

Windmill

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

OCTOBER 1, 2009

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

... 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



Recently several MVUC members have reflected to me their desire for things to return to normal or smooth waters. I replied in my compassionate ministerial way: "I don't think that's going to happen." They were referring to the MVUC community, of course, and I was smiling as I discounted their desire. Well, I did say, "I understand your need, but....", then I offered my perspective.

Throughout the year there are cycles of sunshine, clouds, rain, snow, and ice. The same can be said of communities. There are cycles of moods similar to sunshine, clouds, rain, and ice. Mount Vernon Unitarian Church has experienced some particularly sharp changes in moods in the past few years. I suspect, for some members, there may be another mood shift on the horizon: cloudy to rainy.

The good news is this is normal. The bad news is this is normal.

Good news: The mood over the past couple of years has been focused on various levels of anxious excitement as MVUC searched for a new minister. Upon my arrival, that excitement decreased for some, increased for others, and many found relief. The reaction is usually dependent upon an individual's ability to cope with the changes that are occurring. Overall, the effect has been increased energy throughout the congregation.

This all followed on the heels of shock, sadness, frustration, and anger when your previous minister was asked to leave. I suspect many of you didn't have time to process your emotions. This would be a good time to allow those emotions their cloudy day.

It is normal for a religious community to experience swings of mild ups and downs, and since we've been experiencing a wonderful pattern of sunshine, the expectation, in the normal cycle of life, is for there to be a period of decreased energy (we don't want to keep escalating into a manic phase!).

Now the bad news: Some of you may be experiencing some residual or delayed grief over the sad and distressing departure of your previous minister. This is normal, but it may be unexpected. I've spoken to a few people who have noted this very experience. Others may not understand this, or not want to visit such cloudy emotions. Who does? However, don't allow ice to take over, because expressing grief in any form is important and critical in order to return to sunshine. If you want to chat with me, just call or e-mail.

The bad news comes with a warning: Don't get stuck. It's important for the grief, anger, or sadness to find an outlet, but eventually there needs to be new excitement to bring the energy of the community back up into a new cycle of sunshine. This means new goals to focus on. Our very smart MVUC Board is doing just that, working on new goals. We Westerners are, after all, goal-oriented people. We like to achieve and feel that we have accomplished something.

So, for those wanting a time of "normalcy" in our church, this is normal: Ups and downs, cycling all through the years. What a wonderful ride we're on!

Cheers,

~Kate Walker

**MOUNT VERNON
UNITARIAN CHURCH**

MINISTER
The Rev. Kate R. Walker

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WINDMILL NEWSLETTER

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**Program Highlights
Mark Your Calendar!**

Pet Blessing

Sunday, October 4, 5:30-6:30 pm on the Patio

Join us for a Unitarian Universalist-style Pet Blessing in honor of St. Francis Day. Bring your pets on a leash or in a cage, under your control. Please be sure all dogs and cats have current rabies vaccination and other shots.

Wednesday Fellowship

Wednesday, October 7

Dinner at 6:00 pm, Vespers at 7:00 pm,
and Activities at 7:30 pm (Page 7)

Good Companions

11:45 am to 12:45 pm—BYO Lunch
12:45-1:45 pm—Speakers

Tuesday, October 13—Dr. Alan Bunner: *The Universe and Other Things*.
Tuesday, October 27—Roy Wright: *Perpetual Academic Journey—Informal Learning Practices* (Page 8)

Lunch-with-a-Book

Sunday, October 11, 12:45 pm
Village Wharf Restaurant (Page 6)

Workenanny

Sunday, October 11, 10:30 am-3:30 pm (Page 5)

Birdhouse Building Workshop

MVUC/FHP Natural Playground Fundraiser
Saturday, October 17, 10:00 am-1:00 pm (Page 6)

Seasonal Flu Shots Available at MVUC

A Seasonal Flu Shot Clinic will be held Tuesday, October 6, from 2:00-3:00 pm, in the Commons. Medicare Part B participants will receive free shots if they bring Medicare cards. Seniors or others enrolled in a managed-care plan should receive their shots from their primary medical provider. Shots are \$25 for all others. Questions? Call Jo Jackley, 703-360-6636.

Religious Education (RE)

By Meagan Henry, Director of Religious Education (DRE)

The courage to teach is the courage to keep one's heart open to those very moments when the heart is asked to hold more than it is able so that teacher and learner and subject can be woven into a fabric of community that learning and teaching require. ~Parker Palmer

Dear Friends,

Each year, the RE Council struggles to find volunteer teachers for our Sunday morning classes. This year has been especially difficult, and we still have needs in the K-5th grade classes at the 9:30 am class time.

Many of our parents are overwhelmed with the extra activities of life that having young children entails. However, they also need to recharge their spirits and their children need a spiritual home. MVUC is that spiritual home, and I hope we can continue to serve the needs of our members and friends by providing quality religious education for the children of our community.

If you are willing to help teach a class, please let me know. For safety, we require at least two teachers in each classroom, and I ask that the adults who apply to teach be either members or regularly attending MVUC for at least six months.

See the class descriptions below and contact me if you have additional questions or would like to volunteer. E-mail: dre@mvuc.org.

Kindergarten–1st Grade:

Wonderful Welcome, a *Tapestry of Faith* offering, challenges participants to explore how and why we are willing to welcome others into our lives by welcoming not only strangers, but family, peers, neighbors and even entities that are not people such as our animal friends and nature itself.

This program helps children understand and practice other values central to Unitarian Universalism, such as friendship, hospitality, and fairness. It offers children safe, positive, and intentional ways to relate to one another, the people in their families, and the world around them as they investigate how they use gifts they can't see or touch to welcome others into their lives.

Grades 2–3:

Faithful Journeys, a *Tapestry of Faith* offering, takes a pilgrimage of faith exploring how Unitarian Universalism translates into life choices and everyday actions via historic or contemporary examples of Unitarian Universalist faith in action.

Through sessions structured around the Unitarian Universalist principles, *Faithful Journeys* demonstrates that UU principles are not a dogma, but a credo that individuals can affirm with many kinds of action.

Over the course of the program, children discover a unity of faith in the many different ways Unitarian Universalists, including themselves, can act on our beliefs.

Grades 4–5:

Windows and Mirrors, a *Tapestry of Faith* offering, nurtures participants' ability to identify their own experiences and perspectives, and to seek out, care about and respect those of others via topics that lend themselves to diverse experiences and perspectives—for example, faith heritage, public service, anti-racism, and prayer.

The curriculum presents the windows-and-mirrors metaphor as an effective tool for understanding and living our Unitarian Universalist principles.

In the Spirit of Community,

~**Meagan Henry**, Director of Religious Education



Forgiveness

Reinhold Niebuhr, a 20th-century theologian noted for Christian Realism, wrote: *Nothing that is worth doing can be achieved in our lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope. Nothing which is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by faith. Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be quite as virtuous from the standpoint of our friend or foe as it is from our standpoint. Therefore we must be saved by the final form of love which is forgiveness.*

Sunday, October 4: *Let It Go*—**The Rev. Kate R. Walker.** The theme for the month of October is *Forgiveness*. The Jewish calendar reminds Jews every year in the early fall about forgiveness on Yom Kippur during the High Holy Days. Imagine a time of year when we actually let go of our heavy grudges and guilt! We'd all lose 20-60 pounds! (Pianist **Yee Von Ng** is playing.)

Sunday, October 11: *Growing Our Diversity*—**The Rev. Kate R. Walker.** This is our third annual recognition and celebration of our relationship with the Unitarian Universalist Association. A special collection will be taken to help support the goal of increasing diversity in our association. (**Mark Zimmerman** is playing and the MVUC Choir is singing.)

Sunday, October 25: *A Full-Bodied Prayer*—**The Rev. Kate R. Walker.** This is a reflective service featuring an exploration of the nature of prayer through dance, song, words, and silence. (**Mark Zimmerman** is playing and the MVUC Choir is singing.)

Small Group Ministry Has Begun

Tired of committee meetings? Need a place for your reflections on the Theme of the Month? Want to explore your writing talent? How about reflecting on the spiritual path of being a Unitarian Universalist? Or, maybe you've been hearing about "diversity" and have no idea what that means. All of these topics are offered in the new Small Group Ministry program. Check out the Brochure found in the Commons, sign up in the Commons, or go to <http://mvuc.org/pages/Small-Group-Ministry.html>.

Small Group Ministry is an experience unlike anything you've ever had at church before.

Below are questions that I was unable to answer on Sunday, August 23. I'll answer them a few at a time over the next few months (as space allows).

Question: *Best resources for a children's Bible, UU friendly?*

Answer: I'm not aware of any children's Bibles that have been written with a UU perspective (that would be a huge project). However, we do have resources that introduce bible stories for children. Some offer historical context: from the UUA Bookstore (www.uuabookstore.org), *Pilgrim Book of Bible Stories*, by Mark Water; *From Long Ago and Many Lands: Stories for Children Told Anew*, by Sophia Lyon Fahs, which has other world religions as well.

In my office, available for borrowing, is *Jesus the Carpenter's Son*, by Sophia Fahs. I note that Sophia Fahs was a leading religious educator who revolutionized our movement in the 20th century.

Question: *How do we encourage our neighbors in Northern Virginia to consider UU as their religion?*

Answer: By inviting them to a service. Seriously, the best way for any church to grow is by invitation. Signs are nice, but passive. Articles in the media are wonderful, but not in our control. Advertising is important, but expensive. Invitations are active, under our control, and cheap—unless you throw in lunch, which is extra incentive.

Question: *You've mentioned many times, many different jobs you've held, plus substantial years of education. One day we calculated you must be 100 years old. But that can't be correct. So without telling your actual age, can you give us an idea of your generational position or the years for each job, or something?*

Answer: Well, you're right, I'm not 100 years old. I'm actually 170 years old! Looking good, eh? I have no inhibition about telling my age, never have, I'm 46 with a touch of 20-something and hints of 70-plus. Did I mention I once worked as a parking lot attendant?

~Rev. Kate R. Walker

Thoughts to Ponder!

Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. ~Albert Einstein

People demand freedom of speech as a compensation for the freedom of thought which they seldom use. ~Kierkegaard

Activities On and Off the Hill

Liturgical Dance Group!

On Sunday, September 27, a Liturgical Dance Group was formed at MVUC! **Enrollment in this four-week workshop is open through Sunday, October 4. Please join us!**

The Sunday workshops start at 1:00 p.m. and run about 75 minutes. The Group is open to high school students, adults, and seniors—men and women, members of MVUC and guests. For a fun, yet worshipful event, I sincerely urge you to try this workshop! This is not strenuous physical activity. It provides an opportunity for gentle, graceful exercises and learning liturgical dancing. You will enjoy being part of a team composed of good friends!

The instructor is Dawn Meadows, Director of Studio Gold Dance, Mt. Vernon Sacred Dance Choir, who is also an Isadora Duncan movement specialist. The title of her workshop is *Dances of Peace*. The workshop will culminate with a performance during worship services on Sunday, October 25. **Rev. Kate** is preparing a special sermon that day illuminating liturgical dance as one of the earliest forms of prayer. Donations are welcomed from all who wish to help defray the workshop costs. Please contact **Mark Zimmerman**, MVUC Director of Music, immediately to let him know of your interest. He may be reached at 703-765-5950, ext. 107.

Workenanny

Sunday, October 11, 10:30 am-3:30 pm

Join us for the fall Workenanny at MVUC. We all enjoy our beautiful buildings and grounds, but it takes a lot of work to maintain our nine acres and its buildings. This is the time when members and friends of the church can make a significant difference in the stewardship of our grounds to improve its appearance. Volunteers may start after the first service (on the quiet jobs) or after the second service. Please come dressed in old clothes on Sunday, and stay for all or any part of the day to help with the pruning, weeding, and other assorted odd jobs. No experience is necessary. Bring gloves, weeders, pruners, and pruning saws (if you have them). We also provide tools for those who don't have any. In addition to the usual tasks (removing vines, weeding, etc.), there are two trees to cut and remove. Pizza is provided for workers who are here around 1:00 pm. If you can't make it on Sunday and still want to help, please contact us for jobs that were not completed at the Workenanny: **Alvin Macomber**, 703-780-3489, or **Leah Choudhury**, property@mvuc.org.

Greenhouse News

Hurrah! Fall is here. Did you know that this is a great time for gardening? If you didn't get your peas and beans in, you might plant some now before frost harvest.

If you love spinach and leaf lettuce, now is the perfect time for planting. This is also the time for dividing your perennials, for rooting cuttings, and for planting pansies, violas, ornamental cabbages and kale, chrysanthemums, and asters to brighten up your fall and winter garden. All of this is leading up to the fact that the Greenhouse will have a fall plant sale. So you gardeners out there, come on over to the Greenhouse when you are on our holy hill.

There are plenty of non-gardening chores to be done, too. Pot washing is not one of our favorites, but it must be done. We recycle pots and must clean them up in preparation for spring planting. (This is why we would love to receive already-washed pots from our pot donators.) The windows at the greenhouse need washing and repair. The cold frame needs fixing. Are there carpenters out there who need something to do?

The Holiday Shop is coming up November 21. We will again be selling your favorite winter-blooming paperwhite narcissus, cyclamen, herbs, Christmas cactus, and more. We would love to get you involved! The Greenhouse Group usually meets once a month over a brown bag lunch in the Commons. You do not have to be a horticultural expert to join us, but rather someone who doesn't mind getting dirty and enjoys the company of gardeners. Call **Mary Barnett** at 703-360-7152, or e-mail her at maryabarnett@gmail.com.

Pieces of UU History in October

1844: Meadville Theological School opened in Meadville, Pennsylvania. It continues in Chicago, Illinois, as the Meadville/Lombard Theological School, one of two UU seminaries.

1866: The first meeting of the National Conference of Unitarian Churches was held in Syracuse, New York.

1881: The first Unitarian church in Budapest, Hungary, was founded.

1916: Julia Ward Howe, a Unitarian activist and author of the *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, died at age 96.

1925: Florence Buck died at the age of 65. She and Marion Murdock, both Unitarians, were the first women to hold a joint ministry in the U.S.

Activities On and Off the Hill

Holiday Shop Is Coming!

Visitors and newer members might ask, “What is Holiday Shop?” It is an all-day event (this year on Saturday, November 21), which, since its beginning many years ago (2009 is the 48th annual Holiday Shop), has provided more than \$268,629 to pay for “extra items” needed by the church. Among items funded in the past ten years are computer upgrades, chimney repairs, a new sprinkler system, roofing repairs, a leaf blower, a snow blower, outdoor lights for the Meeting House patio—and much, much more.

On Holiday Shop day, the Meeting House, draped in red and green, is full of artisan who work in fiber arts, photography, wood, paper, metal, glass, and clay. It also includes an orchid station and other plants offered by the MVUC Greenhouse. You will find crafts from many parts of the world. Also, the MVUC quilt group designs and creates a quilt every year that is raffled off during the day. There is also a gingerbread house for raffle.

During Holiday Shop, the Hollin Hall (a.k.a. “the Mansion”) is turned into a Country Kitchen with displays for sale of our famous chutneys, baked goods, gingerbread house kits, and more. A delicious lunch of soup, sandwich, and cheese pie is served in the dining room. Helene’s Attic is set up on the sun porch and offers elegant, if slightly used, decorative household items. A display of amazing unique jewelry for sale is in the Hollin Hall foyer.

Holiday Shop takes effort from all us—besides being a lot of fun. We cap off the day with a wine and appetizer toast to the sunset.

How can you help now?

- Come on Thursdays at 10:00 am to the Every Thursday Group and help make chutney, work on crafts, and have lunch.
- Sign up when asked for baked-goods donations, such as pies, cakes, cookies, and bread. We will give you suggestions for packaging and handling.
- Donate jewelry that you no longer wear, and leave it in the Mansion kitchen to the left of the back door. Last year we made nearly \$2,000 from the sale of this jewelry.
- Donate decorative household items for Helene’s Attic (which is our very own upscale, resale shop).

How can you help on the day of the shop?

We need sales people, lunch-serving people, clean-up people, and many more. Last year more than 100 members and friends of the church helped. If you want to volunteer, please call **Marge Witting** at (703) 768-5212 or **Mary Barnett** at (703) 360-7125. You may also receive a call for help—please say YES!

Holiday Shop is a whole-day community effort. We get to work together, get to know each other better, and spend a delightful day on the hill. Please join us.

~**Anne Ulm**, Holiday Shop 2009 Publicity Chair

Parent/Child Birdhouse Building Workshop Saturday, October 17

10:00 am–1:00 pm, Carriage House

Ed Raduazo, who helped us build our Mud Daub Playhouse, has agreed to teach us how to build birdhouses on Saturday, October 17, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Each parent/child will be provided with a frame to weave beforehand, and then will daub it with the mud mixture and decorate it to come up with a special birdhouse to take home, hang, and welcome the birds. The birdhouses are made of recycled and natural materials.

Cost of the workshop is \$25.00. If you are interested in participating, please contact **Wendy Burns** at wdburns@erols.com, or 703-780-3204.

Lunch-with-a-Book

Lunch-with-a-Book will be meeting at 12:45 pm on Sunday, October 11, at the Village Wharf Restaurant in the Hollin Hall Shopping Center.

All are invited to come and discuss Ernest J. Gaines’s book *A Lesson Before Dying*, the current All Fairfax Reads selection.

The story tells of a young man who, now educated, has returned to teach in Cajun Louisiana, and is asked to visit a man on death row to help him die like a man—not like a hog, which is how his defense attorney had characterized him.

For more information, contact **Louise Werner-Rhoades** at louron13@cox.net or 703-619-1369

Activities On and Off the Hill

Wednesday Fellowship Returns!

In October, the monthly Wednesday Fellowships return. Please mark your calendars for the first Wednesday of the month, October 7, and join us with your enthusiasm and hunger.

For those new to our church, Wednesday Fellowship is a way to come together, eat, chat and enjoy an activity of personal interest outside the usual committee work. We gather at 6:00 pm for dinner—do not worry if you arrive at 6:30 pm, there is always plenty of food. We finish dinner and socializing by 7:00 pm, in time for a half-hour Vespers service led by **Rev. Kate Walker**.

After 7:30 pm, we invite you to join any number of activities that might be of interest. If you like the food, we invite you to join us in the Hollin Hall kitchen for recipe sharing and cooking demonstrations. If you like to sing, try the choir rehearsal. Yoga will be offered in the Hollin Hall fireplace room. A number of other activities will be available; check the sign-up sheet in the Commons for specifics.

Child care will be provided if you let us know you need it. **We strongly encourage you to sign up in advance**, so we know how much food to prepare or purchase.

In the past, we purchased the food. This year, we will try a number of new things. Committees and groups will be offered the opportunity to “sponsor” a Wednesday Fellowship. Groups can purchase the food from various restaurants, as we did in the past, or cook it themselves. The proceeds would support the work of the specific group sponsoring the Fellowship.

In October, Green Sanctuary is cooking for you. **Proceeds will go to the Katie Tyson Leadership Fund**, so bring your friends, neighbors, grandparents, and whomever else you find with an appetite, and join us!

Cost of dinner: \$7/person; cost of child care, \$5/family. For more information, contact **Georgia Pourchot**, tel. 703-721-0595.

Vilma Morrissey

Vilma Morrissey, a long-time member of MVUC and a faithful worker on the Windmill crew, died on Saturday, August 22. Memorial service will be held at MVUC, Sunday, November 1, at 3:00 pm.

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) or **Meg Clontz** (meg@theclontz.net).

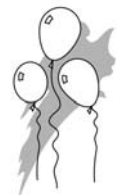
Looking through the Green Lens



Easy Green! October 2009

Virginia businesses and restaurants are not required to recycle, even though we have curbside recycling for our homes. Why not bring your wine bottle home to recycle it when you go out to dinner? And, for doggie bags or carry out, take your own containers and have the restaurant put the food in them. Just a thought! ~**Wendy Burns**

RE Youth October Birthdays!



1	Camille Powilatis	13	Arainn Murphy
2	Matthew Whiteside	17	Emma Hathaway
6	Devin Conway	19	Christopher Stoll
7	Lily Penn	19	Jeffrey Stoll
10	Claude Delamater	23	Lachlan Kerr
11	Emilia Stapleton		



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.

Can You Help?

Fairfax County has a new program to help homeless young people, ages 16-21. The goal of the program is to provide safe, stable, supervised homes for homeless high school students, which will enable them to continue attending school through graduation. The Host Homes Program provides support to youth who are unaccompanied, which means they are not living with a parent or guardian. Students are homeless for a variety of reasons.

Fairfax County program officers are looking for persons or families who would like to help one of these students achieve their goals by providing a place to stay so that they can continue to attend high school and eventually graduate.

If you have room in your home and your heart for such students, please contact **Patty Holley** at 703-403-8565 or patriciakholley@gmail.com.

National Equality March

On Sunday, October 11, 2009, people from all across America will gather in Washington, DC, to let our elected leaders know that now is the time for full equal rights for LGBT people. The March will start at noon (exact origin and route unknown) and finish at the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol, where there will be a rally starting at 2:00 pm. **The Rev. Peter Morales**, our new UUA President, is preaching at All Souls (services at 9:30 and 11:15) and leading the UU delegation at the rally. The single demand of the March: Equal protection in all matters governed by civil law in all 50 states. Several people from MVUC plan to participate. For more information, please contact **Joan Darrah** or **Lynne Kennedy** at 703-768-5751 or jedarrah@aol.com.

Discussion on Peace in the Middle East

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area invites everyone to a discussion on the Middle East. *Peace in the Middle East: Does the US Have an Effective Role to Play?* will be held on Sunday, October 18, at 2:00 pm, at the Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke, Virginia.

Former Ambassador to Israel and Jordan, Thomas Pickering, will moderate the discussion. Panelists include Mohammed Abu-Nimer, professor of international peace

and conflict resolution at American University, Ambassador Warren Clark, Executive Director of Churches for Middle East Peace, Norman Howard, former intelligence analyst for the Defense Department, and Dr. Christopher Mitchell, Professor Emeritus of the Institute for Conflict Analysis at George Mason University. Please access www.lwv-fairfax.org for more information.

Good Companions

11:45 am-12:45 pm-BYO Lunch

12:45 To 1:45 pm-Speaker

Tuesday, October 13—**Dr. Alan Bunner**: *The Universe and Other Things*.

Why does the universe around us seem to be so exquisitely fine-tuned as to be nicely habitable, with planets in stable orbits, a stable star providing light and heat, a nice selection of elements to build things with? Is it the hand of God, or are there other possible explanations? Dr. Bunner will discuss these questions and more with us.

Dr. Bunner retired from the Office of Space Science, NASA, in 2001. He received his PhD in physics from Cornell University in 1967. Alan has been a member of MVUC for over 10 years and sings in the Choir. His wife, Lia LaPiana, currently is a program executive at NASA headquarters.

Tuesday, October 27—**Roy Wright**: *Perpetual Academic Journey—Informal Learning Practices*

Roy is passionate about “informal learning practices” and the positive impact it has achieved in the global citizenry. He founded a career company in 1967, The Wright Company, Inc., an international manufacturer’s representative and technology consultant. At present, through a contract with the USAF, he is president of the Innovative Institute of Material Studies, Inc.

Roy has been a member of MVUC for one year, along with his wife Jordan, who sings in the Choir. He currently serves as a broadcaster and videographer for MVUC selected events.

~Al Erickson

From Our Board

by Reid Adler, Chair

It was great to see so many of you at the Ingathering Picnic on September 13. Even the weather cooperated to give us a bright and crisp afternoon—a perfect day for us to reconnect with our MVUC family. Many thanks to the Board and Program Council who hosted the event and to everyone involved in set-up and clean-up! Our Ingathering is always one of my favorite rites of the summer.

The Board's overnight retreat at the end of August was very productive. Many thanks to the **Tinkers** for allowing us to use their Wolf Run Retreat again this year, a wonderful place for small groups, just next to the George Washington National Forest. Also, special thanks to **Kris Rosenthal** for moderating and facilitating the retreat. Her process skills and past experience as an MVUC Board Chair were invaluable.

We talked about the mission of MVUC, which you find in our written materials and on e-mails from Rev. Kate: *The Mission of the MVUC is to inspire a transforming journey, to embrace our interconnectedness, and to build a loving community of fairness, equality, and respect.* We are certainly walking the walk, with our social justice activities, programs to sustain and improve the environment, partner church activities, youth development, LGBT rights, contributions to improve life quality for the homeless, financial generosity in support of second collections, etc. And the small group ministries starting this month add another dimension to our community and our various journeys through life. Someday, MVUC might consider whether this mission statement appropriately captures the church's role in the world today.

Also, the Board members adopted our own covenant for this year, to capture our various commitments, e.g., to be well prepared for meetings, think "outside the box" and be "strategically critical." We built this list from last year's Board covenant because it was such a good platform and had been field-tested. So thanks to **Lauck Walton** and the 2008-2009 Board members! You can see the full list on our website in the Board's retreat minutes.

Another highlight was a covenant for the Board itself as the collective voice of ten people with a shared love of MVUC and diverse backgrounds. We're aiming for nothing less than "exceptional performance" this year of our fiduciary and leadership responsibilities to the Church. See the retreat minutes for more information and let us know what you think of these covenants.

And the Board set some big picture goals for the Church this year:

- Improve governance (and consider the Program Governance approach).
- Support and facilitate efforts by our Minister and Sunday Services Committee to enhance the congregation's spiritual experience.
- Address church and community-wide communication.
- Complete re-examination of the Capital Building Project/Capital Campaign.
- Growth (particularly to attract and retain younger adult membership).

By the time you read this, our September 26 "capital" workshop with Larry Wheeler will be completed, and the Board in October will consider when and how to address our capital expansion needs. If you're interested in getting involved with this assessment or interested in learning more about these other topics, please let any Board or Program Council member know (or send me an email at boardchair@mvuc.org). ~Reid Adler

Editor's Farewell

Dear Readers,

After 35 exciting months, this issue is my final newsletter. Thank you for the opportunity to serve MVUC in this capacity. It has been a beneficial learning experience in working closely with news contributors and using a publishing format.

My sincerest thanks and appreciation go to: **Mimi Stevens**, **Phyllis Gonigam**, **barbara barry** (she prefers small bb's), **Lynn Alsmeyer-Johnson**, **Curtis Hunter** (our former editor), and **Herb Tyson**, for being the greatest proofreading team that any editor could want, and for their diligence, accuracy, and quality they added to the *Windmill*; additional thanks go to Herb, the master problem-solver on computer challenges, and to **Curtis Hunter**, who provided training for QuarkExpress and critiqued the layouts. Additionally, I say thanks to my "policy guide" **Ron Brandt**, who offered me the job (and I still don't know how he knew that I had secretly wanted it), and to my loyal husband **George**, who graciously gave up vacation time and arranged our social life around "Windmill week."

Good news! Herb has offered to assist in transitioning the *Windmill* to a more mainstream format than QuarkXpress, and will be serving as interim editor. ~Marlene Churchill

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 and 11:15 am
in the Remington Chapel*

October 4**Let It Go*

Rev. Kate R. Walker

October 11**Growing Our Diversity*

Rev. Kate R. Walker

October 18

Sunday Service Committee

October 25**A Full-Bodied Prayer*

Rev. Kate R. Walker

*See Page 4 for Sermon Descriptions

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Thank you!