



What's Happening

MAIN LINE UNITARIAN CHURCH



AUGUST 2019

MINISTERIAL MUSINGS: MY SUMMER

In a recent sermon, I recalled our collective memory of the last day of school before taking summer break. But do you remember the first day of school following summer break? Do you remember being called to the front of the class to share what you did over the summer? Though our new church year doesn't begin until Labor Day weekend at Camp Canadensis and then a multi-generational Ingathering Service on September 8, I want to come to the front of the class now to share what I'm doing during my "summer break."

First of all, I'm travelling. I've already been to my old stomping grounds in Columbia, South Carolina, where I visited with old friends, held a service at my former congregation, saw a terrific documentary about Mikhail Gorbachev at the Nickelodeon (Columbia's counterpart to the Bryn Mawr Film Institute), and endured tropical heat and humidity (but I understand that you did, too). For me, friendships are among life's greatest treasures, and like most things of value, they need to be nurtured to be kept alive. I cultivate my friendships across the years and miles by staying in touch as much as possible.

For a break from the heat and humidity, I also traveled to Asheville, North Carolina to visit a friend who took me hiking along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Soon I'll be on the road again, this time to DC for a Board meeting of Americans United for Separation of Church & State. It is my honor to serve as chair of that Board, and we will meet to approve a budget, endorse the hiring of new staff, review the results of a national poll on Americans' views on church-state issues, and promote new fundraising initiatives. Raising our revenue is critical to our battle against the Religious Right and the present Administration, both of whom are twisting the meaning of "religious freedom" to excuse discrimination against women, people of color, religious minorities, nonbelievers, and LGBTQ people. For example, one of our lawsuits challenges a new rule issued by the Department of Health and Human Services which would allow healthcare providers to refuse services to anyone based on religious or moral objections – depending on the circumstances, a literal life-or-death form of discrimination.

After DC, I'm off to upstate New York for a week at Chautauqua, a small village which resembles a college campus, only without the football games and frat parties. Chautauqua promotes lifelong learning with lectures from writers, teachers, ministers, politicians, scientists, and celebrities, performances of plays and concerts, and recreational activities. Each week's events are centered around a different theme. I will attend week 7, "Grace: A Celebration of Extraordinary Gifts." The main presenter will be Krista Tippett, host of the PBS podcast *On Being*. It will be my privilege to serve as the UU Minister of the Week, which includes my leading a Sunday service and discussion groups throughout the week.

When not traveling, I'll be reading as much as possible for fun. (Almost all of my reading during the church year is in preparation for the next sermon). For me, reading for fun means reading mostly books about Buddhism, psychology, and personal growth. I take a very practical approach to spiritual growth, which for me means becoming fully human, developing those capacities which make us most human and humane – empathy, compassion, generosity, serenity, wisdom, and courage. I think my understanding of spirituality resembles that of our Unitarian ancestors, who used the phrase "salvation by character." Summer will be over before you know it. I look forward to returning refreshed and reinvigorated to begin my 5th year as your minister (Can you believe that?) I look forward to reuniting with my newer old friends at Main Line.

See you soon,
Neal



Rev. Dr. Neal R. Jones
Senior Minister

*Together,
We Transform Lives
through
Love, Service, and Our
Welcoming Faith.*

Who We Are

Main Line Unitarian Church is a diverse and caring religious community engaged in a liberating ministry of spiritual growth, human compassion, and universal justice.

At our church we embrace all people, regardless of age, race, ability, politics, financial situation, or sexual orientation; encourage and nurture every individual in his or her own search for meaning in life; and commit to serve local and world communities in promoting peace, social justice, and responsible stewardship of the earth.



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DAWNING THOUGHTS

Fall Class Line Ups

Program year classes for children and youth start on **Sunday, September 15!** Here's a brief overview of our offerings:

For Preschoolers: *Celebrating Me & My World* celebrates the wondrous qualities children experience in themselves and expands outward to the things and people around them.

For K/1st graders: *Spirit Play Stories of Heroic Leaders* is based around shared stories that introduce an inspiring person who has worked for justice and peace. AND, *K/1 Our Whole Lives*, which supports parents in educating children about birth, babies, bodies, and families.

For 2/3rd graders: *We're on Our Way* explores many of the ways we can be different from each other and how to be fair to everyone. AND, *Stepping Stones*, in which kids work together to create a class plaque with the Clay Lady, and prepare a presentation to share with the congregation in a worship service affirming their faith journeys as young Unitarian Universalists.

For 4/5th graders: *Holidays and Holy Days* teaches about the celebrations and core beliefs of many different religions and cultures with an anti-oppression lens. AND, *4/5 Our Whole Lives*, which helps children gain the knowledge, life principles, and skills they need to understand and express their sexuality in holistic, life-enhancing ways.

For 6/7th graders: *Neighboring Faiths* teaches about a variety of faith traditions and the ways their religious paths differ from our own. Study of each religion will include a classroom Sunday, a visit to a local congregation or group, and a chance to reflect on how what was experienced on that visit can inform our own UU faith journeys.

For 8th/9th graders: *Our Whole Lives* is a comprehensive, faith-based sexuality education program that provides accurate, developmentally-appropriate information about a range of topics, including relationships, gender identity, sexual orientation, sexual health, and cultural influences on sexuality.

For 9-12th graders: *YRUU* youth group meets for fellowship, learning, service, leadership, and worship on Sunday evenings.

For adults: There will be some sort of faith development offering EVERY Sunday after the service in the McGinness Room. So far these include a film on environmental justice, social justice book study groups, Rev. Neal's *Life Lessons* small groups, learning more about wrought faith with me, a workshop on trans identity, and more. Look for more details on an ongoing basis.

Vespers will continue one evening per month. *Small Group Ministry*, book groups, *Theology Explorers*, and other programs will also continue. If you want to learn and grow spiritually and religiously, we have something that will help you on that pathway. Or, if you don't find what you're looking for, let us know!

Volunteer in our children and youth's faith development program!

The Children's Faith Development Committee and I are beginning to put together our teaching teams for the coming year. Although many dedicated teachers and helpers will return to the classrooms, we are always interested in welcoming new folks to serve. If you have ever wondered what it would be like to lead our kids in exploring UUism, learning about the world's religions, or working for justice and peace, please reach out and let us know your questions and willingness. Staffing our programs for next September through June will take energy and effort from at least 40 adults (and maybe some teens).

Dawn Star

INSIGHT BOOK GROUP

Our selection for September 19 is *American Spy* by Lauren Wilkinson, which poses the question, "What if your sense of duty required you to betray the person you love?" This bestselling espionage drama takes place in the heart of the Cold War, with an FBI intelligence officer who must choose between her heart and honor. Insight meets monthly at MLUC Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. and is open to all interested readers. Please direct any questions to Eileen Andrews (jricka@verizon.net).



Dawn-Star Sarahs-Borchelt,
Director of Lifespan Religious Education

SUNDAY SERVICES

Services will be held from 10:00 to 11:15 a.m. unless otherwise noted.

August 4: Radical Spirituality

Rev. Donald Garrett

We'll explore some of the commonalities among spiritual paths.

August 11: The Search for Spirituality

Rev. David Hunter

Spirituality is important, don't we all agree? But what exactly is it, and how do we find it? How does spirituality relate to religion? Rev. Dave Hunter, a member of MLUC, is a partially retired UU minister. He and his wife, Rev. Kerry Mueller, are part-time consulting ministers for the UU Fellowship of Pottstown. In his first career, Dave was a lawyer, with a quarter century in the Voting Section of the Justice Department's Voting Section. Dave is a graduate of Princeton University, the Harvard Law School, and Wesley Theological Seminary. Dave and Kerry were married at MLUC in 1980.

August 18: Resilience for the End of the World (As We Know It)

Rev. Gabrielle Kennedy

Launching from Pastor Nadia Bolz Weber's 2018 article in the Washington Post on our current apocalypse, we'll explore together how liberal religious people can build our stamina in order to begin recreating the world we want to live in.

August 25: Your Hard-Earned Happiness

Rev. Dr. Nathan Walker

Music: Angie Feliciano, soprano

Happiness doesn't just happen. There are strategies we can use to increase happiness for ourselves and those around us. By drawing upon evidence-based publications in peer-reviewed medical journals, we will reflect upon the scientific study and practice of happiness. We will reflect upon the conditions that promote human flourishing and the everyday choices we can make to cultivate wellness.

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AUGUST OFFERING OUTREACH

Founded in 1985, the Women's Medical Fund (WMF), provides emergency financial support for women living in poverty who are unable to pay for an abortion. WMF believes that everyone should have access to safe abortion regardless of income or zip code. Last year, counseling, information, support, and referrals were provided to 3,273 women and 2,504 women received financial support. All were living in deep poverty, earning less than \$8,000 per year. Most already had one or two children at home and 12% reported that pregnancy resulted from non-consensual sex and/or they were dealing with intimate partner abuse.

MEMBERSHIP: CHANGES AHEAD

It's now almost early August, and I'm already looking toward the homestretch of the summer. A few more weeks of camp for my son, and one more trip before switching gears and focusing on what the fall will bring. Autumn is a more meaningful New Year marker to me than January, and I enjoy the ritual of imagining on both a personal and professional level: What are my hopes, plans and vision for the year? Here are a couple.

There are major changes ahead for membership. Most importantly - no more waiting time to start the process of becoming an MLUC member. Beginning in October, Pathway to Membership classes will be offered on the first and third Sundays of each month (except December). It will take two months to cycle through the curriculum, which we will do four times between October and June. Each session will cover topics that both current and soon-to-be members may find engaging (UU history, an exploration of UU principles and values, choosing a new religion, faith development at MLUC, Small Group Ministry, social action, pledging, and volunteering). The topics will vary slightly each session, and many will be interactive. Participants can start attending at any point during the year – even on their very first visit – even in the middle of a 2-month cycle. I am hopeful that this new process will make it easier for prospective members to get and stay engaged, and that classes will include a mix of current members and visitors.



Jessica Hirsch Lynn,
Membership Coordinator

On a different but somewhat related subject, we look forward to another year of community-building through monthly potlucks. Based on the feedback we received from members, we've made a few changes. This year we'll alternate between Saturday potluck dinners and Sunday potluck brunches in hopes that tying the meal to the Sunday service will be an easy option for everyone. The dates are listed below. Please add them to your calendar – and keep the time as sacred as community meals can be. I hope you will join me in making MLUC a welcoming, caring, and close-knit community.

- Jessica

Meaningful Mealtimes

This year, consider making MLUC's all-church potlucks one of your family mealtimes. Since 2003, Columbia University National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) has found connections between the health of family relationships and the frequency of family meals. Teens whose families had mealtimes together reported they are more likely to seek parental support & confide in either or both parents. Teens who dined more frequently with their family reported less stress than teens who had two or fewer weekly family meals. Teens who dined 5-7 times per week were twice as likely to receive 'A's in school and less likely to use tobacco, marijuana, and alcohol (CASA 2003-2012).



UU Community Weekend

August 31-September 2 at Camp Canadensis in the Poconos

This weekend getaway is a unique opportunity to play, exercise, and relax together with old and new friends. It is a time of real vacation without having to cook, set the table, make the coffee, wash the dishes or hover over the kids. The Camp Canadensis setting in the beautiful Pocono Mountains along Lake Lenape, a private 75-acre lake, offers many ways to enjoy this weekend with our UU community. Take a hike on one of the 13 miles of nature trails, grab a friend and kayak or canoe out onto the lake, take a dip in the heated outdoor pool or simply sit on the deck overlooking the lake and read a book. Learn more at <http://mluc.org/community/community-weekend>.

Worship Visuals Volunteer Recruiting

It's easy to take for granted that just about every Sunday, something will be different about the view from your seat in the Main Meeting Room. What you see will often relate to what you'll hear during the service. It's neither magic nor coincidence - it's the Worship Visuals Committee.

Worship Visuals is a small group of MLUC volunteers hoping to attract a few more helpers for the coming year. They need all kinds of volunteers: those with steady hands to hold the ladder, with clear vision to notice the difference between straight and crooked, with creativity to tie together sermon themes and art. There are no meetings and setup takes under an hour each week. You'll get to know the other volunteers, have your name listed in the Sunday service program, and know that hundreds of MLUCers are enjoying your creations. Volunteer weekly, monthly, or whenever you're able. Families, small groups, and committees are encouraged to take a Sunday or two each year and give the congregation a visual gift. For more information, contact Beth Rittenhouse (bethritt@comcast.net).

Folk Sing Picnic

The annual summer folk singers potluck picnic will be held at the home of Marile Marshall and Rick Rickert (203 Butler Drive, Newtown Square, 610-353-4931) on Sunday, August 4. We'll begin gathering at around 4:00 p.m., and singing will begin in the early evening to accommodate those who need to get up early for work the next day. Everyone is welcome, even if you are not a regular at the sings. Marile would appreciate emails (marile@verizon.net), or phone calls if necessary, to make it easier to plan accommodations and food. This event is rain or shine. If weather permits, eating will take place outside and singing will probably be inside in the air conditioning.

Interfaith Climate Action Meeting

Sunday, August 18 at 11:30 a.m. in the McGinness Room

Our world is heating up! All members of MLUC are invited to meet and plan a film screening of *Paris to Pittsburgh* (a hopeful film about what can be done) and community-wide environmental justice kick-off event set for Sunday, September 8 after the service. Help plan an open community program to include a light lunch, film viewing, and discussion (Pennsylvania Interfaith Power and Light offers discussion points) on this critical issue. All are welcome. RSVP appreciated to Pam Kosty (pkosty@yahoo.com).

Small Group Ministry

Members of the SGM Steering Committee are busy creating session plans for the upcoming church year. We welcome your ideas for session plans, or for sending us interesting quotes that might be used in a session plan. If you'd like to try your hand at writing a session plan, we can help you get started! Contact Jean Gaul (coldstream47@gmail.com).

Multicultural Welcome Workshop

August 24, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the UU Congregation of Princeton, 50 Cherry Hill Road in Princeton, NJ

Join us for a day-long workshop on how to better welcome people of various identities to our UU communities. Through experiential learning, this workshop aims to help leaders, greeters, and membership professionals better anticipate the needs and wishes of guests by staying open to hearing them. We'll learn how to move away from our assumptions and become better accustomed to putting those preconceived notions on hold in favor of authentic listening and acceptance. This workshop will be led by Patricia Infante and Rev. Dr. Hope Johnson, Congregational Life Staff in the Central East Region. MLUC members will carpool. For more information, email jessica@mluc.org.

Psssst! ... Making Your Annual Pledge is Easier Than Ever!

Visit mluc.org/support-your-church, fill out a quick form, and follow the instructions based on your preferred payment method. If you've already pledged, manage your payments/information anytime from tinyurl.com/mlucpayments.

Artists of the Month: Visual Arts Committee

Eye of the Beholder

From realism to abstract, there is probably something that pleases your heart and soul in this art show. All pieces were created by our diligent Visual Arts Committee, and will hang for the rest of the summer. Browse around the gallery at coffee hour this Sunday. Some work is also in the ladies and gents bathrooms, done by a member of the Center for Creative Works, a group we have sponsored in the past. All sales benefit the church. See a Visual Arts Committee member for information.

Fireside Room Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Mon-Fri; 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Sunday

How to Nominate an Organization for Offering Outreach

One of the privileges of membership at MLUC is the ability to nominate nonprofit organizations to become recipients of Offering Outreach funds. Members make nominations and the Offering Outreach Committee studies and selects recipients for each month, with one recipient selected for July/August.

There is information on the MLUC website, including a link for the nomination form, a list of recently selected organizations and guidelines for nominations. <http://www.mluc.org/social-action/offering-outreach>

Nominated organizations should be registered as 501(c)3 charitable organizations and have organizational missions that are consistent with Unitarian Universalist principles. Organizations with smaller budgets are preferred so that our donation will make a difference, although projects within a larger budgeted organization will be considered. International nominations are considered if there is a UU connection. Themes are rotated throughout the year such as environmental, disabilities, children and families, food security, anti-poverty, housing, incarceration or LGBTQ. If a nomination is not immediately selected it will be kept on file for future consideration.

Consider nominating a nonprofit organization that you know through your volunteer work, board membership, or as a recipient of services. The Offering Outreach committee begins reviewing nominations several months in advance. Nominations made this summer will be considered as recipients for the fall and winter. Send your nominations or questions to offeringoutreach@mluc.org.

Greater Philly UU Cluster Summit

October 19, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., at MLUC

Leaders, ministers, staff, and members of the 14 congregations of the GPC are invited to attend, explore, and determine the organizational structure and future of the Cluster. Mark Bernstein will facilitate the meeting, and Pat Infante will provide an overview of regionalization/clusters. For more details and to register, visit:

www.greaterphillyuu.org/events/gpc-summit/



CANDLES OF COMMUNITY

We express our support and concern for ...

Rick Koenig, whose mother, Mary Louise Krebs, passed away. She was 97.

Gina Trignani, whose maternal grandmother, Clara Louise Contrevo, passed away on July 10 after suffering from Alzheimer's for many years. She used to sing in the Leverington Presbyterian Church choir with Dr. Vincent Craig's wife, Candice.

Ruth Bowen, who is recuperating at home from surgery.

Pam Susko's daughter-in-law, Nikki, who is married to son Matt, went into severe pre-eclampsia on June 22 and delivered a premature baby boy, Daxton Drew. He is making progress in the NICU.

Rick Andrews, whose cousin, Dave Baker, is in hospice.

Mert Landay, whose brother, Eddie, is in a nursing home with a terminal illness.

Nini Ingersoll, whose uncle, Willis, is in hospice.

We express our joy for ...

Mary Sohier, who has returned home after spending months in physical rehab following a fall.

SAVE THE DATE - HAWAIIAN DREAMS AUCTION

Do you have dreams of going to Hawaii? Aloha and save this date! Saturday, November 2, 2019 is MLUC's auction! Your Auction Planning Committee is already busy fantasizing about a festive evening of fellowship, fun, and frivolity! Imagine what YOU can contribute to MLUC's biggest fundraiser of the year. We are looking for silent and live auction options with a diverse range of pricing for all. For the silent auction: new items, potluck dinners, gift certificates and collectibles; and for the live auction: experiences, vacation homes, dinners - let your imagination go wild! Get your Hawaiian shirts, grass skirts, and flip flops ready for a great time with your fellow MLUCers! Share your ideas or brainstorm with the Auction Committee. Email Dana Wiley dmtwiley@gmail.com, Sally Fritzson sfritzson@gmail.com, or Teddi Cohen ondempprom@aol.com.





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If MLUC is like family to you, please include it in your will. Bequests of all sizes will support the church community and its work on behalf of justice, equity, compassion, religious freedom, and spiritual growth. For more information on planned giving, email endowment@mluc.org

On the Web

The complete MLUC calendar of events is online at www.mluc.org. Members can click the front page icon to request a room for their meeting or event.



WHAT'S HAPPENING

The newsletter of Main Line Unitarian Church is published 12 times a year. Submissions of 225 words or fewer are due on **August 10** for the September issue. Submit material to news@mluc.org. To learn more about communications at MLUC, contact Brianna Johnson (brianna@mluc.org).