

# Windmill

## Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

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

MAY 1, 2009

... is a Welcoming Congregation. Its Mission is to inspire a transforming journey, to embrace our interconnectedness, and to build a loving community of fairness, equality and respect.

## Taking Note . . .

by The Reverend Kate R. Walker



I've been getting a lot of pressure to join Facebook. What's interesting is the pressure is mostly coming from the older members of my family (my retired aunt in the Netherlands and my stepmother), as well as my older friends. My younger brothers and friends are very understanding of my reticent reaction. I feel like a Luddite.

For those whose history is as foggy as mine, according to Wikipedia: *The Luddites were a social movement of British textile artisans in the early nineteenth century who protested—often by destroying mechanized looms—against the changes produced by the Industrial Revolution, which they felt were leaving them without work.*

Apparently, I have a latent tendency to resist some innovative technology. I had the same reaction to CD players, refusing to get one until digital was on the horizon. But, the up side is I never fell prey to eight track tapes.

Facebook is my latest line of defense. I don't currently have any fantasies of destroying anything because, just as the artisans were concerned about losing their work, I'm concerned about what some of our technological advancements are destroying: mainly my work. Or should I say the work of anyone who is enmeshed in the world of community building.

I studied communications when I was an undergraduate student at the University of Denver. For four years I thoroughly enjoyed exploring all the aspects of interpersonal, intrapersonal, non-verbal, vocal and non-vocal communications, mass media, public relations, and even advertising. It was, and still is, a fascinating world to me.

It's all foundational to building community. So, it behooves me today to think we never imagined the world of something like Facebook. Yet, here we are exploring a whole new dimension to community building, but one that involves no direct human-to-human contact. There's written communication, and there's audio and video, but no smells and few non-verbal cues that help us provide a full picture of what we're communicating.

Side note: Non-vocal is communicating without using your vocal chords; i.e., what is your teenager wearing today?! Non-verbal is using your vocal cords without actually articulating any words, yet a clear message is sent; i.e., the grunt you heard from your teenager when you mentioned what he or she was wearing.

Back to my point—I know technological advancements such as Facebook helps bring human community into a new dimension, one that is much broader as people find long-lost high school friends. (Do I really want to be in touch with them again?) But, I still long for the days when people sat and had long conversations over a cup of tea. Quality was the goal, not quantity. Generally speaking, we're only capable of maintaining so many friends anyway.

Besides, I barely have time to do so many other things I love doing, so it's understandable I'm hesitant to add something else to my "daily list." I know I'll eventually cave and get on Facebook—probably about the time that another new technology is introduced. In the meantime, I'm going to the gym where I am looking for some sign that people still talk face-to-face. ~Cheers, Kate

**MOUNT VERNON  
UNITARIAN CHURCH**

**MINISTER**  
The Rev. Kate R. Walker

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- Editor: Marlene Churchill
- Production Crew: Phyllis Gonigam, Laurie Hayden, Dotty Ann McClelland, Sally Montanari, Susan Montanari, Mimi Stevens, Kathryn Moore, Vilma Morrissey, Betsy Stephens
- Proofreaders: barbara barry, Phyllis Gonigam, Curtis Hunter, Mimi Stevens, Herb Tyson, Lynn Alsmeyer-Johnson

Webmaster: Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson  
[webmaster@mvuc.org](mailto:webmaster@mvuc.org)

The Windmill is published monthly. Deadline for articles is the fifteenth of the month. Items will be edited to fit available space. Please e-mail articles to [newsletters@mvuc.org](mailto:newsletters@mvuc.org).

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church  
1909 Windmill Lane  
Alexandria, VA 22307  
Tel: 703-765-5950  
Fax: 703-765-1237  
E-Mail: [info@mvuc.org](mailto:info@mvuc.org)  
Website: [www.mvuc.org](http://www.mvuc.org)

**Program Highlights**  
**Mark Your Calendar!**

Good Companions  
11:45am–12:45 pm–BYO Lunch  
12:45–1:45 pm–Speaker  
Hollin Hall

Tuesday, May 12—Alvin Macomber and Wendy Burns: *Learning About Our Beautiful MVUC Grounds*. Alvin has handled the contracts for maintaining the grounds, including tree care, storm damage and pest control. He was our Grounds Chair for many years and hopes somebody will be found to replace him. He will discuss the history of landscaping endeavors, including trees past, present, and future.

Wendy is a former Chair of the BOT. These days, she chairs the Memorial Walks and will discuss its development and future plans. She is Co-Chair of the Fort Hunt Preschool natural playground project, still in progress. If time allows, she will also discuss the Windmill reconstruction.

Both Wendy and Alvin are long-term members o MVUC.

Tuesday, May 26—Dick Schaffer: *Unitarianism from the Perspective of My Membership in Arizona, Colorado, and MVUC*. Dick is a bicycle-pedestrian specialist with the Department of Transportation in Washington. His job is quite mobile as he travels to as many as five cities a year to advise them. Before coming to Washington, he had more than 20 years' experience, especially in safety matters. He also chairs the Green Sanctuary Task Force and is a member of the choir.

**May Means MUSIC Here at MVUC!**

So much wonderful music is coming your way to add to your worship experience this month. On May 3, enjoy Ron Brandt's impression of Johnny Cash. On May 10, famous UU worship leader Jim Scott comes to share his music and stories. Expect to tap your toe and sing along! On May 17, our very own MVUC Jammers bring their jazz and blues to worship. On May 24th, Yee Von Ng and Ben Whelan-Morin offer beautiful songs to honor our veterans. The highlight of the month will be the All-Music Sunday "Alleluia!" on May 31. Our guest artists are the superb brass quintet from "The President's Own" military band—and of course our wonderful choir. Come experience it! ~Mark Zimmerman

Small Group Ministry Facilitator  
Training and Information Session  
Saturday, May 2, 9:30–11:00 am (Page 7)

# Religious Education (RE)

By Meagan Henry, Director of Religious Education (DRE)

## May Is Teddy Bear Month in Pre-Kindergarten Class!

The Pre-Kindergarten students care for their stuffed animals, building them houses and beds, and learning how to feed them and care for their injuries. This is a fun unit about friendship and caring, ending with a celebration of a friendship party. We know of 11-year olds who still talk about these lessons fondly! It may be because it is often the first time these young children have the opportunity to be responsible for something all by themselves.

## Green Hill Month for Kindergarten-4th Grade

On May 3 and 10, as part of our Natural Playground Project, the classes are planting a wetlands garden in the corner of the playground behind the new sandbox. The purpose of the garden is to grow and nurture water-loving plants that will soak up and filter the run-off in this low spot of the playground so that we are limiting run-off from our property.

On May 17, the classes are planting a cash-crop basil garden this year. They will learn about the life-cycle of plants, as well as the "seed-to-market cycle." When the plants are mature, the children will sell basil in the Commons and donate the proceeds to a local group working on hunger issues. Watch for the sales later in the summer!

## Junior Youth Group, 5th-7th Grade

Welcome 5th-grade friends to the Junior Youth Group! We gather during the second service, 11:15 am-12:30 pm, for cooking, eating, learning, and exploring. Come and find out what "the Black Box" lesson is all about!

## Coming of Age Class, 8th Grade

The class continues to explore spirituality and our UU history and heritage. The Boston trip is May 22-25, and the Coming of Age service is June 14.

## YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists), 9th-12th Grade

The youth group plans to have a lock-in with the youth from the UU Church of Annapolis the weekend of May 30.

~Meagan Henry

## Stories and Music in the Garden! Sunday, May 3, 4:00-6:00 pm

Talented MVUC members, Cheryl Sabo, music and movement for children teacher; Penelope Fleming, storyteller; Eric Pourchot, instrumentalist; and friends, will present folk stories and songs in our enchanting walled garden from 4:00-6:00 pm on Sunday, May 3. Please join us for what will be a glorious afternoon of entertainment for all ages. Families with young children are asked to bring a blanket for seating. Chairs will be available behind the blanket seating. Plan to enjoy a picnic supper with us during or after the performance. Brats, burgers, beer, and wine will be sold. Donations for the performance and profits from food sales will help fund the MVUC/FHP Natural Playground Project. (In case of rain, we will move inside to the Meeting House Chapel.) See you there! ~MVUC/FHP Natural Playground Project Committee: Wendy Burns, Meagan Henry, Kristen Reidy, Gail McNulty, Nancy Renner, Laura Cohn, Rebecca Wolff, Jessie Auten, Susan Ray, Dan and Cindy Avrit



Annual Earth Day Creek Clean-Up



YRUU - High School class fixing the fire pit,  
Spring 2009 Workenanny

## Activities On and Off the Hill

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### UUA Presidential Race

If you're in touch with the Unitarian Universalist Association, then you're aware that there is an election for our new President of the UUA. The election is during our General Assembly (GA), June 27, in Salt Lake City. Our church has six delegates in addition to myself. We do not have to be present to vote, ballots can be mailed in.

The candidates for President are the Reverends Peter Morales and Laurel Hallman. Information about both candidates can be found at <http://www.uua.org/aboutus/governance/elections/president/index.shtml>. In addition, both candidates have their own websites.

I have endorsed Peter Morales because I believe he has better communication skills as an outstanding speaker and writer; has a strong vision for the UUA that is focused on growth and maturity; has a business background; and has the energy and enthusiasm for the demanding job.

I have no doubt Laurel Hallman would also do a good job and will support her if she wins, but I am more confident with Peter Morales due to his skills and passion. When I watch the two candidates speaking as they articulate their vision, answer questions, and make contact with the audience, time and time again, I find Peter more engaging and articulate.

I invite you to consider attending General Assembly in Salt Lake City. This is an exciting event not only for our UUA presidential election, but for our Association as we hold our annual national gathering. We'll sing together in outstanding worship; we'll bring our voices together in advocacy for justice; bear witness for those oppressed; learn from new ideas; find our hearts stirred; and discover new friends. You do not have to be a delegate to attend; everyone is welcome. If you're interested in attending GA, please contact **Lauck Walton**, chair of MVUC's board. I'll be there and voting for Peter Morales as our new UUA president! ~Cheers, **Kate Walker**

#### Presidential Candidates Covenant

We jointly pledge to campaign in a spirit of mutual affirmation. We highly respect and admire each other. We view this campaign as an opportunity for constructive debate and creative exploration of the future of the Unitarian Universalist Association. We ask our supporters to show respect to both candidates and to keep discussion respectful and positive, in the spirit of our religious community.—**Peter Morales and Laurel Hallman, Candidates for UUA President**

### Stewardship Campaign Winds Up

...but it is not too late to get your  
commitment card in!

The Stewardship Campaign wrapped up in April. The good news is MVUC members and friends are projected to contribute \$386,697 next year (July 2009-June 2010)! The average increase has been about 6%, and some people have increased their pledge significantly (and in an economic downturn)! And those whose pledges stayed the same and those people whose pledges had to go down all contributed to making this current total possible. We also appreciate the new members and new pledges (30!) that have swelled the ranks. And it appears that we have exceeded the goal of having over 200 pledging "units" (families and individuals) with 212 so far.

The hard facts are, however, that we may still fall a little short of our goal of 400,000. We need to get every commitment card into the church! Together, our money makes the mission of MVUC happen, with all of its programs and great staff.

What if we fall short? Without a doubt, not making the goal will have an impact on our programs here. The strategic plan is to continue to develop and maintain great programs that serve our members, friends, and community and to hire and maintain an outstanding staff. If we do fall short, we will make up the shortfall out of reserves, but that strategy is not self-sustaining. Our current strategy is working well, so let's keep it going!

A word of gratitude to you for your financial commitment: your financial commitment makes our holy hill possible. And thanks to all of our Visiting Stewards, the Stewardship Committee, **Marlene Churchill** and **Lisa Guide** for helping us with communications, **Anne Ulm** for sending the thank-you notes, the Contemplative Group for the Kick-off Brunch, **Georgia Pourchot** for "The Fair Share Reception," **Mark Zimmerman** and the MVUC Youth for their "Give Us Your Money" skit á la Avenue Q, our "testimonial-givers," **Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson** for the videos, and **Al Robbert** for being the stewardship guru and data-master! Thanks to **Kate Walker** for her great sermons. Thanks to all who pledged, made suggestions, worked and helped! We did it together in community!

~**Jim Potter and Jamie Barnett**  
Co-Chairs, Stewardship Committee

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## Activities On and Off the Hill

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### A Lovely Musical Afternoon

Classical music found a home at MVUC on Sunday afternoon, April 5, under the guidance of MVUC choir director, **Mark Zimmerman**. Nursed by the talents of MVUC choir accompanist, Yee Von Ng, and her guest performers **Alexis Tantau**, mezzo-soprano, baritone **Ethan Watermeier**, and violinist **Jenny Wu**, all joined together to support Ms. Ng in pursuit of her doctorate in the music arts toward qualifying certification as a Collaborative pianist in the multi-sweeping demands of today's piano accompanists. Ms. Ng accompanied each soloist in this program.

This unusually-arranged concert program differed from traditional performances by giving focus to the poetic language translation of the vocal renditions, rather than commentary about the substance of the music—an interesting approach that fit well with the chosen selections and artistic development of the performers since two of the soloists sang in the French language. Mezzo-soprano, Alexis Tantau, in the Masters Music program at the University of Maryland and a member of the Maryland Opera Studio, confidently opened the program by singing three songs by French composer, Henri Duparc. With composed elegance, a natural sparkle, and striking rich tonal quality, she sang with clear diction as one quite familiar with the French language. Her well-developed vocal technique also gave added justification to her already professional accomplishments.

Also on the program and very impressive was baritone Ethan Watermeier, who, with Ms. Tantau, is a member of the Maryland Opera Studio while pursuing a doctorate in opera performance at the University of Maryland. Prior to his performance, Mr. Watermeier spoke briefly about his selection of songs written by Francis Poulenc with text by Charles Baudelaire, and eagerly informed the audience of the ribaldrous nature of Baudelaire as poet. This young man also has developed amazing technical control and strength as a vocalist, with rich and almost bass-like tones reminding me of the rich deep green of a forest at sundown.

The performance of the concluding composition put Ms. Ng in the role of near piano soloist while accompanying violinist Jenny Wu in the collaborative César Franck *Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major*. Not having heard any César Franck for some time, I was surprised and deeply moved by the breath and mix of the emotional power distinctly demonstrated in this four-movement sonata, and was also happily surprised to hear a familiar theme in the first movement repeated more elegantly in the fourth movement. Both artists were superb in their combined rendition. The coming together of violinist Jenny Wu's sonorous and vibrant execution, and the perfection, intelligence, and pianistic range of Yee Von Ng was, for me, an uplifting, intellectually near-spiritual experience. This is a concert I was happy to hear. ~**Leila Goodman** (Note: The free-will offering from this performance will be used for MVUC's music program.)

### MVUC Photo Directory Supplement

Are you new to MVUC, or have you been here awhile, but were unable to get your photo taken for our current photo directory? If so, you are in luck. On Monday, August 24, and Tuesday, August 25, between 3:00–9:00 pm, Life Touch will be at Hollin Hall to take your photograph. If we are able to get at least 30 families to have their photos taken, we will get a hard-copy directory supplement for everyone who is in the current directory, as well as those in the supplement. A family is defined as one person (friend or member of MVUC), or any combination of adults, children and pets. There is no cost to you or to MVUC for the photographs or the supplement. Each family will also receive a free 8x10 photograph. Of course, Life Touch hopes that you will like the quality of the photographs enough to purchase additional photographs, but they have assured us that there will be no pressure. Additional details will be available in June. Starting in July, you will be able to sign up for your photo session on the MVUC website. In the meantime, it would be great if you would please mark "MVUC photo" on your calendar for August 24 or 25. While some people aren't too keen on having their photo taken, the directory is an invaluable tool to help others get to know you. If you absolutely can't make either of these dates, please contact **Joan Darrah** (jedarra@aol.com or 703-768-5751) as soon as possible, and she will try to make other arrangements for you to have your photograph taken.

### Book Sale News

Income from the Annual Spring Book Sale from July 1 to March 31 is just over \$9000! Thanks to everyone who donated, helped, and purchased!

Books left over from the sale are in the Fireplace Room of Hollin Hall and may be purchased at 50 cents each. They will be available until November, when we empty the shelves for Holiday Shop. Preparations for the next sale have begun, and opportunities to help are available. Contact **Joan Wamsley**, 703-751-6086.

### MVUC Greenhouse News

Think tomatoes—**now!!!!** Thirty-three varieties, plus tomatillos (the main ingredient in green salsa), will be ready for you to purchase by the time you read this. We have planted two batches of each variety, so we should not run out, **but** you never know. The basil genovese is in abundance, too. Yum!

Anyway, do check out the greenhouse. It is full to overflowing with unique annuals, perennials, herbs and house plants. We are in the midst of our Spring Plant Sale, which is every Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 am–2:00 pm, until Memorial Day. Help is also welcome. Give me a call: **Mary Barnett**, 703-360-7152.

## Looking Through the “Green Lens”



### **MVUC Hosts Climate Change Event in Honor of Earth Day**

Getting a jump on Earth Day, MVUC held its second annual Climate Change Event on March 29. Hosted by the Green Sanctuary Task Force, the event featured presentations from Virginia Tech mechanical engineering students, Greater Washington Interfaith Power & Light (GWIPL), Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN), Minister **Kate Walker**, Director of Religious Education **Meagan Henry**, and church members.

“The Climate Change Event reflects MVUC’s ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability,” said Rev. Walker. “After completing rigorous environmental requirements, MVUC was delighted to be certified in 2008 as an official Green Sanctuary by the UU Ministry for Earth. Hosting environmental speakers and singers, holding annual Earth Day services, holding Earth Day Fairs and community-wide Discovery Circle classes, such as Simplicity, Menu for the Future, and Sustainability, are just a few of the ways that MVUC lives its love of the Earth.”

As their senior year project, Virginia Tech students Jochen Dietl, Tom Fox, Craig Griffith, Eric Knox and Sebastian Tuerk evaluated the church’s 100-year-old windmill as a potential source for generating energy. Although their study demonstrated that the windmill could not generate sufficient electricity to justify expenditures, MVUC continues to explore other renewable options, such as solar energy.

Laura Glickman represented CCAN, which is dedicated to fighting global warming. Allison Fisher represented GWIPL, which inspires hundreds of religious congregations in the Washington, D.C. area to be good stewards of creation and provides clean, renewable energy. GWIPL previously conducted an energy audit of the church’s facilities and MVUC continues to incorporate “green” improvements recommended for its buildings and operations.

**Dan Cohen** presented recent actions and future plans to reduce MVUC’s carbon footprint. **Lynn** and **Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson** drew a large “carbon footprint” for members to cover with notes identifying their environmental actions to combat climate change (be sure to add your note to the carbon footprint in the back of the Sanctuary). **Wendy Burns**, **Georgia Pourchot** and **Ben Jesup** gave testimonials of their recent Earth-friendly actions at home. “The Greener MVUC Award” was presented to **Alvin Macomber** and **Wendy Burns**, who have contributed substantially to the “greening” of MVUC.

The Coming of Age class sold Boca burgers and other foods as a fundraiser for their UU heritage trip to Boston. Musicians **Dolly Rowe, Eric** and **Michael Pourchot** led congregational singing. Green Sanctuary Task Force Chair **Dick Schaffer** offered “green” products for sale – including cleaning products, tissues, toilet paper, Fair Trade coffee, and chocolate – during the event and once a month during Sunday coffee hours. Former Chair **Suzanne Cleary-Cohen** served as emcee.

Now is a great time to join the Green Sanctuary Task Force to increase MVUC’s environmental effectiveness, both at church and at home. To find out more, contact **Dick Schaffer** at [bikeschaf@aol.com](mailto:bikeschaf@aol.com).

### **Climate Action Wine and Cheese Events May 13 and June 10, 7:00 pm Fireplace Room, Hollin Hall**

Help Virginia lead the way towards real change in the world! Work with church members and friends, neighborhood associations, and other interested parties for Climate Action Wine and Cheese Events on May 13 and June 10 at 7:00 pm in the Fireplace Room of Hollin Hall to help make that happen. Co-sponsored by MVUC, Mt. Vernon Citizens for Sustainable Energy, and the Chesapeake Climate Action Network, we will be writing notes, making phone calls, and reaching out to neighbors to educate them about the need to contact our legislators about climate change solutions.

In order to stop the worst effects of climate change, the U.S. government must act to cap the amount of carbon dioxide, the major global warming pollutant, that we emit. The best way for this to happen would be for Congress to pass a strong bill capping carbon dioxide. Virginia’s Senators have so far remained noncommittal on the type of global warming solution they support. Both are key swing votes on global warming. It is widely believed that in order for the world to take decisive action at this December’s global warming conference in Copenhagen, the U.S. Senate will have to have taken a leadership role. For more information contact **Wendy Burns**.

### **Easy Green!**

Use toilet paper made from recycled paper. Recycled paper manufacture uses one-half the energy and water required in the production of new paper. Currently, one in five of the world’s trees is used to make paper. And, just for the challenge, see if you can cut down on the number of squares you use. Just a thought. ~**Wendy Burns**

## Activities On and Off the Hill

### Walter Anderson

We miss seeing **Walter Anderson** at his customary time attending the first service. He now resides near his daughter, Terry, in Manassas. His address is:

Walter Anderson  
Emeritus at Manassas  
8341 Barrett Dr., Apt. 123  
Manassas, VA 20102  
Telephone: 702-335-8788

### Caring Associates

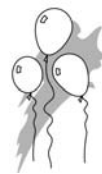
Contact information for the Caring Associate for the week and Caring Associate Coordinator (CAC) can be found each week in the Order of Service and in the Member Services area of the church website. As always, the MVUC staff and volunteers are willing to assist you during normal business hours. Please 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)).

### Easy Ways to Pay Your Pledge

There are now several new ways to conveniently fulfill your financial commitment to the church. Rather than writing checks yourself, you can authorize an amount to be taken each month from your bank account, or you can make contributions by credit card. Forms are usually available on the credenza in the Commons, but if you don't find them there, ask the church office. We'll gladly mail them to you.



### RE Youth May Birthdays!



1 Lucy Neer	23 Sarah Jesup
1 Christina Dillard	24 Caitlin Stewart
2 Arwyn Fleming	24 Alison Tashima
8 Syre Clark	25 Kiah McGhee
9 Tabitha Chilton	26 Emily Irish
10 Alexander Johnson	27 Alex Venzke
10 Kenneth Johnson	27 Rebecca Roberts
11 Parker Collins	30 Benn Mellinger
13 Mia Colaizzi	30 Dylan Mellinger
20 Ella Benbow	

### Small Group Ministry (SGM) Facilitator Training and Information Session Saturday, May 2, 9:00-11:30 am Hollin Hall Morning Room

Through the pursuit of ultimacy and intimacy, Unitarian Universalist churches all over the country are being transformed and energized by SGM. MVUC is gearing up to start the SGM program in the fall. If you're interested in being a part of this adult program as a facilitator, please join us.

The purpose of SGM is to offer a path to better realize our mission as a congregation and a religious community. Individuals benefit by deepening their spiritual experience, and engaging in meaningful relationships with other members.

Time commitment for facilitators depends on each facilitator, but is generally 8-10 hours per month. Please let **Rev. Kate Walker** know by calling, 703-765-5950, ext. 104, or e-mailing [minister@mvuc.org](mailto:minister@mvuc.org).

### Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde, April 18-May 9

(Editor's Note: The following letter was received from Frank Shutts regarding the current Little Theatre of Alexandria performance.)

Dear Welcoming Congregations:

My name is Frank Shutts, and I am the director of *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*, which opens on Saturday, April 18, and runs through May 9, at the Little Theatre of Alexandria. I am wondering if you think this is something your members would be interested in seeing or at least knowing about. The show, which is based on the actual trials of Wilde, is written by Moises Kaufman who is known for The Laramie Project, which dealt with the murder of Matthew Shepard. About *Gross Indecency*, the USA TODAY wrote, "As a court drama, it's thrilling. As social commentary, it's unforgettable ...perhaps even life-changing."

I cannot recommend this play enough to you and your congregation. If you want to organize a group outing, we offer a group discount for groups of 15 or more for week-day performances. Our tickets are affordable anyway at only \$18 being the most expensive.

Additional information can be found by visiting our website at [www.thelittletheatre.com](http://www.thelittletheatre.com).

Thanks so much for helping us spread the word via mouth or your website or your newsletter. It means so much! If you have questions, please feel free to ask me.  
~Frank Shutts, Director



**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.*

**Thank You to Our Volunteers in VIC HOP  
(Ventures in Community Hypothermia Project)**

Many enthusiastic volunteers from MVUC and our partner church, St. Mark's Episcopal, worked with VIC HOP serving our Route 1 community. Heartfelt thanks goes to all our MVUC folks who worked for four months, December through March, every Thursday night, more than any other church, providing breakfast bags, fabulous dinners, and overnight supervision. Your caring, planning, shopping, cooking, serving and overnight stays were greatly appreciated and made this program a huge success. A big cheer for the following great crew, with apologies for any forgotten names:

Michael Seay, Jacki and Ralph Scherer, Angela and Gordon Hiebert, Marty Bredeck, Lisa Guide, Dorothy and Ron Brandt, Nina Tisara, Mike Walker, Mary Beth Bernhard, Barbara Jacobs, Dolly Rowe, Michael Pourchot, Meg and Bill Clontz, Elliot Jernigan, Abigail Woodroffe, Seileen and Steve Murphy, Kristin Calhoun, Jim Potter, Rachel Morgan, Chuck Reams, Carol Willis, Carole Cooke, Greg Early, Peg Bartel, Angel Collins, Helen Hartzel, Paula Mathis, Dee Dee Meyer, Mary Marcia, Brian Lounsbury, Mary Fitzgerald, Nancy Barkume, Susan and Richard Sears, Carl Lohmann, Pamela Cressey, Ken Pilkenton, John and Vero Worth, Sulaiha Masten, Grace Lynch, Shahad

Choudhury, Roy and Jordan Wright, Al Robbert, Jacki Arnold, Joe Kittrosser, Pam Tinker, Lisa Gillispie, Brenda Gail Brown, Linda Jemison, Joan Darrah, Pete Bloom, Dick Schaffer, Mimi Stevens, Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Leila Goodman, Susan Barrett, Jay Holmes, Kristin Rosenthal, Beth Conway, Meagan Henry, Donna Sicklesmith Anderson, Celia and James Barnett, Sarah Sertic, Suzanne McDonnell, Jan and Bill Vaughan, Lucinda and Peter Mosley, Kathi McNeil, Keith Krogh, Tina Bak-Brevik, Tamara De la Camp, Nan and Howard Zimmerman, Linda Davidson, Keith Brophy, Kim and Lincoln Cobb, Sally Swimmer, Pam Unger, Bonita and Rebecca Brandt, Deborah Hansell, Jim Kerr, David Coakley, Karen Offringa, Ruth Bennett, Lynne Kennedy, Donna Gettell, Baiba and Richard Seefer, Renee Desrosiers, Alison Stevens, Renee Griest, Sharon Roberts, Sandra Peterson, Linda and Lauck Walton, Cheryl Sabo, Suzanne Cleary, Frances and Christopher Veith, Georgia and Eric Pourchot, Thomas and Colleen Griffin, Louise Werner-Rhoades, Linda Lloyd, Janet and Jack Powers, Laura Mulvaney, Lauryne and Joseph Morris, Diana and Alvin Macomber, Mary Barnett, and Betsy Yarrison.

~Helen Lounsbury

**UUs for Social Justice Gathering  
Saturday, May 30, 9:00 am-1:00 pm  
Washington Ethical Society**

Save the date! Help our congregations move forward on issues of environmental justice, non-violent communication, group service trips near and far, and ethical eating. Presentations and sharing of best practices on these will take place at the UUs for Social Justice Gathering, Saturday, May 30, 9:00 am-1:00 pm, at the Washington Ethical Society (located on NW 16th Street, near the DC/Maryland line). A UUSJ board meeting will follow the program. The board meeting will begin at 1:30 pm.

~Cynthia A. Snavelly  
Administrator  
Unitarian Universalists  
for Social Justice  
Tel: 301-588-1951  
E-mail: [www.uusj.org](http://www.uusj.org)



**DC DemonCats Championship Bout!  
Saturday, May 9, 5:00 pm**

Meagan Henry, MVUC's wonderful DRE, has another life! She is also a member of the DC DemonCats of the DC Rollergirls League, an all-women's flat-track roller derby. Meagan is the current President of the League! The championship bout, to be held at the DC Armory, will be Saturday, May 9. Doors open at 4:00 pm. Bouts begin at 5:00 pm.

Meg Clontz and Wendy Burns purchased 20 tickets, at \$10 each, so that the bouting committee will reserve seats together for us. Let Meg or Wendy know if you want to go. Metro will take us right to the DC Armory/RFK Stadium Stop. Please wear the DC DemonCat colors—red and black!

P.S. Seasons 1 and 2 were completely dominated by Scare Force One; so this is the first year that Scare Force One will face strong competition from the DC DemonCats! *We have to be there to lend our support!*

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## Activities On and Off the Hill

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### Support our UU Troops!

A new Unitarian Universalist Military Handbook is in the works—a pocket-size volume of readings that military service members can turn to for inspiration and comfort. This collection would provide a liberal religious alternative to the conventional religious books that are most commonly available to members of the military and would also be a good way to spread the word about our UU values.

Last month, several MVUC members associated with the military (**Al and Birgit Robbert, Dan Cohen, Bill Boisenin, Joan Darrah, Jamie Barnett**, and others in spirit) met with **Rev. Beth Graham** of the UUA Stewardship and Development Office regarding this proposed handbook. We're excited, and whole-heartedly support this effort, knowing how valuable such a resource can be. The estimated cost to produce and distribute the handbook is \$25,000 for 20,000 pocket-sized, leather-like copies. We're spreading the word to all our military friends to get on board and help raise the funds needed. We're hoping you will help as well. Contributions can be made at [www.uua.org/giving](http://www.uua.org/giving), or sent to UUA at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108. Make your check out to UUA and put "Military Handbook" in the memo line. For more information, call or e-mail **Al and Birgit** (703-299-9892, [aarobbert@comcast.net](mailto:aarobbert@comcast.net), [birgit.robber@comcast.net](mailto:birgit.robber@comcast.net)).

### UUA's Melcher Book Award Goes to Gustav Niebuhr

The Unitarian Universalist Association's 2008 Melcher Book Award will be given to **Gustav Niebuhr** for his book, *Beyond Tolerance: Searching for Interfaith Understanding in America*. This work explores how Americans of different faiths are finding common ground.

Niebuhr will be presented with the award on Saturday, June 27, at the UUA General Assembly 2009, in Salt Lake City, Utah. The award ceremony will be followed by a book signing by the author.

"This book is important," said Phyllis O'Connell, chair of the Melcher Book Award Committee, "because it tells a post-9/11 story that has been ignored by the media, a story about the profound interfaith work happening in neighborhoods throughout America. This spiritual work is going on all around us, as Niebuhr says, 'beneath the public radar'."

*See next column*

*From preceding column*

Niebuhr spent four years researching the book. *Beyond Tolerance* explores communities where interreligious cooperation exceeds mere tolerance. He describes Hindus and Quakers in Queens, New York; Catholics and Jews in Baltimore, Maryland; Baptists and Catholics in Louisville, Kentucky; and Catholics and Buddhists in Los Angeles, California.

Gustav Niebuhr is associate professor of religion and the media at Syracuse University and a former New York Times religion reporter. His great-uncle was renowned religious thinker Reinhold Niebuhr, and his grandfather was leading theologian H. Richard Niebuhr.

"I am thrilled to be the recipient of the Melcher Award," Niebuhr remarked. "It holds a special meaning for me for two reasons. First, the award honors the vital tradition of liberal religion, a profoundly formative current in American thought and culture. Second, it comes from the Unitarian Universalist Association, with which I feel an enduring family connection through my father, Richard R. Niebuhr, who taught many future UUA ministers while a professor of theology at Harvard Divinity School between 1956 and 1999."

Established in 1964, the Frederic G. Melcher Book Award is given annually by the UUA to a work published in the United States during the past calendar year judged to be the most significant contribution to religious liberalism. Previous recipients include James Carroll, Richard Rodriguez, Toni Morrison, Dorothy Day, and Joseph Campbell.

### Family Getaways at Murray Grove Get Back to Simplicity!

Enjoy a mini-vacation at your Mid-Atlantic UU retreat center in the peaceful New Jersey Pine Barrens, on the site where Universalism began. Mid-week reservations are available; the accommodations are comfortable, affordable, and fun. The activities offered are swimming (pool open in season), athletic fields for sports, nature walks, barbecues, and fire circles. Nearby are beaches, boardwalks, Six Flags, canoeing, restaurants, and parks. Support your UU retreat centers! Plan a vacation with us. Check out [murraygrove.org](http://murraygrove.org); write us at [murraygrove@murraygrove.org](mailto:murraygrove@murraygrove.org), or call 609-693-5558. Save the dates: August 14-16—Murray Grove's 2nd Annual Drum And Dance Retreat—Learn to drum and have some fun! September 25-27, Homecoming Weekend.

*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*

May 3

*This Is Not a Walk-Away Faith*  
**Rev. Kate R. Walker** and  
**Social Justice Council**

May 10

*Honoring Mother Earth*  
**Rev. Kate R. Walker** and  
**Special Guest Jim Scott**  
Story Teller and Musician  
(Flower Communion)

May 17

*Could I Have Your Eulogy  
Now, Please?*  
**Bill Clontz**

May 24

*Remembering Why*  
**Rev. Kate R. Walker**  
and **Friends**

May 31

*Alleluia!*  
**Mark Zimmerman** and  
**MVUC Choir**

**Mt. Vernon  
Unitarian Church**  
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Alexandria, VA 22307

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

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

*Thank you!*