



Windmill

*To affirm and
promote the in-
herent worth and
dignity of every
person*

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church January 1, 2010

... 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

It's a new year, and I am very excited for a new project for myself as a minister. Beginning in September, Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church is going to have an intern minister, which means I get to supervise! For the past four years, I have served as a field advisor for a seminary student, but this relationship ends in May because she is graduating. I've always wanted to serve as an intern supervisor, and this will be my first intern. Fortunately, MVUC has lots of experience with being a "Teaching Congregation."

A "Teaching Congregation" is one that has both experience and success in helping develop a seminarian into a professional minister ready for her or his own ministry. MVUC has had several interns over many years, although none in the past ten years due to ministerial transition. Back in 1991/92, one of those interns was my own stepmother, Marlene Walker. For those who haven't heard the story, I participated in Marlene's ordination here at MVUC — which led me to choose ministry for my career.

The process of becoming a Fellowshiped UU minister is long and expensive. I intentionally say "Fellowshiped" because anyone can be ordained as a minister in a UU church because we have congregational polity. This means a congregation is the ordaining body rather than a Bishop or other member of a hierarchical religious institution. Getting Fellowshiped as a UU minister means the minister has been certified or credentialed as a UU

minister by our Fellowship Committee. This is a national credentialing body charged with the task of setting the standards for education and training, and then granting a seal of approval.

To get to this point, a successful candidate must receive a Masters of Divinity Degree from an accredited seminary (the expensive part), take part in a Basic Clinical Pastoral Education program (a formal training program usually in a medical setting such as a hospital), read a whole lot of books, write a lot of papers, take an extensive psychological personality study otherwise known as Career Assessment, read more books, and do an internship in a church.

Our intern has already been selected — her name is Kären Rasmussen. She is a student in D.C. at Wesley Theological Seminary. She will be with us for nine months beginning in September. Until then, I'll be helping the congregation understand how to support in Kären in her ministerial formation, particularly members who have never experienced having an intern. I'll also be helping the Board select an intern committee. If you're interested in serving, please contact me for information on what the expectations are and what we need in committee membership.

I'm so excited! I hope you are too.

Kate R. Walker

Rev. Kate R. Walker

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The Windmill is published monthly. Deadline for articles is the 15th of the month. Items will be edited to fit available space. Please e-mail articles to newsletters@mvuc.org.

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Program Highlights Mark Your Calendar!

Young Adults (18-40) Fellowship Night

January 2, 6 pm to January 3

(See page 4)

Wednesday Fellowship

January 6, 6-9 pm (see page 6)

Coal Country

January 8, 7 pm

(See page 11)

Lunch with a Book

Sunday, January 10 (see page 5)

Good Companions

January 12, 11:45 am (see page 6)

Bea Holmes Memorial Service

January 16 (see page 3)

Martin Luther King Jr. VIC Choir Festival

Sunday, January 17, 7 pm (see page 6)

Mission/Vision Statement Discussion (Two times)

January 19, 7:30 pm *or*

January 24, 12:30 pm

(See page 7)

Memorial Service for Al Searle

January 23, 2 pm

(See page 3)

Multimedia Visioning Event and Dinner

January 29, 6:30 pm (see page 7)

Envisioning the MVUC of the Future

January 30, 10-11:30 am (see page 7)

Bea Holmes

Beatrice Hort Holmes, poet, historian, attorney, water policy analyst and Federal agricultural planner, died Sunday, December 6. Bea was an MVUC member since November 1959 and a Unitarian since 1956. She was 82. She is survived by her husband, Jay.

A practitioner of personal verse, Bea led the adult poetry class at MVUC through 13 years of study and recitals. In 2005, she published *Matinee Lessons: A Would-Be Poet Tells about Her Life and Others*. Bea served on the church board of trustees, and with her husband Jay, co-led the Great Decisions adult education class studying foreign policy. She was also a member of the Every Thursday women's group.

While on the staff of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bea published several histories of Federal water resources and policies, and retired in 1989. In private life, she published one other such study under contract with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Bea was a graduate of Queens College in New York City and the Cornell University School of Law. In the 1950s, she served as an attorney in the office of the New York State Attorney General. In recent years, previous Cornell law graduates have been awarded doctorates for small payments, but she declined to purchase the degree. After retirement, she studied American history at George Washington University and earned a master's degree in 1994. She was of Eastern European Jewish heritage, born in the Bronx in New York City.

Bea and Jay had been married for 59 years and resided together in Hollin Hills since 1960. Bea is sur-

vived by her husband, Jay, a son, three daughters, and three grandchildren.

Jay is a retired science writer and author and was also employed by the federal government.

Their son, John Dewey Holmes, earned a PhD at the University of California, Berkeley, after researching a history of the life of Bea's uncle, Noah London, a high official of the Soviet government executed by order of Stalin in 1937. John and his domestic partner, Marge

Turngren, live in Oakland, California. Their daughter Dolly Holmes, a painter and graphic designer, has a BFA degree from Cooper Union and an MFA from Hunter College. She and her husband, Mark Pehanich, live in Petersburg, Virginia. Their daughter Olivia (Livy) Holmes, and her husband, Mario Moroni, are professors of Italian at Binghamton University in New York. They met and were married in Italy, earned PhDs at Northwestern University and have both published widely. Their son, Jacopo, is nine years old.

Their daughter Barbara (Baba) Holmes, who received her BS from Brooklyn College, is a lactation specialist at NYU Hospital in New York City. She is married to Arthur (Aaron) Brown, an internet communications specialist employed at the UN headquarters in New York. They have two daughters — Jasmine, a college graduate and aspiring playwright, and Deva, a high school student. They live in Brooklyn, NY.

A memorial service at MVUC is scheduled for January 16. Bea's ashes will fertilize the burial site.



SOCIAL JUSTICE COUNCIL OPPORTUNITIES

We have several opportunities available for those of you who may be thinking about getting involved. The **Civil Liberties Task Force**, the **Women's Reproductive Rights Task Force**, and the **Green Sanctuary Task Force** all need dedicated volunteers. These and other social justice focus areas could benefit from your energy and ideas. Please contact Georgia Pourchot, 703-721-0595, gpourchot@yahoo.com to learn how you can become a part of the exciting work being done by your fellow MVUC members.

WITH SADNESS

It is with much sadness that we report the death of founding member Al Searle, who died at home on the night of Wednesday, Dec. 9. His memorial is scheduled for January 23, 2010, at 2 pm.

Monthly Worship Theme by Rev. Kate Walker

JUSTICE

The following are excerpts from the sermon "We Are Keepers of the Dream" by Rev. Matthew D. Tittle, of the Bay Area UU Church in Houston, TX:

The words "The long arc of the universe bends toward justice," which President-elect Barack Obama referred to in his acceptance speech, are often attributed to the Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. The original quote was written by the Unitarian minister Theodore Parker in 1853 and stated: "I do not pretend to understand the moral universe; the arc is a long one, my eye reaches but little ways; I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by the experience of sight; I can divine it by conscience. And from what I see I am sure it bends towards justice."

This quote and the subsequent dream it evoked are the very essence of liberal religious thought, of which Parker and King were masters. The key here is not in the morality of the universe or in the justice toward which it supposedly bends, but in the arc itself.

Theodore Parker was among the 19th century transcendentalists who believed that there existed an ideal spiritual state that transcends the physical and empirical, and is realized through the intuition rather than the doctrines of established religion.

The arc is the transcendent reality of both men's dreams because they believed within the arc there were self-evident truths in which all humankind should enjoy inalienable rights expressed non-violently through compassion and love for people.

January Service Topics

January 3: "Summons," the Rev. Kate R. Walker. The theme of the Month for January is Justice. How do we answer the moral imperative of seeking justice in a world that prefers to sleep?

January 10: Special guest speaker TBA. Please watch for announcement on our website and Sunday Bulletin.

January 17: "Infinite Hope: Honoring King's Vision by Example," Ilene Gillispie

January 24: "Working Class Theology," the Rev. Kate R. Walker. According to statistics, Unitarian Universalists are well educated and are generally a "white collar" population. Today I ask two questions: Do we have anything to offer those from the "working class" or

"blue collar" part of our community? And do they have anything to offer UUs?

January 31: "Faith of Uncertainty," the Rev. Kate R. Walker

Can we find happiness in uncertainty and the unknown? Are we destined to be in a perpetual escape from anxiety? Don't kid yourself; we're all scrambling up the hill of clear perspective and wisdom.

Question Box Sunday (8/3/2009), Continued

Q. If there is one thing that must happen to this church to make us a growing church, what would it be in your judgment?

A. Finish the renovations. I don't have any skills in seeing into the future, but I know people well enough to recognize that appearances make a difference on first contact. Visitors want to know we love each other and our property, and that love should show in more than words.

Q. How, in times of hardship, can we UUs find solace?

A. I don't think UUs are any different from Catholics or Jews, or even politicians, for that matter. We find solace in each other. Sure, faith in an ultimate being helps many, but being held in the warm thoughts of someone who loves us helps more.

Q. What should be our UU Church's position on the exploding human population on this small, limited planet?

A. The same as the UUA's position: Sex education is an important value and is worth teaching to all generations, and making birth control available is an important part of being a responsible adult. In addition, individual responsibility for controlling and reducing our use of and consumption of resources.

Young Adults (18-40) Fellowship Night

Saturday, January 2nd through Sunday, January 3rd, beginning at 6:00 pm in the Hollin Hall Fireplace Room. The first ever overnight event for Young Adults! There will be food, group bonding, games, a short worship, music, and a movie! Please bring a potluck dinner dish to share and \$5 to cover the cost of drinks and breakfast. You are welcome to attend just for a portion of the event if you do not wish to stay overnight. RSVP on Facebook, to Kelly Campbell (moonbeam610@gmail.com) or 860-977-3435, or Ilene Gillispie (ilene.gillispie@ncf.edu) or 703-509-8089).

Proposed Cell Phone Tower/Tree Update

Based on the positive vote of the Church at the special congregational meeting on December 6 (with 121 “yes” and 38 “no” votes), the Board of Trustees will negotiate with AT&T/ACO Property Advisors for the construction of a communications tower/tree on church property. As a reminder, we are at least two months away from signing a contract and one and one-half to two years away from construction. (Of note, because of the safety concerns that have been raised as part of this process, the Board has established a task force to explore safety issues on the Hill, including ways to improve communications among our buildings.)

On December 9th, representatives from MVUC, AT&T, ACO property advisors, Bechtel Engineers, and Ron Fitzsimmons, senior aide to Supervisor Gerry Hyland, held a meeting on the MVUC meadow to review the proposal to date and to refine site plans. At this meeting, it was determined that the tower/tree would actually only need to be approximately 115 feet tall, not the 140 feet previously estimated. Although the tower/tree could be built to accommodate 4 carriers, we may attempt to limit the amount of meadow space used by including ground equipment for only three carriers, AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon. If, in the future,

Sprint or a fourth smaller carrier wants to add on, consideration could be given at that time to expanding the equipment storage area. It is hoped that we may be able to increase rental collected from the 3 carriers to at least partially offset the income expected from a fourth carrier (approximately \$500 a month).

Sometime in January, AT&T/ACO will conduct a “balloon test.” A balloon will be flown for a period of several hours at the proposed tower height so that neighbors and MVUC members and friends can be further informed about the visual impact of the proposed tree/tower. As soon as a date is selected for the test (typically a Saturday morning), notice will be sent to Mason Hill citizens and the information will be widely distributed at MVUC. During the test, AT&T/ACO will take several photographs of the balloon from numerous locations. Using simulation tools, they will create photographs of what the finished structure will look like from various locations. In the next several weeks, AT&T/ACO is also going to conduct a radio frequency propagation test. This will give us a more accurate assessment of where the cell phone coverage will be improved. — Joan Darrah

MVUC PHOTO DIRECTORY SUPPLEMENTS HAVE ARRIVED!

The MVUC Photo Directory supplement has arrived and will be available for pickup in the Commons on Sundays at the New Member Desk or from the Administrative Office during the week. If your photograph is in the current MVUC Photo Directory or you had your photo taken this August or September for our supplement, you are entitled to a free supplement – one per family, please. If you had your photograph taken for the supplement and did not order additional portraits, please see Joan Darrah, as she has your free 8x10 portrait.

Anyone who is relatively new to MVUC may have a free supplement (one per family). However, if you have been associated with MVUC for an extended period of time and could have reasonably had your picture taken but did not, a supplement will cost you \$2.00. In the UU spirit, we will trust your judgment/conscience. If you have any questions, please contact Joan Darrah at 703-768-5751 or jedarrah@aol.com. Thank you.

LUNCH WITH A BOOK

The January Meeting of Lunch With a Book will be January 10th, 12:45 at the Village Wharf Restaurant. This month we will be discussing *Kabul Beauty School* by Deborah Rodriguez, one woman’s experience working with the women of Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban For more information contact Louise Werner-Rhoades at 703-619-1369 or louron13@cox.net

Thanks so much! — Louise

Grocery Shoppers Wanted!

Do you shop at Giant Foods? Please consider using Giant Gift Cards for your purchases. MVUC gets \$1 for each \$20 card or \$5 for each \$100 card we sell. The money goes to the church operating budget. Contact Joan Wamsley for more information.



Musical Notes

from Mark Zimmerman, Director of Music

Choir resumes on Wednesday, Jan 6th. There will be a Choir Retreat with rehearsal and luncheon in Hollin Hall on Saturday, Jan 9th, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. "Low Calorie Potluck!" New members are welcome to join us!

I'd like to thank everyone who helped make the "Cabaret and Celtic Coffeehouse" such a success. It was a fun night, and the funds generated allowed us to bring in many excellent guest artists in November and December.

The public is invited to the Fifteenth Annual **Martin Luther King Jr. Ventures in Community Choir Festival**. Sunday, January 17, 2010 at 7 pm. Bethlehem Baptist Church, 8710 Mount Vernon Highway, Alexandria, VA 22309. Our choir will be singing.

Upcoming music events: We host the Paint Branch UU choir on Sunday, February 14th. UU troubadour Matt Meyer will be here for morning services and afternoon percussion workshop on Sunday, February 28th. There will be a presentation of "The Words of Albert Schweitzer and the Music of Bach" at MVUC at 3pm on Sunday March 7th by our music and social justice groups. — Mark

Susan B. Anthony Fund

Requests for using money from the profits of Holiday Shop (which go into the SBA Fund) must be in by Wednesday, January 27, 2010. Any committee, group, staff person, or individual may submit a request for an item that is not already available using operating budget money. Include how and where the item will be used and stored, the cost, where it is available, who is asking for this item, and any other helpful information. Put the request in the mail box of JOAN WAMSLEY. The committee will consider all requests and submit its recommendations for funding to the Board for final approval. For more information, contact Joan Wamsley."

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, January 12, 2010

Ron Brandt: A Lucky Life

Most people probably think their lives are special, but Ron thinks his story is an especially happy one. He will tell us of ten lucky things that made his life so interesting, complete with pictures.

As a special bonus, he will show how to convert old family photographs into digital format.

Tuesday January 26, 2010—Not meeting

Green Sanctuary — Repower America

Chris Gill and Natalie Mebane from Repower America (www.repoweramerica.org) will be in the Commons between services on January 17th, with information and a video camera collecting comments for their web site. Green Sanctuary is sponsoring this because they seek to galvanize the American public around a bold new clean energy plan and a revitalized national energy infrastructure that will jumpstart our economy, create millions of jobs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and slow the threat of climate change.

Global Warming: Changing CO₂urse

Sunday Evenings, February 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21
Hollin Hall Fireplace Room from 7:30 pm-9:00 pm

Global Warming: Changing CO₂urse explores the history and science of global warming, personal values and habits as they relate to climate change, and personal actions to curb the effects of global warming. Wendy Burns of Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church and Kathy Seikel of St. Aidan's Episcopal Church will facilitate this Northwest Earth Institute course.

We ask each participant to commit to attending all sessions if possible. Class participation will be kept at about 12 participants. Please bring \$20 to the first class to pay for the book we will use. For more information see www.nwei.org or contact Wendy, wdburns@erols.com or Kathy, seikel.kathy@epa.gov.

Wednesday Fellowship 2010

Kick Off the 2010 Wednesday Fellowship Season with Mardi Gras!

Come join fellow MVUC revelers for a New Orleans-themed meal at our January Fellowship night, Wednesday, January 6, 2010. In recognition of the day of the Epiphany, the official beginning of the Mardi Gras (or Carnival) season, we will serve authentic New Orleans fare, prepared by Keith Brophy and Angel Collins, along with homemade King Cake for dessert.

- Dinner 6 – 7 pm
- Vespers service 7 – 7:30 pm
- Choir, yoga, kids activities and more, 7:30 – 9 pm

Please sign up in the Commons. Proceeds benefit the Katie Tyson Fund.

Envisioning our Hill of Dreams — Your Ideas and Dreams

We are all invited to be part of Mount Vernon Unitarian Church’s vibrant future. What is our mission as a congregation? What do we want to become? What does it take to dream, envision, and plan?

The planning committee has designed a series of events in January so that everyone can participate in this interesting, energizing, and fun time for the church. Look over the descriptions below, check your calendar, and let us know when you will be with us.

What Works and Where to Go Next?

Tuesday, January 19, 7:30 pm *or*
 Sunday, January 24, 12:30 pm

Discussion groups, small enough so that everyone gets to share, will do two things:

- 1) Share ideas about what makes MVUC your spiritual home
- 2) Collectively imagine what MVUC can become

A Multimedia Visioning Event For All Ages

Friday, January 29, 6:30-9 pm

We hope to see everyone at this intergenerational highlight dinner, which will bring Technicolor to the dreams we want to share about MVUC. In a multimedia “idea shop,” we will develop ways to show our

individual dreams for this faith community. Do you express your creativity in poetry, painting, or song? Or, perhaps you like to brainstorm with others. Come see how the richness of our visions can lead to the future we collectively desire. Dinner will be provided.

Envisioning the MVUC of the Future

Saturday Morning, January 30, 10-11:30 am

UU churches sometimes plan for “Deep Chair” time—a reflective, deeply involving discussion on where we have come from, who we are, and where we are going. Geared for adults, this is a chance to think together about our direction with a group of other interested members.

These will be stimulating and creative events led by Meredith Higgins, a professional facilitator from the Joseph Priestley District. Meredith is familiar to some of us as facilitator of the Ministerial Search Committee retreat a few years ago.

Would you like to know more about these events? Contact Joan Darrah or Karen Tyson. Email Joan Darrah at jedarrah@aol.com, or call 703-768-5751, or sign up on Sundays in the Commons. Please also let us know if you will need childcare.

Event Cancellation

Small Group Ministry: Theme of the Month, announced in the December, 2009 Windmill, has been canceled due to low interest. If you are interested in starting a Small Group Ministry with a special focus, please contact Rev. Kate Walker.



RE Youth January Birthdays



1 Stuart Lee	13 Julia Lager
7 Raina Pilkenton	16 Shannon Brown
10 Ariel Villa	22 Benjamin Powilatis
12 Sarah Whiteside	28 Jacqueline Lee
31 Georgeanna Hoey	



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.

Mid [Church] Year Social Justice Program Update

MVUC has been busy again, trying to make the world a better place in our corner of the world. Since summer, the social justice program, with volunteer support from over a third of the congregation, achieved the following:

- Held phone banks and wrote letters to oppose further mountaintop removal for a planned, new power plant in Southwestern Virginia. We joined efforts with Sierra Club, Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light, and Chesapeake Climate Action Change. Our combined efforts and a lawsuit stayed the permits obtained to further remove mountaintops and stalled the plant construction.
- Joined with other faith communities to petition the White House to investigate torture abuses.
- Walked for the homeless on the National Mall, and continued work to feed the homeless in the VIC-HOP framework. Involved youth grades 6-12 in this service. Continued weekly commitment to collect and deliver food, clothes, toiletries to New Hope Housing, UCM, Kennedy Shelter and Rising Hope.
- Joined the UUA Standing on the Side of Love Campaign to petition Congress for full equality for all. Rallied at the White House and Capitol Hill for marriage equality and the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell.
- Rallied and petitioned Congress for comprehensive health care provisions for women, and opposed restrictive reproductive choice language such as that proposed by the Stupak Amendment in pending health care legislation.
- Reinforced the importance of eating lower on the food chain by providing vegetarian dishes during Wednesday Fellowship.
- Sold green products and offered green tips in the Windmill, on our website, and on a new MVUC Facebook site.
- Reinforced the importance of decreased consumption of disposable products, by using ceramic and glass dishes for church events. Racks were installed for coffee mugs during coffee hour, and styrofoam products were eliminated.
- Held Partner Church brunches that support our partners in India and Romania. We provided alternative gifts during Holiday Shop and sent Christmas packages to our partner churches.
- Used \$500 of our Disaster Relief Fund to support UUs affected by floods in the Philippines.
- Held special collections to benefit Open Door Housing Fund, UUs for Social Justice (UUSJ), Beacon House, New Hope Housing, UU Service Committee (UUSC), and United Community Ministries (UCM), with a total of over \$8,000 sent to these institutions.
- Organized and participated in interfaith events in our region, with the Virginia Interfaith Center, educating our community about upcoming bills in the Richmond legislature; with Northern Virginia UU Legislative Priorities - NOVA-LUUP; and with Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement - VOICE.
- Participated in interfaith blood drives at MVUC, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, and Heritage Presbyterian Church.
- Participated in UUSJ [UUs for Social Justice] workshops to promote social justice activities.
- Screened social justice movies to educate our membership and the public at large about issues of importance.

In faithful service to our community, your Social Justice Council: Lynn Alsmeyer-Johnson (reproductive rights), Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson and Dick Schaffer (Green Sanctuary), Ron Brandt (interfaith outreach), Gavin Conway (youth representative), Joan Darrah (Don't Ask, Don't Tell), Lisa Gillispie (Partner Church), Keith Keener (civil liberties), Lynne Kennedy (publicity), Helen Lounsbury (Route 1), Jim Potter (blood drive), Al Robbert (UUSJ trustee), and Georgeta Pourchot (Program Coordinator).

From Our Board of Trustees Reid Adler, Chair



MVUC is now at the halfway point in the Church year. Like the school kids, we're poised to enjoy the winter holiday break and, on behalf of the Board, I extend our very best wishes

to all. And we hold fond memories of our members and dear friends who have left us this year.

As we consider, in community, important and challenging topics like cell towers and updating our mission statement, it is both humbling and energizing for me to know that our "business plan" starts with "Love is the teaching of this church." I remain very grateful to MVUC's excellent staff and to the many volunteers and members of our committees and councils who generously give of their time to organize the programs and activities that make MVUC our spiritual home. And to the choir and musicians who make the Sunday services and our cabarets and inaugural balls so meaningful and so much fun! I also appreciate the many people who spoke "for" or "against" the cell tower at the informational meeting on October 18 and the congregational meeting on December 6. Together, all of us put meaning to the teaching of love.

Our first session on December 4 of the "career transition support group" had five participants (including me) and helpful guidance from Carolyn Slenska and Vince Patton. There was unanimous interest in meeting again to share our stories, network and talk about resumes. So we will meet again on either Saturday January 9 or 23. Please check the Friday announcements or the Order of Service for the final date. The economy is still recovering and is a once-in-a-generation challenge for many families. 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, by phone, email (minister@mvuc.org or boardchair@mvuc.org), in person, or by leaving a note in our mailboxes at the Church.

I am particularly excited about the program that Karen Tyson and Joan Darrah are organizing in January and February, to give each of us an opportunity to "Envision our Hill of Dreams" — to share in a fun, collaborative process that will chart the course of our church for the next few years. What do *you* think is our mission as a congregation? If we're not there yet, what do we want to become? And what are your top priorities for MVUC and its resources and energy? Each of us, participating in the ways and meetings that we can, will share ideas and develop a clear vision for MVUC so that we can plan the steps we need to take to make it happen.

Also, as a way to improve how we use our committee and volunteer resources in pursuit of our mission, the Board has approved a plan to consider ways to improve Church governance. This likely will involve ways to improve our organization of the Board and committees, as well as update our bylaws. We will think critically about why we do what we do and also seek to adopt "best practices" for nonprofits and church governance.

If you are interested in helping to organize the mission statement process, please contact Karen Tyson. And if you are interested in the governance project, let me know.

Happy holidays!

Start 2010 with Massive Food Drive

With the holidays over (and several inches added to our waists?), it is time to remind ourselves that the need for food is never over — at United Community Ministries, Rising Hope, New Hope Housing, and the Eleanor Kennedy Shelter for the Homeless. Increasing numbers of families seek help from these organizations, which rely heavily on the food donations of the faith communities along the Route One corridor. For those of you who do not know yet, we have been visited by Kennedy Shelter residents, UUs who were affected by the economy in the worst possible way. Whether you come to church on Sunday morning, for a committee meeting, choir practice or any other church function, please grab a can of food from your pantry and drop it off by the main entrance. Encourage your children to do the same, and explain to them why this effort is so needed. We are doing a massive food drive in January, as food shortage after the holidays seems to be even greater than usual. Thank you! Contact Helen Lounsbury, helenlounsbury@yahoo.com.

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****

January 3

"Summons,"

The Rev. Kate R. Walker

January 10

Special guest speaker TBA

January 17

*"Infinite Hope: Honoring King's
Vision by Example,"*

Ilene Gillispie

January 24

"Working Class Theology"

The Rev. Kate R. Walker

January 31

"Faith of Uncertainty"

The Rev. Kate R. Walker

*See Page 4 for Sermon Descriptions

**Mount Vernon
Unitarian Church**
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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 betsys@cox.net or Meg Clontz meg@theclontz.net.

Reminder to All MVUC Email Users

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

Thank you!

Becoming Greener

COAL COUNTRY

**Friday, January 8, 2010, 7 pm Showing
6:30 pm, Snacks and Information
Old Presbyterian Meeting House
323 S. Fairfax St., Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 549-6670**

When we turn on our lights in Northern Virginia, chances are that the electricity was generated at least in part by burning coal mined from Appalachia. What does our connection to “Coal Country” and its people mean for us?

The Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, St. Aidan’s Episcopal Church, and the Old Presbyterian Meeting House are sponsoring this premier screening of “Coal Country”, a dramatic look at modern coal mining. Through this film, we get to know working miners along with activists who are battling mountaintop coal mining in Appalachia. We hear from miners and coal company officials who are concerned about jobs and the economy and believe they are acting responsibly to bring power to the American people. 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 mountaintop removal mining, which has leveled more than 500 Appalachian mountains, is tearing the people apart.

We need to understand the meaning behind promises of “cheap energy” and “clean coal.” Aren’t there good alternatives to our energy future? Representatives from Greater Washington Interfaith Power & Light, The Sierra Club, and the Chesapeake Climate Action Network will be on hand to help us understand the connection between local coal mining and how to respond as people of faith to the threat of climate change.

Donations will be accepted to support the organizations working to stop future mountaintop removal mining. And, if you want to carpool from MVUC, please contact Wendy Burns, 703-780-3204.

EASY GREEN BY WENDY BURNS

As many of you know, I am a freak when it comes to limiting plastic bag use. I go up to friends in line and offer to help them get stuff out of a store if they’ll do it without taking bags. I use all pockets, my teeth, etc. to avoid taking a plastic bag. And I do return to my car or leave a store if I forget cloth bags.

Why? Pollution by plastics is clearly out of control. Just one example is the Pacific Ocean Trash Vortex swirling in the North Pacific at least twice the size of Texas and consisting of mostly small plastic particles. Also, I know I am making a difference, no matter how small. The Sierra Club says that for each 13 plastic bags not used, we save enough petroleum to drive a car one mile. And, they also claim, if you use cloth bags for one year, you can keep about 400 plastic bags from use. Even if you take your plastic bags back to the store to “recycle,” the plastic will still be here on earth for thousands of years.

One year ago, I pledged to try to not take a plastic bag from any store. I am happy to say that I have generally succeeded, except for produce bags. I still have difficulty with loose string beans and such. But, through MVUC’s Green Sanctuary Committee, we will now have reusable produce bags, made from nylon, for sale. Dick Schaffer sells “green” products on the third Sunday, every month, year round. Please check out the produce bags (cool, huh?) and other supplies that we can use to help us walk more gently on this earth.

Just a thought.

Partner Church News

Thank you to everyone who attended our two fall brunches and who contributed to Alternative Gifts in support of our Partner Churches in Romania and India.

We are still seeking sponsors for students in our scholarship program in Transylvanian partner village, Szentháromság. The village school serves students until the eighth grade. In order to continue their education in trade school, high school or university, students must leave the village and go to other cities or towns. Their families often cannot afford the travel costs, tuition, room and board.

This year, our program is helping 41 students continue their education. If you would like to help, the following students are seeking sponsors. You can share the cost of the scholarship with another sponsor. Please contact Lisa Gillispie of you would like to help.

The students are listed last name followed by first name:

Bereczki Szabolcs, \$350 Continuing in trade school in Nyárádszereda

Csiki Csaba, \$250 attending high school in Marosvásárhely at Bolyai

Dávid Beáta, \$350 attending trade school in Marosvásárhely learning to be a cosmetician

Kászoni Szabolcs, \$375 attending high school in Marosvásárhely at Bolyai

Kis Zsolt, \$500 attending university to study Computer Science in Marosvásárhely

Sóos Szilárd, \$350 attending trade school in Nyárádszereda for auto mechanics

Suciu Denes, \$600 attending trade school in Marosvásárhely for construction

Tamás Imre, \$400 attending trade school in Marosvásárhely

JanUUary Herstory and History

January 7, 1800: Millard Fillmore was born in Locke, NY. Fillmore was a Unitarian and served as President of the USA when President Taylor died.

January 18, 1782: Daniel Webster was born in Salisbury, NH. He was a Unitarian, a lawyer, and political leader known for his powerful oratorical skills.

January 20, 1566: Francis David gave his first Unitarian oration in the main church of Kolosvar, Transylvania.

January 29, 1861: Florida Yates Ruffin Ridley was born in Boston, MA. Ridley was an African American, a Unitarian, author and an advocate in women's suffrage. She founded women's clubs, and became the second African American teacher in the Boston public schools.

Library Being Reorganized — You Can Help

Members of the new MVUC Library Committee are updating the adult library on the 2nd floor of Hollin Hall. By January 1, they will place books they propose to discard on tables in the Blue Room. If you are interested, please glance through the books before the end of January and place any you think should be reconsidered in the box below the tables with your name and the reason they should be retained. If you want one of the books scheduled to be discarded, please take it. Committee members are Keith Keener, Dorothy Brandt, and Lynne Kennedy.

Holiday Shop Thanks

Holiday Shop 2009 was a great success. In spite of a national economy in recession, profits from Holiday Shop sales nearly matched those of last year. The crafters were satisfied with their day's earnings and were highly complimentary of our hospitality. It was a beautiful festive day.

Our work started in January, 2009, with a planning group that met throughout the year. Their creative thinking and hard work played a major role in our success. Thank you, Sandy Peterson, Meg Clontz, Dorothy Brandt, Terry Bradley, Ruth Ann MacCleery, Betty Davis, Anne Ulm, Marge Witting, Pat Jackson, and Joan Wamsley.

Without the knowledge, leadership and support of the Every Thursday Group Master Chefs, there would be no Holiday Shop. These amazing women are responsible year after year for producing our famous chutneys, Boursin cheese, gingerbread for making gingerbread houses, amazing fudge cups, monthly birthday cakes and much more. In addition, they host the Holiday Shop luncheon held this year on December 10. We cannot thank you enough, Karna Schwimmer, Dotty Ann McClelland and Jo Jackley for your invaluable guidance.

This year we had the most organized parking crew ever under the leadership of Bill Clontz. Thank you, Bill, Tony Barkume, Bill Burns, Bruce Burrows, Lincoln Cobb, Carl Lohmann, Jim Potter, Dick Youngflesh, Steve Dressing, Mark Gorman, Marty Hayden, Keith Keener, Joe Kitrosser, Doug MacCleery, and Al Robbert.

Cleaning up, putting things away, and setting up for Sunday Services is not a particularly easy or pleasant task yet Marty Bredeck has taken this on year after year. Thank you again, Marty, and thanks to those who helped you: Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Robin Roberts, Jim Wamsley, Maria Wells, Bill Boissenin, Doug MacCleery, Tom Tarcza, Marty Hayden, Lisa Gillispie, Michael Wells, Janet Wamsley, Dorothy Brandt, Bill Clontz, Joan Darrah, Lynne Kennedy, and Linda Walton.

For the additional many other tasks both large and small involved in putting on Holiday Shop this year, I thank the following knowing full well I will leave someone out. Please accept my apologies in advance for not mentioning your name. Thank you so much... Kathi McNeil, Elaine Petermann, Anne Andrews, Birgit Robbert, Golden Slawson, Ralph Slawson, Mary Clarity, Barbara Given, Dolly Rowe, Eleanor Erickson, Al Erickson, Jean Elliott, Betsy Stephens, Jane Nelson, Pat Maddox, Colleen Griffin, Nancy Barkume, Kris Rosenthal, Baiba Seefer, Anne Bredeck, Priya Bredeck, Ruth Bennett, Sonja Bloom, Annie Mechanic, Lisa Gillispie, Doreen Bender, Eva Molnar, Dianne Brown, Lewis Long, Jenn Judge, Matthew Carpentier, Lynn Alsmeyer-Johnson, Barbara Al-Turki, Jan Vanderstaay, Suzanne McDonnell, Kiki McDonnell, Jane Simpson, Helen Haltzel, Bill Means, Max Keeler, Suzanne Cleary Cohen, Dan Cohen, Mike Walker, Peg Bartel, Esther Dickinson, Ron Brandt, Leila Goodman, Mary Marshall, Kelsey Dressing, Erin Walker, David Napier, Rowan Napier, Dolan Napier, Lisa Napier, Wendy Burns, Liz Campbell, Sibyl Pierotti, John Henrehan, Rob Dickinson, Branka Bijelovich, Karen Tyson, Ron Brandt, Becky Brandt, Michael Brandt, Joe Templeton, Shirley Cherkasky, Leah Choudhury, Farhat Chaudhry, Kim Cobb, Oma Cox, Linda Davidson, Joanne Ell, Penelope Fleming, Emily Francomano, Phyllis Gonigam, Renee Griest, Gordon Hiebert, Angela Hiebert, Kathie Watson, Louise Werner-Rhoades, Jim Kerr, Norman Comfort, Laura Jernigan, Judy Lohmann, Diana Macomber, Marguerite Murray, Georgia Pourchot, Sally Joy Remington, Lois Shaw, Mimi Stevens, Pam Unger, Patricia Williams, Za McDonnell, Kay Youngflesh, Ginny Hastings, Doug Blair, Lynn Roberts, Donna Gold, Dick Schaffer, Angel Collins, Keith Brophy, Parker Collins, Keller Collins, Chris Reidy, Darby Bossman, Linda Jemison, Raleigh Romine, and last but not least our own Rev. Kate Walker who wields a mean soup ladle. Thank you, one and all. — Mary Barnett, Coordinator, Holiday Shop 2009

RELIEF FOR THE PHILIPPINES

The UU Church of the Philippines began distribution of food to help members who lost their crops due to the past typhoon rains. The first congregation who received food aid is the Doldol Congregation, partnered with UU Church of White Plains, New York. Sacks of rice were distributed to families in the region. Other congregations will also receive food in the coming weeks.

In recognition of the contribution MVUC made from the Social Justice Disaster Relief Fund, we received the following letter from Rev. Rebecca Quimada-Sienes, President of the UU Church of the Philippines:

My dear UU friends,

As President of the UU Church of the Philippines, Inc., I am very glad to receive your donation to aid our UU victims of the recent natural disasters that hit our country. I am very grateful to each one of you for directly helping us in our relief efforts:

Transylvania Unitarian Church, Cluj, Romania- \$1,000
UUs of San Mateo, USA- \$1,497
Fox Valley UU Fellowship, USA- \$1136
Rev. Ruth Gibson, USA- \$100
UUCF UU Oakton, VA,USA- \$500
Mt Vernon Unitarian,USA \$500
Dwight Cramer, USA \$100

Thank you so much for your compassion in reaching out and sharing with those who are in need. Indeed thank you very much. As our expression of thanks, a beautifully designed acknowledgment of your contribution will be sent to each of you. Your help means a lot to those who have been hit by successive natural disasters.

In faith,

Rev. Rebecca Quimada-Sienes



UU families from Doldol in the Philippines, with their food distribution.