



Windmill

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

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church December 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 recently got a new light for my bike. Seemed necessary since it is often dark when I ride to the gym in the morning. The light is really bright, and it has the option of blinking. I also have a blinking red light on the back of my bike, I wear a bright orange reflective vest and, of course, a helmet. This is the minimum of what I can do to feel a little safer in this world, on my bike anyway.

Working out is a way to feel safer, too, since it helps with my health, although I could easily pull a muscle or tendon (did you see me limping last month?). Trying to feel safe in this world is a constant pursuit—often with results that can't be measured. Our attempts to feel safe can result in all sorts of actions and inactions. To smoke or not, to reduce our weight or not, to drink or not, to walk on ice or not, to live near a cell tower or not, to go skydiving or not—we choose and then we bear the consequences of our decisions.

In “The Last Dance: Encountering Death and Dying” by Lynne DeSpelder and Albert Stickland, the authors dedicate an entire chapter to the risks of death in the modern world. With accidents, disasters, violence, war, and disease, living is a risky business. We all know most

of the risks we take—when we choose to pay attention. But almost all the time, we choose to accept the risks of living.

I'm not a life insurance expert, but I'm willing to gamble that riding in a car is one of the riskiest acts the average person does on any given day; yet we do it with little reflection. We might not don helmets in the car. Hopefully, we put on our seat belts. But off we go, risks and all. I won't even mention the threat to others and the environment.

Each of us finds our own comfort level with the risks we're willing to take. Each decision is deeply emotional and might or might not even be subject to reason. After all when death is on the line, emotions rule.

Every day we take risks in order to live. Yet, to not take any risks, we would not be living.

May the holiday season be full of life—risks and all.

Happy Holidays and take care.

Kate R. Walker

Do You Love Our Beautiful Church Property? Help maintain and improve our surroundings by joining the new Property Committee. In recent years, we've missed the active Buildings and Grounds Committees we used to have, but now with a staff Property Manager, we're ready for a fresh start. The new committee will meet a few times a year (not every month) and members will not be expected to do all the physical work required to keep things in shape. Everybody should help with that! If you're interested in serving, please contact either Leah Choudhury, Property Manager (703-765-5950x100, property@mvuc.org), or Ron Brandt (703-765-4779, ronbrandt@cox.net).

Rev. Kate R. Walker

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Program Highlights Mark Your Calendar!

December Wednesday Fellowship
December 2 at 6 pm (see page 4)

Holiday Craft Workshop
Saturday, December 5, 2-4 pm (see page 3)

Holiday Dinner, Sing-Along and Piñata Party
Saturday, December 5 (see page 3)
Dinner: 5:30pm, Sing-Along: 7 pm, Piñata: 8 pm

Special Congregational Meeting
Sunday, December 6, 12:30 pm, Chapel
Vote on whether to proceed on cell tower

Good Companions
Tuesday, December 8 (see page 6)
Dr. Alan Bunner: The Universe and Other Things

Lunch with a Book
Sunday, December 13 (see page 5)

Annual Holiday Pageant
December 20, 11:15 am Service (see page 6)

Winter Solstice Celebration
Sunday, December 20, 5-7pm (see page 3)

Christmas Eve Services
Thursday, December 24
Family Service at 4:30 pm
Service with MVUC Choir and Musical Guests at 7 pm

Partner Church Brunch
Sunday, December 27, after service (see page 8)



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

Please join us as we celebrate the Holiday Season with our two annual multi-generational, fabulous fun-filled events: the Holiday Craft Workshop and the Holiday Piñata Party!

Holiday Craft Workshop

Saturday, December 5, 2009,
2-4 pm

We start the day with the annual craft workshop: gingerbread houses, solstice wreaths, boxwood wreath making, holiday crafts, etc. All ages welcome. Please volunteer to lead a craft, or sign up in the Commons and just enjoy the event! Gingerbread house decorating space is limited, so sign up early. Please contact Cheryl Sabo to volunteer: shurl@cox.net or 703-244-3096.

Holiday Dinner, Sing-Along and Piñata

Dinner: 5:30pm

Sing-Along: 7 pm

Piñata: 8 pm

After you take a mini-break, come back to MVUC for a

wonderful cozy dinner (we provide the dinner and drinks, you provide dessert), followed by a Sing-Along


led by Angel Dean Collins, with the 12 Days of Christmas led by Marty Bredeck. As always the most anticipated event is the whacking of the piñata! Once again, Mike Walker has agreed to provide

a socially unacceptable piñata that deserves to be "taken down." Sign up in the Commons, or to volunteer to help contact Seileen Mullen Murphy at smurphy@martin-blanc.com or 703-283-5130.

Winter Solstice Celebration

Sunday, December 20, 2009, 5-7pm

Join us for a celebration of the changing of the season! Food, ceremonies, stories, music and the labyrinth will all be a part of this program. Come and welcome back the light! Bring a snack or appetizer to share and warm clothes so that we can spend some time outside (weather permitting). The celebration will begin in the Commons at 5 pm. All are welcome. Please let us know that you plan to come by signing up in the Commons during Sunday Services.

| <i>RE Youth December Birthdays</i> | |
|--|----------------------|
|  1 Nyla Zindler | 20 Malcolm McNeil |
| 1 Priya Bredeck | 27 William O'Connell |
| 20 Gabriel Chesney | 28 Rebecca Ribbing |

Congratulations for 50 Years of MVUC Membership!

Fifty years ago, in 1959, Jay and Bea Holmes and Elaine Bronez joined MVUC. The Membership Committee and all MVUC members want to recognize them and thank them for their fifty years of service to our church community.

Jay and Bea moved here from Albany, NY, where they were already members of a UU church. Jay has contributed to the music program since first joining and was editor of our Newsletter for many years. Bea began the Would-Be Poets group more than 13 years ago, and every year she has put on a Sunday service with her group—providing a booklet of their poems. Every January for the past 7 years, Bea and Jay have organized and led the Great Decisions class.

Elaine Bronez was introduced to MVUC by her neighbors Trudy and Rufus Wright. During the past 14 years she has spearheaded the Good Companions lunch discussion forum, which meets at MVUC twice a month. At one point, she became well-known for her stand-up comedy routine on "How to avoid being asked for money by the church canvasser." She also served on MVUC's BoT. Elaine has always been a social activist with strong interests in equality, services for the aging, voters' rights through the League of Women Voters, and open affordable housing. She was active in the sit-in movement in DC restaurants before it began in the south—and much, much more.

We have much to be thankful for in their long service and friendship at MVUC.

Monthly Worship Theme

HOPE

Hope for me is sometimes about some external event, such as no red lights all the way home. But, I know I'm a better person when I hope that I can be a source of change. Maybe, I'll have more patience at each red light, all the way home. Sometimes the best hope is found within. ~ **Kate Walker**

December 6: "The Long and Bumpy Road of Hope"

The Rev. Kate R. Walker

The December theme of the month is hope. Seems a good fit for the holiday season, but can we wrap it up and give it as a gift? Special music with holiday jazz ensemble.

December 13: "Do We Need God?"

The Rev. Kate R. Walker

With the holiday season upon us, I have to ask as a good Unitarian Universalist, the real question for God, "Why are you here?"

December 20: First service at 9:30 a.m.

"Confessions of a Holiday Tree Hugger"

The Rev. Kate R. Walker

Second service at 11:15 a.m.

Annual Holiday Pageant

Thursday, December 24: Christmas Eve Services

Family Service with traditional Christmas music at 4:30 pm

Candlelight Service at 7 pm, featuring the choir and special musical guests

Sunday, December 27, 2009: "Where Is My Inspiration?"

Rev. Róbert Bálint (One service at 10 am)

Question Box Sunday

Q. Why don't we, the church, have more events in the gardens? We're always in the Chapel or Hollin Hall ... we should be enjoying the grounds too.

A. I agree! Worship in the garden in January!!! Okay, maybe not. But we did have a great pet blessing on the patio in October, and an intergenerational campout in September. Great fun.

Q. Which books have helped you form your religious beliefs/views? Which have been instrumental to your personal religious development?

A. Wow, this is like asking kids to pick their favorite candy in a store! I'm glad it is worded "books," plural.

Not in order of preference:

Karen Armstrong, "History of God"

Jack Mendelsohn, "Being Liberal in an Illiberal Age"

Conrad Wright, "Walking Together: Polity and Participation in Unitarian Universalist Churches"

Alice Blair Wesley (The 2000-01 Minns Lectures), *Our Covenant: The Lay and Liberal Doctrine of the Church: The Spirit and the Promise of Our Covenant*

Paul Rasor, "Faith without Certainty: Liberal Theology in the 21st Century"

Q. What was the "defining moment" of your summer break?

A. The moment I spoke with Herb and Karen Tyson after Katie's death.

Wednesday Fellowship Update

First Wednesday of the month, Meeting House and Hollin Hall. **Dinner:** 6 - 7 pm, **Vespers:** 7 - 7:30 pm, **Other Activities:** 7:30 - 9 pm.

In October 2009, we relaunched the Wednesday Fellowship with a slightly different format. We serve dinner in the Commons and eat in the chapel—with plenty of leg room and space for socializing. Food is no longer ordered from a restaurant, but homemade by church groups and individuals. Recipes [and sometimes a story of their genesis] are available.

The money left over after reimbursing volunteers for their food expenses goes to benefit the Katie Tyson Fund. The October and November Fellowship Nights raised over \$550 for the fund.

The activities following the Vespers service include choir [Chapel], yoga [Fireplace Room], and movie viewing [Morning Room]. We are open to organizing other activities—such as a games group, a children's or teen's group, or a discussion group. If YOU have an idea and would like to lead an activity on a Fellowship Night, contact Georgia Pourchot, gpourchot@yahoo.com.

December Wednesday Fellowship

The theme for December 2 Wednesday Fellowship is "Holiday dishes across cultures." We will have Jewish pancakes, Romanian [or Greek, Serb, Polish] stuffed cabbage, and a surprise dish from UK. Join us for dinner at 6 pm, \$7/person, \$21/family. Child care is available for \$5/family—please sign up in the commons. We will have a Vespers service from 7 to 7:30 pm. Activities from 7:30 to 9 pm include choir practice and movie viewing. "For the Bible Tells Me So" will be screened. Contact Georgia Pourchot, gpourchot@yahoo.com, 703-721-0595.

Social Justice Movie Series for Winter – Spring

Second Fridays, 7 – 9 pm Hollin Hall Fireplace Room

January: “Coal Country” [2009]. This is a dramatic look at modern coal mining. We get to know working miners along with activists who are battling coal companies in the Appalachian Mountains. We hear from miners and coal company officials, who are concerned about jobs and the economy and believe they are acting responsibly in bringing power to the American people. Both sides in this conflict claim that history is on their side. Families have lived in the region for generations, and most have ancestors who worked in the mines. Everyone shares a deep love for the land, but *mountain top removal* mining has leveled over 500 Appalachian mountains and is tearing the people apart. We need to understand the meaning behind promises of “cheap energy” and “clean coal.” Are they achievable? At what cost? Are there alternatives to our energy future?

February: “Let Freedom Sing” [2008]. PBS movie compellingly retells one of the greatest stories in American history—the Civil Rights Movement—through the singers and songwriters who fought for change through their music. This is the story that made President Obama’s success possible, told for the first time through the music that drove it and by those who were there. Narrated by Louis Gosset Jr., the movie features interviews with Gladys Knight, Isaac Hayes, Chuck D, Andrew Young, Quincy Jones, Pete Seeger, and more. Songs include *Respect*, *Change Is Gonna Come*, *People Get Ready*, *Fight the Power*, and *What’s Going On*.

March: “Boys Don’t Cry” [1999]. Based on actual events, Brandon Teena is the popular “new guy” in a tiny Nebraska town. He hangs out with the guys, drinking, cussing, and bumper surfing, and he charms the young women, who’ve never met a more sensitive and considerate young man. Life is good for Brandon, now that he’s one of the guys and dating hometown beauty Lana. However, he’s forgotten to mention one important detail: It’s that Brandon Teena was actually

born a woman named Teena Brandon. When his best friends make this discovery, Brandon’s life is ripped apart.

April: “Osama” [2003]. A 12-year-old Afghan girl and her mother lose their jobs when the Taliban closes the hospital where they work. The Taliban have also forbidden women to leave their houses without a male “legal companion.” With her husband and brother dead, killed in battle, there is no one left to support the family. Without being able to leave the house, the mother is left with nowhere to turn. Feeling that she has no other choice, she disguises her daughter as a boy. Now called Osama, the girl embarks on a terrifying and confusing journey as she tries to keep the Taliban from finding out her true identity. “Osama,” inspired by a true story, is the first entirely Afghan film shot since the fall of the Taliban.

May: “Food, Inc.” [2008] How much do we know about the food we eat? The current method of raw food production is largely a response to the growth of the fast food industry since the 1950s. The production of food overall has changed more since that time than in the several thousand years prior. Controlled primarily by a handful of multinational corporations, the global food production business has as its unwritten goals production of large quantities of food with low direct inputs (most often subsidized) resulting in enormous profits, which in turn results in greater control of the global supply of food sources within these few companies. Health and safety (of the food itself, of the animals produced themselves, of the workers on the assembly lines, and of the consumers actually eating the food) are often overlooked by the companies, and are often overlooked by government in an effort to provide cheap food—regardless of the consequences. Many changes are based on advances in science and technology, but often have negative side effects. The answer that the companies have come up with is to throw more science at the problems to bandage the issues but not address the root causes.

Lunch with a Book

The December meeting will be on **Sunday, December 13** at 12:45 pm at the Village Wharf Restaurant in Hollin Hall Shopping Center. This month’s book is “The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society,” by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barnes The book tells the story of a group of eccentrics living on the island of Guernsey during the Nazi occupation For more information contact Louise Werner-Rhoades at 703-619-1369 or at louron13@cox.net.



Musical Notes from Mark Zimmerman, Director of Music

The Music Program has received several donations this past year. I would like to thank Henry Bobotek and Dolly Rowe for a large drum for our percussion groups; Angel Collins and Keith Brophy for 2 lovely new choir anthems; and Betsy Lowry for funding our acquisition of several types of miniature musical instruments for our young people in RE classes. Jordan Wright also donated proceeds from green energy placards. Graciously given and gratefully received.

MVUC choir accompanist Yee Von Ng will present another recital in her doctorate series on Saturday, December 5th at the Kogod Theatre, Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, University of Maryland, 2-3:30 pm. This features music of her home country of Malaysia, with a variety of instrumentalists as well.

December Music. We have much special music in December! We will feature all-jazz Holiday Music with guests **MVUC Jammers** on December 6th. The following Sunday will be our choral presentation of selections from the madrigal cantata *A Day for Dancing*. December 20th includes the annual Holiday Pageant with our young people performing *Spirit of the Christmas Tree*. And, of course, there are our two services on Christmas Eve with children and adult choirs. Special guest artists for Christmas Eve will be harpist Diana Marie Gibbs and our own Mike Gillispie on flute. Diana recently took the stage for a 56th Presidential Inauguration celebration held in the National Archives Rotunda for the Charters of Freedom, and as a guest artist with the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic. Plan to join us!

Music in 2010. This winter, look for the performance of "Words of Albert Schweitzer and the Music of Bach" sponsored by our Program Council. Sunday, February 28th, MVUC hosts talented young UU musician Matt Meyer for morning worship and a two-hour Drum Circle and afternoon Percussion Workshop entitled "Drumming and Spirituality." February also includes joint "Choir Swap Sundays" with Paint Branch UU Church. In the spring, look for another recital by Yee Von Ng. Many special musical events heading our way!

Good Companions

Hollin Hall Dining Room & Fireplace Room
Elaine Bronez, assisted by Eleanor & Al Erickson
BYO Lunch 11:45 - 12:45 | Speaker 12:45 - 1:45

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Dr. Alan Bunner: The Universe and Other Things

Why does the universe around us seem to be so exquisitely fine-tuned so as to be nicely habitable, with planets in stable orbits, a stable star providing light and heat, and 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 December 22, 2009—Not meeting

Easy Being Green

Even though we know that we are "wasting energy" when we use strings of lights during the holidays, it's hard to forgo this pleasure. You can reduce your impact significantly by replacing incandescent lights with LEDs. LED lights last longer, consume 90% less energy, and are virtually maintenance free. They are much cooler than incandescent lights, emitting virtually no heat. Sound ideal? Well, much better, at least. If you want clear/white ones, get "warm white," which are closer to the color you are used to in white lights. Just a thought...

Feed the Homeless

VIC-HOP (Ventures in Community Hypothermia. Outreach Program) is starting up again. From December through the end of March, we feed the homeless on Thursday nights. Contact Helen Lounsbury, helenlounsbury@yahoo.com.

On and Off the Hill

Great Graduates!

MVUC graduated two important classes in recent weeks:

In October, our fifth class of the MVUC Leadership Seminar provided the Hill with 14 more highly motivated and ready to lead members. We now have over 50 graduates of this home-grown leadership program.

In November, our second Red Cross certification course graduated five more members qualified in CPR and in operating our Automatic Emergency Defibrillators (AEDs). We now have 18 members qualified to assist in a heart emergency, using the AEDs in Hollin Hall and the Meeting House.

Small Group Ministry (SGM) Offerings

SGM is a new program at MVUC to facilitate individual space for spiritual growth. Groups of no more than 10-12 people get together regularly to discuss topics of common interest in a shared space of inclusiveness, spirituality, and confidentiality. These are open groups. Anybody can join, but they are not drop-in groups. If you wish to participate, please contact group leaders in your area of interest. The following groups are currently running.

The Parenting group meets every other Sunday, 5 - 7 pm in the YRUU room [Carriage House, upstairs]. To date, members discussed the spirituality of pre-teens and teens, what parenting techniques work, how to encourage creativity and independence, how to impress personal responsibility and accountability in our children, and more. For information, please contact Meagan Henry, dre@mvuc.org, or Leah Choudhury, lchoudhury@earthlink.net.

The Diversity group meets every other Friday, 7 - 9 pm, at Georgia Pourchot's house. Topics range from diversity of political and religious views, to racial, ethnic, sexual, gender, and people with disabilities diversity. The focus is on how the contributions of people "unlike" us enhance our spirituality. Contact Georgia Pourchot, gpourchot@yahoo.com, or Vince Patton, vince.patton@monster.com.

The Theme of the Month group meets on the first Sunday of the month, 1 - 3 pm, in the Hollin Hall Fireplace Room. It typically discusses the worship theme of the month and extrapolates that theme to participants' own experiences and spiritual needs. Contact Tom Tarcza, ttarcza@yahoo.com.

The Riding Poetry group meets on the first and third Mondays [except federal holidays and during the holiday season], 7 - 9 pm, in Hollin Hall. Participants

bring one or two poems of special interest to them to read aloud and then reflect on the particular meanings and messages of each poem. Contact Linda Jemison, poetrycommander@gmail.com.

The Birthright UUs group meets on the second and fourth Sundays, 3:30 - 5:30 pm, in the Hollin Hall Breakfast Porch. Participants include born-and-bred UUs, and people raised in other faiths. They exchange views about their specific religious experiences and reflect on big spiritual themes. Contact Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, bill@alsjohn.com, or Betsy Yarrison, betsy.yarrison@verizon.net.

The Personal Writing group meets the second and fourth Thursdays, 7 - 9 pm, beginning January 14, in the Hollin Hall Dining Room. Participants undertake creative spontaneous exercises to open themselves to become non-critical writers, and do directed reflective writing stimulated from readings. Two books, "Writing RE-Creatively: A Spiritual Quest for Women" by Rev. Gail Ranadive (past member of MVUC) and "Writing Down the Bones - Freeing the Writer Within" by Natalie Goldberg, will be used in this personal writing adventure. For information, please contact Sandy Peterson, sandrapeterson@cox.net.

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, 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.



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.

Partner Church News

Please plan to attend a very special service on Sunday, **December 27** (10:00 a.m.—one service only) with the Rev. Róbert Bálint from Transylvania.

The Rev. Róbert Bálint is the 2009-2010 Balázs Scholar at Starr King School for the Ministry. Róbert is minister to congregations in Mészkö, the Alabaster Village, and Csegez. In addition to his theological studies, he completed a degree in sociology at Kolozsvár Babes Bolyai University. He has been involved in the Unitarian youth movement, and worked with local social and charitable organizations. Along with others, he started the Francis Balázs Historical Preservation Project, designed to preserve and promote Francis's spiritual and material heritage. He hopes to return to Transylvania at the end of his scholarship year having learned more about church organizational life and practices, new springs in Unitarian Universalist theological thinking, and ways of handling social issues.

Rev. Bálint's sermon will be entitled "Where Is My Inspiration?" He writes:

In a sense, we all are poets writing the poem that becomes the story of our life. For some of us, the words come easily and we succeed. Others of us have to struggle for every single word to make the poem happen. And, of course, for some people the poem just doesn't work, no matter how hard they try. And here I have to tell you; it is not always their fault. For our life, our individual story is interwoven with other stories, other lives.

Is there a way to make this story—our story interwoven with other people's stories—to be one of joy, compassion, understanding, a story of light and love?

A partner church brunch and discussion with Róbert and his family will follow the service.



R. Walker, minister of Mount Vernon Unitarian Church. Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice is a regional organization of UU congregations in Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Northern Virginia.

Pictured: Ron Brandt, Lynne Kennedy, Joan Darrah, Birgit Robbert, Al Robbert, Rev. Kate Walker, and Mark Gorman

Joan Darrah Receives Award

MVUC member Joan Darrah was honored Sunday, October 25, 2009 at an awards dinner sponsored by [Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice](#). Darrah, current vice-chair of the Board of Trustees of MVUC, received the award for her leadership in the effort to repeal the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy of the U.S. military. Darrah received the award for her "powerful momentum against this unjust law, including sponsoring an Action of Immediate Witness at the 2007 General Assembly, conducting workshops, testifying before the House Armed Services Committee and appearing on national radio and TV programs." The citation was presented on behalf of UUSJ by the Rev. Kate

From Our Board of Trustees by Reid Adler, Chair

Thanks to those of you who responded to my column in the Windmill last month about support for those of us who are in career transition, perhaps having been nudged there by the challenging economy. We're had a small support group meeting on November 23 at the Church with a couple of recruiting and networking specialists who are MVUC members. We will schedule another meeting in December if there's interest (date not available at this writing—stay tuned).

If MVUC can do anything more to support and assist anyone in our community, please let Rev. Kate or me know—in confidence—what MVUC might be able to do for you. Call us, write to us at minister@mvuc.org or boardchair@mvuc.org, respectively, talk to us in person, or leave a note in our mailboxes at the Church.

There will be a special Congregational Meeting on Sunday December 6 at 12:30 pm in the Chapel following the second service. We will vote on a proposal to allow construction of a cell phone tower on church property. I greatly appreciate the time and efforts by Joan Darrah and others to evaluate this possibility for us, and for hosting a very informative meeting at the Church on October 18 to discuss it.

The cell tower is an issue for which reasonable people will have differing opinions—about aesthetics and otherwise. Some of us have concerns about the public safety risk from lack of cell phone coverage on our Hill while others may be concerned about radiation from cell towers. There is also a revenue opportunity for MVUC in a couple of years if the tower is built. Please note that a vote in favor by MVUC does *not* mean that the cell tower actually will be constructed. Fairfax County will follow its regular procedures that involve public notice and comment, and the community that surrounds our Hill will be given a voice. And the County government will have its own opinion. MVUC's interests and concerns

should be considered thoughtfully nonetheless, particularly because they might lead to different decisions at this stage in the process. I am confident that we will strike the right balance because “love” and the “quest for truth” and “community” embody the covenant of MVUC. You will find useful and objective information and photos on our web site. Copies of this material are also available in the Church office.

Also at the meeting on December 6, you will hear a brief “State of the Church” report as well as an update on finances, and the like. This segment of the meeting will include an interim update on options currently being evaluated by the Building Task Force and the Stewardship and Finance Committees regarding the possibility of restarting our building program and conducting a capital campaign. If you might be interested in assisting with this evaluation and learning more about the contemplated building program, please contact Lauck Walton or Birgit Robbert. Later this church year, the Board will inform the Congregation about their recommendations and ask for a vote on proceeding.

The Board has approved a plan to consider ways to improve MVUC governance by considering ways to better organize our Board and committees and to update our bylaws. We will think critically about why we do what we do and also seek to adopt “best practices” regarding governance for nonprofit organizations and churches.

The Board has approved what will be a very interesting and important opportunity for us to think about who we are as a church community and to state clearly what are our most vital and significant reasons for joining together on the Hill. We will be scheduling a “Mission and Vision” session after the holidays to talk as a community about MVUC's mission. If you are interested in getting involved, please let me know!

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
unless otherwise noted****

December 6

**"The Long and Bumpy Road of
Hope"**

The Rev. Kate R. Walker

December 13

"Do We Need God?"

The Rev. Kate R. Walker

December 20

9:30 am:

**"Confessions of a Holiday Tree
Hugger"**

The Rev. Kate R. Walker

11:15 am:

Annual Holiday Pageant

Thursday, December 24

**Christmas Eve Services
Family Service at 5:30 pm
Candlelight Service at 7 pm**

December 27, 2009

**One service at 10 am
"Where Is My Inspiration?"
Rev. Róbert Bálint**

* See Page 4 for Sermon Descriptions

**Mount Vernon
Unitarian Church**
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In 2010, the Windmill Defaults to Email Delivery

Here's another way living our values of taking care of the environment and reducing our costs!

Beginning in January, the *Windmill* will be sent via email (PDF format) to everyone for whom we have an email address, rather than through the U.S. Postal Service. If we do not have your email address, you'll continue to receive the *Windmill* by slow and more costly postal mail. (If you need to continue receiving the monthly newsletter by postal mail even if we have your email address, please let Anne Bredeck know in the MVUC office, info@mvuc.org.) If we don't yet have your email address, please let us know so we can better keep you informed.

Enroll for e-delivery or change your email address at any time by notifying the webmaster at webmaster@mvuc.org. Please include your full name so we can properly update church records.

Reminder to All MVUC Email Users

To receive all weekly bulletins and special notices, please notify Esther Dickinson, esthergertrude@verizon.net, if your email address changes.

Thank you!