

Windmill

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

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

MAY 1, 2006

REV-ving Up!—Words from Our Minister

by The Rev. Louis V. Schwebius

*Hail, bounteous May that dost inspire
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire!
Woods and groves are of thy dressing;
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.
John Milton, Song on a May Morning (1660)*



Dear Friends,

The month of May puts that extra “Spring” into my step! It is the time of year when warmer temperatures step in—when flowers and trees thrive and flourish. It is said to be a time of love and romance. The sun lingers on the horizon for an average of two minutes longer each passing day, and there is a regeneration of life that comes with increased sunlight. (The ancient Angles and Saxons apparently called the month of May *Timilchi*, meaning that, owing to the fresh grass of Spring, they were able to milk their cows three times a day!) People celebrate the coming of summer with lots of different customs that are expressions of joy and hope after a long winter.

There are few other months in the year that inspire the kind of glee that one feels when turning the calendar from the last rainy day of April 30th to the fresh and rejuvenating weather ahead! As I drive down the GW Parkway or stroll the grounds of our hill, it seems that the whole earth is blooming.

But what about the people of the earth? Are we blooming and blossoming as the people we are meant to be?

During the month of May, I am reminded more than ever of the need for all of us to take time in the coming weeks for self-care. When we examine all the hours we spend on our professional labors or sustaining our family relationships or working on tasks at church and other venues where we volunteer, it is very easy to think of ourselves as human “doings” instead of human “beings”.

Coming to church shouldn't only mean tracking down that person who has not answered your Stewardship phone call or constant work with your committees or looking to recruit help for some new project. Coming to church should also mean that you are seeking both the renewal of your spirit and the renewal of personal relationship with the other members of this congregation, as we gather to rejoice in that spirit of liberal religious community which brings us together.

My wish during this month of beauty and seasonal change is that we all take more time to enjoy the visual celebration of Life that is taking place around us. Take time to just “be;” take time for self-care and self-renewal—and gently remind all of those who are important to you to do the same. In faith and love,

—Rev. Lou

Program Highlights

Hawaiian Luau Concert

Mon, May 1, 7:30 pm
Meeting House

Good Companions

Tue, May 2, Hollin Hall
Senior Center Drama Group
Tue, May 16, Reverend Lou 11:45 to
12:45—BYO Lunch
12:45 to 1:45—Speaker
Hollin Hall

Fort Hunt Pre-school Rummage Sale

Sat, May 6, 8:00 am
Carriage House

Contemplative Workshop

Sun, May 7, 9:30 am
Hollin Hall

History Forum: the Viet Nam War

Sun, May 7, 12:30 pm
Hollin Hall

Workenanny

Sun, May 7, 12:30 pm
MVUC Buildings and Grounds

Senior Year Piano Recital

Katie Tyson
Sun, Jun 4, 3:00 pm
Remington Chapel

INSIDE—Page 8

Good News from the Greenhouse!



MOUNT VERNON UNITARIAN CHURCH

MINISTER

The Reverend Louis Schwebius

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Ric Sears, chair '06

Joanne Masterson, vice chair '07

Doug MacCleery, secretary '05

Jane Nelson, Program Council Convener, '06

Nance Cedar, '06

Katie Tyson, Youth Representative '06

Hal Holtzclaw '07

Jane Nelson '07

Wendy Burns '08

Jim Potter '08

Raleigh Romine '08

~ ~ ~

Barbara Gay Stoddard

Interim Director of Religious Education

Michael O'Brien, *Director of Music*

Al Erickson, *Church Treasurer*

STAFF

Donna Bledsoe

Business Administrator

Anne Bredeck

Congregational Administrator

Leah Choudhury

Office Assistant

Norman Comfort

Custodian

Jim Kerr

Religious Education Assistant

Farhi Chaudhry

Nursery Caregiver

WINDMILL NEWSLETTER

Editor Curtis Hunter

Production Crew Ginny Endicott, Phyllis Gonigam,
Laurie Hayden, Dotty Ann McClelland,
Sally Montanari, Susan Montanari, Kathryn Moore,
Vilma Morrissey, Sue Ringwalt, Flo Searle,
Betsy Stephens, Joan Weinstein

Proofreaders Phyllis Gonigam, Mimi Stevens,
Herb Tyson

Webmaster Herb Tyson webmaster@mvuc.org

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.

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

1909 Windmill Lane

Alexandria, VA 22307

703-765-5950

Fax: 703-765-1237

info@mvuc.org

www.mvuc.org

Mark Your Calendars

Good Companions

11:45 to 12:45—BYO Lunch; 12:45 to 1:45—Speaker in Hollin Hall

May 2: Carolyn Lane, *The Scheme of the Driftless Shifter*

A three-act mixed-up melodrama. Door knockings, doorbells ringing, and clocks ticking at the wrong times. The piano player keeps interrupting the play at the wrong time with different tunes. The prompter is constantly reminding the players of their lines.

The play starts at the Pompington residence on a cold, chilly, snowy night. The maid really controls the goings-on while the master of the household believes he has the control. Everything is mixed up in this hilarious melodrama presented by the Hollin Hall Senior Center Drama Group. The play will be performed in the Chapel from 12:45 to 1:45

May 16: Reverend Louis Schwebius, Subject to be announced.

MVUC's Spring Workennany—May 7

The Spring Workennany has been rescheduled to May 7. There are many jobs available to suit your preferences and capabilities. Please volunteer to help keep our buildings and grounds in good shape!

Piano Recital—June 4

The Tyson family invites the MVUC community to a senior-year piano recital by **Katie Tyson** on Sunday, June 4, at 3 pm in the chapel.

Annual Church Retreat, June 23—25:

The Annual Church Retreat is Friday, June 23, 3:00 pm, through Sunday, June 25, 2:00 pm, at Prince William Forest National Park, near Quantico, VA, about 30 miles south of MVUC. All ages are welcome. Accommodations are rustic CCC-built cabins; bring bedding for the bunks. Meals are family-style in the lodge: be prepared to take a turn at cooking and cleaning. Specific activities to be determined, but anticipate art projects, campfire sing-along and skits, nature activities, an outdoor church service and plenty of free time for hikes, sports, games in the lodge and enjoying family, friends and community. \$110 per family/\$35 per single for full weekend. To volunteer to plan, prepare and/or lead activities or more information contact **Jim Kerr**, reassist@mvuc.org. Sign-up in the Commons or via e-mail to reassist@mvuc.org.

Participate in Memorial Day Sunday Service

Are you an MVUC member who is either a veteran or currently serving in the military? Rev. Lou is hoping that you might be interested in participating with him in our Memorial Day Sunday Service on May 28th. Please contact him for further information.

Religious Education

by Barbara Gay Stoddard, Interim Director of Religious Education

As you have heard, MVUC has hired **Meagan Henry** to be your new Director of Religious Education. Meagan is a wonderful young woman who will lead you all into the future. I will be leaving the end of June and will take a new position as Interim DRE at the First Unitarian Church in Worcester, MA. I will be there for a year as they transition from a DRE who has retired after 23 years of service and the hiring of a new Religious Educator. I've enjoyed our journey together, but am looking forward to the next phase of my professional life.

Our "Sunday School" classes continue through May 21. On May 28 we begin the tradition of one service through September 3rd. May 28 we will hold an RE Fair for the children following "For All Ages." Come prepared to play and create and have some fun together.

In case you missed this notice earlier, the Last Thursday of the Month Book Club selection for May is *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* by John Perkins. The book club meets May 25 at 7:00 pm in the Blue Room in Hollin Hall.

Hope to see you during the month of May.

The Search Has Ended!

Meagan Henry has accepted our offer to become MVUC's new Director of Religious Education. She is the part-time Youth Programs Coordinator for both the Tennessee Valley UU Church and the Oak Ridge UU Church. She is currently teaching Religious Studies at the University of Tennessee and has taught and developed Montessori curricula.

She brings with her a lifetime of UU experience and passion, as well as her daughter, Starling, and her husband of only 5 months, James.

She is looking for housing and has asked whether anyone at MVUC might have something available in July. She is expecting something temporary, 1-3 months, until she can find something for herself, but is willing to consider something more long-term.

Plans are under way to officially welcome Meagan to the congregation. If you have any ideas or would like

to help organize something, please email **Lisa Napier**.

Please make an effort to thank the members of the Search Committee for their hard work: **Nancy Barkume, Kristin Calhoun, John Henrehan, and Lisa Napier (Chair)**.



Faith Works

The spring edition of *UU Faith Works*, a compilation of religious education resources, is now at www.uua.org/re/faithworks. Although intended primarily for religious educators, *Faith Works* is full of material for parents, too. This edition includes puzzles for children with themes of accessibility and inclusion, resource reviews and classic articles about social action and religious education as branches of the same tree. *Faith Works* is a project of the UUA's Lifespan Faith Development Staff Group.

Activities, On and Off the Hill

MVUC Youth Honored by JPD

On April 1st, at the Celebration Service held during the JPD Annual Conference, MVUC received the Youth Empowering & Supportive Congregation Award. The “Yes” award was presented to us for our integration of youth in the life of the church through committee/leadership participation, youth worship, youth membership, and youth participation at the district level. The award was accepted on our behalf by **Hannah Pocock & Katie Tyson**, who also took part in the Bridging Ceremony that day.



Congratulations also go to **Katie Tyson**, who was presented the district’s Outstanding JPD UU Youth Award. Katie is pictured above, with her parents **Herb & Karen Tyson**, receiving the award from **Jan Taddeo**, JPD Coordinator of Youth Activities.

50th Anniversary History Forum Sunday May 7

The Viet Nam War and MVUC’s response will be the focus of the History Forum on Sunday, May 7. Founding member **Al Searle** will lead the program. Everyone is invited to join in the Fireplace Room in Hollin Hall, 12:30–2:00 pm. Light refreshments will be provided. In coming months, as schedules permit, the History Forum will focus on the Hollin Hall Gardens and the Memorial Walks, and MVUC’s Open Mic Coffeehouses.

Paths of Contemplation Workshop

Join us on Sunday, May 7, from 9:30 to 11:00 am for a workshop on paths of contemplation—a sampling of contemplative methods from many traditions. Participants will learn and experience time-honored practices including *Tai Chi*, *Qi Gong*, chants, sitting and walking meditation and prayer. The workshop will be held at Hollin Hall in the fireplace room and

sun porch. The workshop will be lead by **Linda Lloyd, Peter Mosley and Peter Pocock**. Linda is an acupuncturist and practioner of *Qi Gong* movement and meditation. Peter Mosley is an adjunct instructor at the Virginia Theological Seminary and the cantor of the Contemplative Group of MVUC. Peter Pocock is a long-time student of *Tai Chi* and Taoism. He also studies calligraphy as a form of meditation. Join us for 90 minutes of exploration of meditative practices.

Memorial Society of Northern Virginia

On Saturday, June 3, the Memorial Society of Northern Virginia will hold their Mid-Year Meeting in the Chapel of Mount Vernon Unitarian Church. The meeting will take place at 10:00 am and the subject under discussion will be Long Term Care Insurance. Everyone is encouraged to attend. This will be a good place to meet and greet and learn about the Memorial Society while enjoying refreshments provided by the Women’s Group. See **Bev Southerland** for more information.

MVUC Movie Night Returns

Our Larger World will be sponsoring two upcoming movie nights:

Friday, May 19: *Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price*

Friday, June 16: *Vera Drake*

Robert Greenwald’s 2005 *Wal-Mart* movie is back by popular demand, for those who missed the November showing.

Vera Drake is the story of a devoted wife and mother who secretly terminates unwanted pregnancies in post-war London. The film won the Venice Film Festival Best Picture award in 2004. It is directed by Mike Leigh and is R-rated. *Vera Drake* is sponsored by the Reproductive Rights Task Force.

The movies will be shown at 7:30 pm in the Commons. Bring snacks to share. Stay for discussion afterward.

Activities, On and Off the Hill

MVUC Gardens

Wow! Look at how beautiful our hill looks this spring! For the second year, we are thrilled to have “professionals” (EP Landscaping who mow for us) doing some of the weeding, edging, and mulching of the Island Garden, front of the mansion, etc. For a number of years, volunteers had done all these jobs and we know how hard it has been.

But, there are still many areas that are maintained by volunteers. Please walk over to the side of the mansion to see the glorious garden tended by **Leroy Merrifield** and his family. It is especially gorgeous at this time of year when all the bulbs are in bloom. **Mary Barnett** and others keep the greenhouse area beautiful. **Russ** and **June Stumpe** lovingly maintain the garden in the meetinghouse patio. **Mike Walker** and **Sandy Rutiser** are committed to keeping the vines from overtaking the boxwood. **The Pourchot family** just took on the area behind/beside the mansion kitchen. Other members/friends try to keep up with other spots, too.

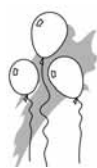
Many other sites are available and in need of volunteers to keep them from looking too overgrown. Please call Wendy if you like to be up on the hill and would be willing to take on an area. We have lots of “jobs” available. You can choose your own and do it on your own time! Thank you!

—Wendy Burns



RE Youth Birthdays!

— May —



1 Lucy Neer	24 Caitlin Stewart
Christina Dillard	25 Kiah McGhee
8 Eban Kuhns	26 Emily Irish
9 Tabitha Chilton	27 Becca Roberts
10 Alex Johnson	30 Benn Mellinger
Ken Johnson	Dylan Mellinger
13 Mia Colaizzi	
23 Sarah Jesup	

Mayhem: A Riotous Weekend of Social Justice

Keynote Address by **Bill Schulz** open to all ages!
May 12–14, 2006, Centreville, MD

Join fellow UU Young Adults for this weekend event as we put our Faith in Action. With a series of workshops, a keynote address by Amnesty International USA's Executive Director, Bill Schulz, and small group work, we'll explore our commitment to social justice issues as UUs and leave with a personal plan to incorporate important social justice work in our lives. Learn more and register online today: <http://www.jpd-uuyan.org/mayhem.php>

Note: Bill Schulz's speech is open to all, not just young adults. There is a special “Lunch with Bill” registration that's just \$10 and includes only lunch and the keynote. (Registration is required.)

Desk Available

To make better use of available space, we need to remove a large desk from the Blue Room on 2nd floor of Hollin Hall. If you want the desk, please call **Donna Bledsoe**, 703-765-5950 x 103. If not claimed, the desk will be destroyed.

Caring Community

Our thoughts are with the family of **G. Hinckley Porter**, who died on April 1 in Portland, Oregon. Hink and his wife, Elsa, were longtime members of MVUC. He was BOT Chair in 1990–1991.

Our good wishes go to **Larry Austin, Bea Bobotek, Elaine Bronez, Leila Goodman, Betty Neuendorffer, and Lois Shaw.**

The **Caring Associates** provide support for members of the congregation who may need temporary assistance. This includes help with a ride to an appointment, shopping, picking up prescriptions, or delivery of meals due to an emergency. Caring Associate members wear green name tags during Sunday services, and there is always a member on call to respond to your needs, as noted in the Order of Service. Kindly notify the on-call associate or the church office if you know someone who may need assistance. Call **Betsy Stephens** if interested in joining us.





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

A Call to Men: Realizing Your Power to Create a Nonviolent Community

All men and women are invited to this engaging community discussion and planning session led by **Tony Porter**, co-founder of *A Call To Men*: National Association of Men and Women Committed to Ending Violence Against Women. www.acalltomen.com

A Call to Men believes that violence against women is not a women's issue, it is a civil rights issue. Although historically it has been almost entirely women who have been at the forefront addressing this subject, *A Call to Men* believes it is essential that men play a primary role in the solution to end it. To do that well-meaning men who don't see themselves as part of the problem need to get involved.

We will meet on Friday, May 19, 8:30 am–3:30 pm in the Conference Hall of First Baptist Church, 2932 King St, Alexandria, VA. Breakfast and Lunch will be provided. To register, call 703-838-4911; tickets are \$15; students attend **free**.

UUSJ Social Justice Program

Come to a half-day of social justice programming prior to the Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice board meeting on June 3, 2006 at All Souls Church, Unitarian Universalist. Hear an address at 9 am by Rev. Bill Murry on the spiritual grounding of our social justice work. At 10 am choose to attend a workshop on a review of the spiritual progressives meeting to be held in DC in May or on the day laborer/minuteman issue or on working to make your congregation open to all people. At 11:00 am hear and see how to use the world-wide-web in your social justice work. Stay for lunch and network. After this half-day programming is over all are welcome to stay for the board meeting of Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice of the Baltimore Washington Northern Virginia Region. To register, see your congregation's UUSJ Board members, the flyer on the bulletin board, or contact UUSJ at www.uusj.org; csnavely@uusj.org; 301-588-1951.

Campaign Against Torture

Join the Washington Region Religious Campaign Against Torture (WRRCAT). The campaign will be kicked off at a conference on Saturday, June 17 at the River Road Unitarian Church in Bethesda. For more

information contact jlathey@hprg.com or dcantitor-ture@yahoo.com. The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is supporting this campaign (www.nrcat.org).

UUA Moderator Wants Your Ideas

Do you have some thoughts about how our Association of Congregations could be organized more effectively to foster health and vitality in our congregations? The *Congregations Come First* Task Force, an initiative of **Gini Courter** (UUA Moderator), would welcome input on these issues, so don't be shy. You can find out more about the Task Force, and how to respond, at: www.uua.org/administration/committees/ccf/.

UU University

A great learning opportunity for lay leaders will debut directly before the start of the UUA General Assembly in St. Louis this year. "UU University" will offer a day and a half of specialized training designed primarily for current and future congregational presidents, financial leaders and membership leaders, though all lay leaders involved in congregational leadership are welcomed and encouraged to register and attend!

The Rev. Dr. Peter Steinke, congregational consultant and author of *How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations As Emotional Systems*, will be the keynote speaker for congregational presidents. Steinke's insights will provide leaders with the inspiration and critical skills needed for the demanding work they do for their congregations.

Financial leaders will learn about the language of generosity, gain a solid understanding of effective stewardship, and build knowledge about managing your congregation's money.

Membership leaders will learn how to "Repel Fewer Visitors!" and close the invisible "revolving door" in their congregation, while exploring effective means of moving visitors to enthusiastic membership.

Program registration is \$95 per person, and is separate from General Assembly. All programming will be held at America's Center in St. Louis, MO. Dates are June 20 and 21, immediately before GA (June 21-25). For more information and registration, go to www.uua.org/uuuniversity.

Construction Corner

Planning for New Addition Continues

The Construction Task Force met April 18 with **Kristine Hesse**, architect from Cole & Denny, to discuss a list of unresolved design issues. Although some matters will require further consideration, task force members reached tentative agreement on all the issues discussed, including arrangement of the renovated restrooms, provisions for handicapped access to the new lower level, and layout of the new nursery. It was also agreed that the stained glass window should remain in its present location but that we will investigate the possibility of having a new leaded window over the new entrance.

Other developments:

- At a meeting with members of the Neighborhood Association on April 19, **Bill Clontz** explained the status of the building project and related plans to improve groundwater runoff.
- MVUC's application for changes in our special permit will be reviewed by Fairfax County officials at a hearing on Tuesday, June 13.

For more information contact **Jim Potter, Bill Clontz, or Ron Brandt**.

Immigrant Rights

Statement from the Rev. William G. Sinkford on Immigration Reform



People of many faiths have been moved by the current debate over the immigration and labor policies that present a profound dilemma for our nation. We are seeing that our willingness to ignore the injustices that maintain our economic system weakens the moral fabric of our society. We know that illegal immigration

is driven by two factors: the prospect of economic opportunity for the newcomers, and the voracious need of American businesses for cheap labor.

Those of us lucky enough to be born into US citizenship can thank our ancestors, some of whom came here in bondage, but many of whom saw a shining City on a Hill and were inspired by its promise of freedom and opportunity. Today's immigrant workers are following that same beacon, and they come to this land filled with hope. That hope gradually dims, however, as they struggle to support loved ones back home while hiding in the shadows of US society. As years pass, family reunions are deferred and the American Dream is denied. In the meantime, our comfortable middle-class standard of living is secured at the price of these workers' hopes.

As a result, America has, once again, created a permanent under-class of residents who are refused the dignity and civil protections that come with citizenship. To people of conscience, this situation is intolerable.

There are no easy answers, but the religious community is called to stand in solidarity with the oppressed. The dramatic sight of half a million immigrant families rallying in Los Angeles touched many of us with a heightened awareness of their plight. Our concern for family values needs to embrace these families as well. We are also called to acknowledge that racism has blinded most Americans to what takes place in our own kitchens, workshops, and fields. For our nation to be whole, we must acknowledge that our lives of privilege are supported in thousands of ways by people whose labor is invisible and whose suffering is hidden.

Each generation of Americans is called upon to define again who we mean when we say "We, the People." We must follow our conscience as we respond to this call. During this religious season, our thoughts and prayers are with our elected legislators as they struggle to revise our current immigration and labor policies. It is my deepest hope that their work will reflect the values of justice, equity and compassion for all.

Sermons for Your Re-hearing

Each Sunday's service is recorded on audio tape. If you would like a copy for yourself, a friend, or one of our church's shut-ins, please speak to **Raleigh Romine** or **Joanne Ell**.

Stirrings From Windmill Hill

Deadline for the mid-month newsletter, *Stirrings from Windmill Hill*, is the 5th of each month. Material should be submitted to **Mimi Stevens** by email (newsletters@mvuc.org) or left in the Newsletter box by the Church Office. *Stirrings* is not published in July or August.

A Month of Sundays

*All services at 9:30 am and 11:15 am
(except where noted)
in the Remington Chapel*

May 7

Finding Fountain House

Rev. Louis V. Schwebius

May 14

One Service at 10 AM

Mother's Day: A Celebration in Song

Michael O'Brien and MVUC Choir

May 21

For Growth's Sake

MVUC Outreach Committee and

Rev. Louis V. Schwebius

Special Second Collection to benefit

UU's for Affordable Housing

May 28

10 AM Services begin today!

Rituals of Remembrance

(Memorial Day Sunday)

Members of MVUC and

Rev. Louis V. Schwebius

Mt. Vernon
Unitarian Church
1909 Windmill Lane
Alexandria, VA 22307

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Alexandria, Virginia
Permit #658

Address Service Requested

TIME VALUE MAIL — PLEASE EXPEDITE DELIVERY

Good News from the Greenhouse!

Ahh! Spring is here and everything and everyone is coming alive again! This is the busiest time of the year for the greenhouse. We are open on Saturdays and Sundays in April and May, 10am-2pm and often, during the week, someone is there.

This year we will be featuring shade-tolerant plants along with our regular fare which includes herbs, heirloom and hybrid tomatoes, annual and perennial flowering plants, Virginia native plants and an assortment of house plants. Come and check out our "shop;" it's as colorful as a candy shop, but no calories!

Thanks to our new volunteers, **Pat Hess** and **Alexa Sears!** We could still use a few more as there is lots of watering to do along with transplanting, gardening and selling plants.

I'd also like to remind you that we are supporting the green sanctuary program at MVUC by selling and planting native plants and participating in the Backyard Habitat Program sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation. Keeping a garden, no matter what size, attracts birds and butterflies. So, come and shop! If you'd like to help, please call **Mary Barnett**.