



# The Chalice

*Embracing Diversity, Nurturing Spirituality, Promoting Justice in the World*

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT: A TIME OF TRANSITION

As this newsletter is published, I am finishing the first year of my term as president of the governing board. While we are in a time of transition, the changes we are experiencing reflects our strengths and successes.



We have said our goodbyes to our ministers, Revs. John and Phyllis. They served us well over the past five years and have given us the stability in the pulpit that has allowed us to pursue other improvements to our church. We should all be aware that ministerial ethics requires that our past ministers severely limit their contact with UUCL. Specifically, Rev. John and Phyllis advised the board that they can no longer officiate at weddings, child dedications, and memorials. It is not for their lack of love for us that they separate from us, but to ensure that we build a strong and healthy relationship with our new minister.

We have signed a contract with our new minister, Rev. Dan King. He comes to us from The First Congregational Church of Kingston, MA, which he served since August 2007. He recently moved with his wife to Leesburg to be close to his daughter and infant granddaughter. The experience, talent, and wisdom that Rev. Dan brings to UUCL are described in more detail in another article. We are fortunate to have him join us in this time of change.

Looking back over the past year, I am elated at the successes we have had. Your leadership team, including the board and committee chairs, is strong. We had our most successful canvass ever; the Service auction was a success once again; membership is at an all-time high; the board has adopted a plan for space improvements; and RE is thriving.

In my monthly message I called for a new chair for the Caring Committee. One person, who remains on the committee and who deserves special recognition, is Barbara Berge. Barb has gone above and beyond for one member facing multiple needs. She coordinated the care of Dave Gillogly and others. She has been described as the yeoman of the committee. The work that Barb does goes unnoticed and unrecognized, but she clearly lives the values of UUCL. Many thanks to Barb for her work.



## ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW MINISTER FOR UUCL:

As we bid farewell to our beloved Reverends Phyllis Hubbel and John John Manwell, UUCL is pleased to announce the appointment of Rev. Dan King to UUCL's ministry. Rev. King will join our congregation in September following a summer relocation to Loudoun County from his current ministry at the First Parish Church, Unitarian Universalist of Kingston in Kingston, MA.

Rev. King brings to UUCL deep experience in the pulpit from almost 20 years of ministry to small to medium-sized UU congregations. With family roots in the South, Rev. King studied and practiced law in Texas for 20 years before making the decision together with his family to commit to the call of ministry. His first nine years of service to the UU congregation in Augusta, GA was a time of great success and growth for the congregation as it expanded its numbers, lay leadership, and social justice work within the community. Following this successful experience, Rev. King initially branched out from service to a single ministry and accepted a position in Boston's UUA headquarters. However, ministry was a better fit than administration and Rev. King soon accepted a position with a small congregation in Kingston, MA. Like his experience in Augusta, Rev. King enjoyed nine years of successful service in Kingston, helping the congregation to engage its talents in lay leadership as well as to become a larger presence in the interfaith community.

Rev. King and his wife Nina, an artist, made the decision to relocate to the DC area soon after their daughter—who resides in Fairfax—welcomed her first child. Rev. King and Nina are thrilled to be entering this next chapter of their lives in an area rich with opportunities for both of them to engage their professional talents.

UUCL looks forward to welcoming Rev. King and his family into the UUCL community this September!

\*UUCL thanks Katherine Jacobs, Sandy Shihadeh, Jenna Korff, and Ricky Keech of the Minister Search Committee for their efforts in bringing Rev. King into our congregation. \*

## NEW MEMBERS

**New Members!!! Welcome to UUCL!! As a community, we love expanding our connections and broadening our horizons. Every member brings new talents and experiences. Maybe you would like to join a committee!?! Whatever your path as a UUCL member is, we celebrate your presence in our church.**



Kelly Erikson signing *The Book*.



Left to right, Dan Wesely, behind him, Martin Gordon, Lauren Gordon, Susan Roy, Shelagh Meade & daughters Ada and Margaret are behind Pat Sheckler (who donated and distributed flowers), Dan Snyder & son Owen Snyder, Ken & Susan Kirk.



Dan Wesely & Shelagh Meade with daughters Ada & Margaret.

## **“SNAPSHOTS ALONG THE PATH.... A BRIEF NOTE FROM REV. DAN”**

Life is full of transitions, isn't it?



The summer days are shooting past us—it's already a week after the extra-special full moon Solstice.

After a decade of service in New England, we are in the midst of the bittersweet process of “striking the tent” over the next few weeks to join you in Northern Virginia, preparing to make new friends and new memories as we bid a fond farewell to the people and places we have come to love.

As I write, my life partner, Nina Benedetto, is already back with our daughter's family in Fairfax, where she has spent most of the past several months as a monthly long-distance commuter “nanny” for our two granddaughters (Maezie, age 5 and Margot, already 6 months).

Once again, I have the self-imposed task of sifting through our belongings—especially the many boxes of papers and hundreds of books representing our accumulated memories over our decades together—to drastically reduce the weight and volume of “stuff” (as George Carlin so delicately put it!). We will ship our condensed things to our new townhouse office and rental home in Old Town Leesburg.

Of course, there are the ordinary, tedious details of changing residences. This being our seventh interstate move together, we do know how to do this! The empty PODs will be dropped off here next week, to be filled to the point of overflowing for delivery to Leesburg a couple of weeks later. We hope to begin unpacking by the end of July. More details to come!

We have just returned from another inspirational week at our UU General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio, where we were challenged—yet again—to take our faith seriously and to live up to our highest ideals. But this time, we also had great stories to share with our longtime friends and colleagues—our personal story of the gift of fond farewells from folks we love, the family story of our relocation to be with our daughter and her family, and our ministry story about the excitement we feel about undertaking a new partnership with your dynamic congregation.

We look forward to being there with all and getting to know you so that we can begin to be accepted as part of your congregation. We are eager to hear your stories, to learn about your favorite places, to understand your collective history and your goals for the future. And, as our mutual trust is established, we want to be your companions in ministry for your special community, “to multiply your joys and share your sorrows.”

Nina and I have lots of tasks ahead of us. And, our hearts are full right now, because transitions not only bring challenges, but also opportunities to make new friends! But when we arrive in NoVA in just a few weeks with all of our memories and experience, we will come with open hearts, ready to embrace our new community as fully as we know how.

Your new Minister,

Dan



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION by Kate Savidan



Inspired by the Social Justice Committee's call for 25 Acts of Service to celebrate our church's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Religious Education program will be doing its part by spearheading our first "Summer of Service" with UUCL's children and youth. The goal this summer is simple: to have fun, explore the different Circles of Caring, perform acts of service and to raise money to donate to a charity of the children's choice. We are also introducing a once a month Children's Chapel.

Summer should be a time to explore and create, with an emphasis on the fun side of Religious Education. This is made easier because children do not go upstairs for any part of the service during the summer. The extra time in RE is a perfect excuse to relax, play games and have a little free time together to strengthen our bonds of friendship amongst the kids and our Religious Education volunteers. We are encouraging all children and youth to bring a game to play with the group. We will also be introducing our RE group to Fifth Sunday Funday, a concept we have celebrated in Youth Group throughout the year. On any 5th Sunday, we will have a day of fun and games. This summer we have a Fifth Sunday Funday in July, where we will be playing Minute to Win It games.

The Circles of Caring lessons were the brainchild of Barb Elvin from the Caring Committee. If you are unfamiliar with this concept, imagine a stack of five concentric circles. The largest circle represents the world. Inside that circle, is a slightly smaller one that stands for your community. Within that, is another circle for your extended family and friends. The next circle embodies your immediate family and then, at the very middle of it all, the smallest and most important circle is you. The children made necklaces to represent the Circles of Caring and we will be exploring them throughout the summer, encouraging the children and youth to always remember they must take care of themselves before they can serve others.

Also, we will be doing acts of service for our church and community this summer. Our Religious Education group has already made soup and cards for the Caring Committee and planted a vegetable garden for Green Team. We will continue to look for ways we can help make a difference within our church family and the Leesburg community this summer and welcome any ideas or suggestions from our congregation.

On the fourth Sunday of each month, we will make items to sell to raise money for a charity of the children's choice. In June, our children made Unitarian Universalist-themed magnets, which are currently for sale in the main sanctuary. July and August, will see the creation of UUCL key chains and Unitarian Universalist prayer beads, highlighting our 7 Principles, as well as personalized cloth napkins and chalice art. After the cost of supplies, all proceeds will be donated to one or two charities the children will choose through democratic vote.

Our Religious Education Committee is currently exploring different methods of implementing RE, while making it a rewarding and fun experience for the children and youth of our church. This summer we will be exploring Yoga in July, Meditation through Labyrinths in August and our Water Gathering in September. As always, we welcome any and all suggestions, ideas and feedback regarding the Religious Education program here at UUCL. Feel free to contact Kate Savidan, UUCL's Director of Religious Education, at [dre@uuloudoun.org](mailto:dre@uuloudoun.org).



You may know Gerri Mathews as UUCL's music director and as coordinator for Loudoun Out Loud (LOL) and PFLAG Loudoun, a branch of the nation's largest organization for parents, families, friends, and allies united with people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ). She's also the assistant director of the Bach to Rock Music School in McLean. As you can imagine, there is much more to know about this ebullient woman who lives her convictions.

Gerri was born and raised in Vermont but has lived in the DC area since attending George Washington University, where she earned a B.A. in Music. After graduating in 2009, she was introduced to UUCL by Worship Director

Ricky Keech, at a time when the church needed a new music director. She's been here ever since.

Gerri hadn't been part of a UU church before taking the position, but the welcoming spirit and commitment to social justice aligned with her own beliefs. "It's the universal desire to do good. Not in the name of anything... just for the simple fact that good is good and it's the right thing to do."

Under Gerri's leadership, the music program has evolved steadily. The group has become much more integrated with both Worship and Religious Education (RE) and is involved, in some capacity, with the planning of every service. The choir has grown from 4-5 to more than a dozen participants, and there's also an active children's choir. Members have participated in mass choral events with other area UU churches. The next event, scheduled for April 2017, will be directed by one of Gerri's favorite composers and arrangers, Rollo Dilworth.

"Music is a strong aspect of my identity," says Gerri. "I believe it is a cornerstone in the complete education of an individual, young or old. It helps a person develop critical thinking and other key traits needed to become the best human they can be."

Two other strong aspects of her identity are compassion and advocacy. As coordinator for LOL and PFLAG Loudoun, she helps support teens at risk because of gender identity and their families. "In a world full of hate and fear, LOL gives these kids a space to be themselves, and PFLAG Loudoun helps keep families together."

Last October, after more than 8 years together, Gerri married Jonathan Mathews, another frequent face at UU. Her thoughts on marriage reflect her approach to just about everything she does.

"Don't listen to the advice of others. No one else is living your life but the two of you. Find what works for you and be confident in it."



## FAREWELL MINISTERS



## PICNIC FUN WITH JOHN AND PHYLLIS

Following a touching ceremony in the chapel, where John and Phyllis graciously accepted a token of the congregation's thanks, we joined together for a picnic to celebrate their time with us as ministers of UUCL. The warmth of fellowship and the wonders of the day were experienced by all. We shared food and conversation, then Phyllis cut a yummy chocolate cake. We will always remember the efforts Rev. Phyllis and Rev. John have made towards strengthening our church community. We wish them well in retirement. They deserve it!!



## FAREWELL LESLIE



As Leslie Wright moves on from her position as Communications Chair, the committee would like to give our thanks and praise for all her efforts over the past years. Leslie headed the newsletter and took over making changes to the website. Her contributions of time, skills, and direction are greatly appreciated. Thank You Leslie!!

### Say "Happy Birthday" to...



July 1	Tamar Datan
July 1	Carrie Nowell
July 6	Gina Faber
July 12	Ann Robinson
July 14	Shelagh Meade
July 22	Mark Motivans
July 23	Chuck Harris
July 23	Nancy Chamberlain
July 25	Ricky Keech
July 25	Andrew McKnight



August 10	Sally Frease
August 23	Carol Moses
August 24	Robert Wright
September 10	Yvette Castro-Green
September 11	LeAnne McNamara
September 13	Jenny Stevens
September 20	Jeff Erikson
September 20	Scott Dickinson
September 30	Chad Green

Thank you to this Chalice's Reporters: Nancy Chamberlain, Michelle LaLumia, Carrie Nowell, and Ken Kirk.

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