

THE COMMUNITARIAN

COMMUNITY UNITARIAN CHURCH AT WHITE PLAINS

Sunday Services 10:15 am Religious Education 10:00 am Accessible to the Handicapped

MAY 2012



Community Unitarian Church
468 Rosedale Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605
Founded 1909

The Rev. Benjamin Maucere
Interim Minister

Annie Gonzalez
Religious Education Coordinator

Liliana Keith
Church Administrator

Adam Kent
Music Director

Lisa Meyer
Choir Director

The Rev. Deb Morra
Community Minister
in Association with CUC

Susan King
Bookkeeper

For more information
about CUC:
www.cucwp.org
Email: info@cucwp.org
914.946.1660

Communitarian Deadline for
June Edition:
Sunday, May 20

Submit information to
Emily Economou, Editor
emily.economou@gmail.com

In the Interim ...

When you come across the phrase “people of faith,” do you wonder if it includes Unitarian Universalists? While I’m sure some people use the phrase to exclude those who do not believe in their particular creed or dogma, I am, of course, going to suggest a broader definition.

Early in my ministry, I had an exchange with a minister from another faith tradition. I was talking about social justice efforts in our congregations and our desire to be more effective. His response was, “I don’t strive to be more effective. I strive to be more faithful.”

At the time I was a bit impatient with his response. I wasn’t theologizing, I was talking about saving the world! But his words stayed with me. Over time I came to appreciate the distinction.

To be “effective” is to strive to meet established outcomes. To be “faithful” is to strive to be true to your deepest values and highest aspirations, however it turns out.

Faithfulness entails humility. It means letting go, being open to new truth as it is revealed to us.

To be faithful is to live out our religious values – at work, at home, at school.

It is to carry on our religious heritage of over four hundred years of Unitarian, and three hundred years of Universalist commitment to freedom, reason, and mutual respect.

To be faithful is to be true to those values as they are embodied in our religious communities. And to call those in our communities back to our values if and when they stray.

May we live out our values. May we be people of faith.

Yours in faith, Benjamin

May 6. The Rev. Benjamin Maucere.
What if God Were One of Us? One of those big theological questions.

May 13 The Rev. Benjamin Maucere.
What Happens After I Die? Another one of those “big theological questions.” Let’s explore some possibilities.

May 20. ***Coming of Age.***
Our 8th and 9th grade youth will share their religious convictions with the congregation after their year long coming of age process.

May 27. ***Petra Thombs.***
Topic to be announced.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

At the beginning of this year, we began our two conversations, to seat a search committee and to run a successful Annual Campaign that was funded by 100% participation. As we complete the church year, our search committee is in place with seven dedicated, thoughtful church leaders whom you identified and our Annual Campaign is winding down. Our goal is 100% participation and as of this writing on April 23rd we have 73% participation. Our pledge total to date is \$318,684.

Most of you know that CUC has been struggling with a significant shortfall in the budget for several years, and we have tried to reduce our expenditures in areas that would not impact the church’s two beloved programs- RE and Music.

Other areas have already been trimmed until there is no more left to cut. This year the Board of Trustees has been faced with the unpleasant reality of having to make significant cuts in the areas we have traditionally tried to avoid cutting...RE and Music.

The proposed budget will be available on the back table in the fireside area of the sanctuary beginning on Sunday, May 13. You will also be able to view it on line at our website www.cucwp.org. In addition there will be two informational Budget Forums, one on Thursday evening, May 17th at 7:30, and the other on Sunday May 20th after services. Please plan to join us for one of these forums if you have questions or concerns.

The congregation will be voting on this budget on Sunday June 3rd at our Annual Congregational Meeting. We hope that by getting the budget out early and opening up discussion before the vote, the congregation will feel confident in supporting the budget put before them.

This has been a difficult time economically, both for individuals and for the church congregation. Our goal is to see the congregation emerges financially intact from the challenges we face today. The Board of Trustees feels that if we can close the fiscal year with close to 100% congregational participation that we will have begun a meaningful move towards a more stable financial posture.

~ *In Community,*
Janet Press, Board Chair

Official Notice

The Board of Trustees calls the Annual Meeting of the Congregation following the service on Sunday, June 3, 2012 for the purpose of

- receiving Annual Reports;
- voting on the Board of Trustees slate presented by the Nominating Committee;
- the election of members to the Nominating Committee;
- voting on CUC's operating budget for July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013;
- voting on CUC's capital expenditures for July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013.

**THE NAMED NOMINEES FOR THE BOARD WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE CHURCH OFFICE IN EARLY MAY.
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON NOMINEES WILL BE AVAILABLE IN EARLY JUNE.**

FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROPOSED BUDGET

1. The proposed budget will be available online as of Sunday May 13th
2. Hard copies of the budget will be available for congregants to pick up beginning on Sunday May 13th. In addition you may contact Liliana Keith in the church office should you wish to have a budget mailed to you home after May 13th.

BUDGET FORUMS

We are having two budget forums:

Thursday May 17th at 7:30 pm in Fellowship Hall

Sunday May 20th after services in Fellowship Hall.

These forums will give everyone an opportunity to get their concerns addressed in a thoughtful and meaningful way, well ahead of June 3rd.

NOT THE 99% AND THE 1%, BUT THE 100%!

CUC ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

Late pledges for the 2012-2013 church year, are needed ASAP.

"So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth."

Unity Baha'u'llah (Iranian philosopher)

Pledge forms can be picked up at CUC or found at www.cucwp.org.

Ministerial Search Committee

The congregation elected the Ministerial Search Committee on April 22nd. The members of the committee are:

Diana Echevarria	646-251-2391	Lori Saccardi	914-761-2179
Emily Economou	914-633-4455	Janice Silverberg	914 591-5083
Ted Kuczinski	914-949-6619	Jeff Tomlinson	914-428-8032
Al Rocchi	914-777-3216		

The committee met with Craig Hirshberg, our Ministerial Settlement Representative, where members were introduced to all the tasks ahead for the minister search. The committee is starting a survey for you to share ideas on the future of CUC and its leadership.

MONEY MATTERS

CUC Money Matters: Third Quarter Results

March 31st marked the end of third quarter: we are in the home stretch of the fiscal year and the Church year.

Here are the numbers:

	Actual @ 3/31/12	Budget	Actual @ 3/31/11
Expenses	382,378	380,079	373,724
Total Revenue	400,638	428,987	512,921
Pledges Collected	244,039	253,924	264,951

So the above chart shows the following:

- Our expenses are about on target with budget. This is unexpectedly good. As previously discussed in other Money Matters columns, we faced a number of unexpected and large expenses. These were offset by avoided expenses for snow removal and utilities related to the warm winter and on staff expenses.
- Revenue was about seven percent under budget: plate and gifts were up slightly and contributions for use of space were up nearly \$15,000, due primarily to a one time movie production rental.
- Unfortunately, pledge income is under budget by almost \$10,000. Compared to this time last year, total pledges are down almost \$21,000.
- For March, expenses ran about \$16,500 over total revenue. At current pledge collection rates and expense levels, the deficit will total about \$66,000 by the end of June 2012. That amount will have to be withdrawn from the Endowment Fund. Since we have already withdrawn \$51,000 this year, the total endowment transfer will be \$117,000 for the full CUC year.

How can you help? If you are among those who have not yet completed your pledge payments, please take the necessary steps to do so.

Want to know more? Ask Drew Swiss, dswiss@montefiore.org or Chris Kortlandt, kortlandtbunch@verizon.net.

SAFE CONGREGATIONS, POLICY UPDATE

Safety at CUC

CUC welcomes everyone who enters our doors to attend our services and participate in our programs and activities. Our open door policy is one of our strengths, but also means that we must be vigilant in protecting our congregation. Due to the awareness that churches can be the setting for sexual abuse involving minors, we decided to review CUC's Safe Congregations Policy.

Our current requirement that two unrelated volunteers be in the classroom at all times is an essential part of our policy. In addition, CUC had already established a Safe Congregations Committee. Anyone who has concerns about inappropriate sexual conduct, violence, intimidation, or physical abuse by child-care workers, teachers, or others in the congregation can contact this committee to receive guidance. It is made up of the Minister (or interim), the DRE (or interim), the BOT Chair, the RE Council Chair, and two other members of the congregation with experience in counseling.

While our current Safe Congregations Policy sets forth many valuable procedures, we established a CUC Task Force on Criminal Background Screening to learn about additional measures we might consider for our church. Our Task Force reviewed recommendations from the Unitarian Universalist Association and from our insurance company regarding criminal background screening. They also examined safety procedures at other organizations. They learned that before a parent can volunteer to be a Girl Scout Leader or to coach Little League Baseball, he or she must undergo criminal background screening.

Our Task Force then presented the issue to our CUC Religious Education Council, which provided valuable guidance. Finally the CUC Task Force presented a set of recommendations to the Board of Trustees to strengthen our current Safe Congregations Policy.

The Board of Trustees has concluded that while our current procedures are protective, an additional safety measure is needed. In seeking to provide a nurturing and safe environment for all, our Board of Trustees adopted new church policies at their April 18 meeting. These new policies require all staff, all volunteer religious education teachers, and other volunteers who are likely to regularly interact with children, youth and vulnerable adults to undergo criminal record background screening. One of the major objectives of conducting this screening is to provide a deterrent to someone seeking a church that is not exercising vigilance. For this reason our website will clearly state that we do background screening of all volunteers in our Religious Education Program.

We are especially grateful to our congregants who volunteer to teach in our Religious Education Program and who participate regularly in other activities that involve our children, youth and vulnerable adults. These other important volunteers include those serving as Coming of Age Mentors, Grounds Day supervisors, and Midnight Run supervisors. In order to demonstrate the importance with which we hold this background screening, many of our leaders in the congregation will undergo screening regardless of whether they regularly interact with our young and vulnerable congregants. These include all of those serving on our Board of Trustees (2012-2013), on our Religious Education Council (2012-2013), and on our Task Force on Criminal Background Screening. In addition to protecting our congregants, establishing appropriate procedures and policies will better protect CUC as an institution.

In order for screening to occur, one fills out a brief background screening form. The background screening will be conducted for CUC by a screening service and will include a review of records of criminal convictions and a nationwide review of state sex offender registries. These forms and screening reports will be kept confidential and secure, accessible only by those authorized by the Board of Trustees.

The other safety procedures adopted at the April 18 meeting include the requirement that our Safe Congregation Policies protect "vulnerable adults", as well as children and youth. In addition, the Board has directed the Religious Education Council to ensure that parents and teachers who are likely to be driving young congregants on field trips have current drivers' licenses and automobile and liability insurance. This will be done for the classes that take frequent field trips. This will merely require copies of drivers' licenses and insurance cards.

We sincerely thank you all for your role in serving this congregation and in helping to make it a safe place.

The Reverend Benjamin Maucere
Board of Trustees Chair Janet Press
Religious Education Council Chair Robin Rocchi
Task Force on Criminal Background Screening Chair Cynthia Roberts

CARING & SHARING

Rejoicing...

Sam and Adine Usher joyfully announce the birth of a grandson, **Hugh Hudson Usher**, born on March 13, 2012 to Stephen and Emily Usher, New York City.

In Memory...

Church member Jim Thomson passed away in April after a long illness. Jim's ashes are now interred in our Memorial Garden. Potted flowers are near his grave. They will remain there until early May after which time they will be planted around the memorial garden in his memory.

Caring & Sharing Committee

Contact Janet Giewat at 617-2137 or Eleanor Herman at 937-1213 if you, or someone you know, is in need of help from the Caring & Sharing group. This includes home visits, help getting to doctor's appointments, help with food shopping if one is home bound, etc.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education Council

Happy spring, RE families! We have several important events coming up in the next few weeks:

April 29 is RE Sunday, a reverse family service in which we recognize the efforts of the RE teachers and other RE volunteers. This year in particular I want to thank everyone who stepped up and took on additional responsibilities in the wake of Lara's midyear departure. It was truly a community effort to keep the RE program smoothly!

April 29 also marks the final collection day for the RE social action project - cereal for the Ecumenical Food Pantry. Please remember to drop off your contribution of a healthy cereal (no larger than 14 oz) in the RE lobby.

The PreK - 5th grade children should mark their calendars for May 6. Rumor has it that a UU superhero will be making a visit to Children's Worship that Sunday...

The annual Coming of Age service will be held on Saturday, May 19 at 3 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend this inspirational event! Twenty 8th and 9th grade students will be presenting their credos. The next morning, the CoA class will lead the Sunday service with a sampling of the credos, display some musical talent, and more.

Lastly, I want to update you on our progress of hiring an Interim DRE. We extended an offer which has been accepted, and we are very close to being able to make an official announcement. Watch your email for details soon!

- Robin Rocchi, RE Council Chair

EVENTS



MIDNIGHT RUN

**Friday, May 11
8 PM**

Help feed the homeless in Manhattan. Provide clothing. Help with food preparation. This well organized event is a great way to help others and work with other CUC members and friends, from our youth to our grandparents.

For more information contact David Schuler at davidbf_schuler@yahoo.com or 831-5605.

Grounds Day

**Saturday, May 12
8 AM—2 PM**

(or when you can join us)

Come join us for time outdoors, doing whatever spring asks of us. Trimming, moving brush, etc. Tools provided. No experience necessary. This is a great opportunity to get some fresh air, spend time with congregants, and give back to CUC.

Questions? Contact David Schuler at davidbf_schuler@yahoo.com or 831-5605.



Meditation - Method & Practice

Sundays, 9:00 am , May 13, June 3

Have you ever been curious about meditation, but are not sure how to start? This class is for you. We will talk about some different meditation theories and practices. But the main objective is to get everyone started with their own practice by practicing as a group. Even the most experienced or advanced meditators can benefit by practicing in a group setting. Please join us at 9:00 on May 13 and/or June 3. Please arrive promptly (by 9:15) to sit with the group. We will conclude each session with a brief discussion of what we experienced. Taught by Jennifer Lewis.



Got Photos?

The CUC website needs your photos. The Ministerial Search Committee needs your photos.

Please send your photos of CUC events electronically to Emily Economou at Emily.economou@gmail.com

A picture says a thousand words....

COMING OF AGE

Please join us to celebrate the Coming of Age Class of 2012

Saturday, May 19, 3-5:30 PM
Reception Follows

All Credos will be presented Saturday.

A few Credos will be presented at the morning service, Sunday, May 20.

Ian Cooper-Smith
Rachel Cutsumpas
Sinead Hunt
Gunnar Magnus
Russell McGahren-Clemens
Jonathan Mulhern
Julie Mulhern
Jenny Neuman
Sofia Pardillo
Catherine Rocchi

Sabrina Mari Sakai
Emma Schmitt
Susanna Schuler
Caleb Schwartz
Matthew Sheeley
William Stoeffhaas
Omar Suri
Ian Tera
Greer Thelander
Catherine Thomson

BUDGET FORUMS

We are having two budget forums:

Thursday May 17th at 7:30 pm in Fellowship Hall

Sunday May 20th after services in Fellowship Hall.

Learn the details of next year's budget before the June 3rd meeting.

GOT TEENS?

The CUC Parents of Teens group meets once per month to talk, share, laugh and cry about the “stuff” that comes up when your family includes teenagers. We welcome parents with teens that are currently in eighth grade and up. We meet once per month on alternate Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings in order to accommodate parents’ varying schedules. There is no need to attend every meeting, although we seek relatively regular participation to provide mutual support. Currently, we meet at CUC in the RE lobby. We ask that only one parent from each family attend. Please come and join us. Our upcoming meetings are:

- **Saturday, May 19 from 9:30AM to 11:00AM, and**
- **Thursday, June 14, from 7:30PM-9:00PM.**

For further information and to sign up please e-mail Cynthia Roberts at cynthiaVroberts@gmail.com. Come chat with us!

FURNITURE SHAREHOUSE

Join us Saturday mornings.....We are looking for volunteers to work from 9:30-11:30 doing light furniture moving. We need at least 2 people for each Saturday at the Furniture Sharehouse location at the Westchester Airport.

“Furniture Sharehouse provides free furniture to economically disadvantaged individuals and families living in Westchester County, giving them the basic household furnishings that enable them to rebuild their lives and live with dignity.”

For information contact Scott Damashek at: 917-796-6896. There is also a sign-up sheet in the church lobby.

CUC and the Coachman Center

A group of eleven CUC'ers went to the Coachman Center in March to continue our adult chat sessions and child craft program. At the Coachman's request, our chat session was a special session on Health Issues for Teens. Concurrently, we organized a paper flower making activity for ten eager children.

Please Join Us Next Tuesday, May 1st!

We need snack providers, chaperones, a craft organizer, and craft helpers for our May 1st sessions. The program will start at 6:30pm and run for approximately one hour. Contact us if you can help: Johanna Bauer 636-1047 johbauer@msn.com or Karen Schmitt 921-3647 schmitt8@verizon.net.

May 6th at Coffee Hour



Were this year's Coachman Center programs a valuable Community Action Program for CUC?
Do you have ideas for changes to our Coachman partnership?
Would you be more interested in a Community Action project that involved a larger group of CUC participants at one time?

Please come to the CUC/Coachman table during Coffee Hour on May 6th, and tell us what you think!

(If you cannot make it that day, contact us at the e-mail/phone numbers listed above).

- Spring is here! K-5 kids & families: Join us for spring planting on the grounds of CUC – Sunday, May 27th at 10:00 a.m. (No regular R.E. classes. This is Memorial Day Weekend.) Please dress for digging, and if you have gardening tools & gloves, please bring them!!



Sanctuary Flowers

Share your cherished occasions. Flower donations at CUC are for you to honor loved ones. A birthday? An anniversary? A new family member? A remembrance day? The bouquet will adorn the sanctuary and the occasion will be mentioned in the Sunday Order of Service. To make a flower donation, contact Liliana Keith at 946-1660 x2 or at admin@cucwp.org. The cost is \$65.

Dates Available For Flower Donations:

June 3
June 10

Coffee Hour

Consider hosting a coffee hour. Work with one or two other families. It's easy. It's fun. It's helpful.

Available dates are May 6 and May 13.

Contact Liliana Keith at 946-1660, or at cucoffice@gmail.com.

Or speak to the welcoming crew on Sunday mornings.



DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

UU District of Metro NY 2012 Annual Meeting

General Assembly (GA) 2012 will take place on June 20-24 in Phoenix Arizona. I will be signing up in the next few weeks to be an offsite delegate. This will be my second year as an offsite delegate. As an offsite delegate I have a delegate card and will vote on any actions at the GA business meeting. I would like your help in voting this year. I would like you to do a little research on some of the actions that I will be voting on and add your voice to the vote. You can email me your opinions on the topics and/or in June I would like you to join me in viewing GA and be there for the vote. My email is denice.tomlinson@yahoo.com So now for the homework.

Doctrine of Discovery – find out why this 500 year old document is still significant in today's court decisions concerning indigenous people and immigrant issues. Follow this link <http://www.uua.org/ga/2012/189502.shtml>.

Proposed Congregational Study/Action Issues for 2012-16: Climate Action and Adaptation Plans: Why Greenhouse Gases and their Effects Matter to Us; Ending Slavery; Exploring Class Barriers; Families, Population, and the Environment; Reproductive Justice: Expanding Our Social Justice Calling. I will be voting to make one of these topics a study issue. Follow this link <http://www.uua.org/statements/current/index.shtml>.

Immigration as a Moral Issue: take a 6 week introductory curriculum on this topic <http://www.uua.org/immigration/re/moral/guide/index.shtml>.

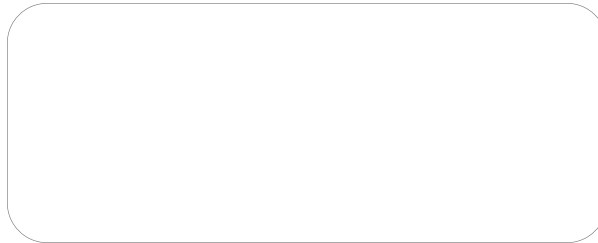
And don't forget to check out the "Cooking Together Project" Recipes for Social Justice Work. This is a collection of ideas and resources for social justice work contributed by congregations, districts and staff groups across the country.

Can't go to General Assembly? Stay tuned for the schedule of live streaming from CUC coming in the June Communitarian or ask me how to view GA from your home.

Submitted by Denice Tomlinson

~ May 2012 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal	2 7:30p-9p Program Council	3	4 6p-10:30p 6th OWL Retreat	5
6 8:45a-10:15a Child Care (32) 8:45a-9:45a Choir Rehearsal (SANC) 9a-10a CoA Youth Mentor Mtg (RE Lobby) 10a-11:30a Religious Ed 10a-10:25a Children's Service (FH) 10:15a-11:45a Worship/Coffee Hour 11:45a-1:15p In the Spirit of Truth (FH)	7 7p-8p Tai Chi (FH) 7:30p-8:45p Spanish Conversation Circle (44)	8 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal (SANC,24)	9 7:30p-9:30p Board of Trustees (41)	10 11:30a-1p Science and Spirituality (41)	11 Midnight Run 8p-2a (FH,KTCH)	12 8a-2p Grounds Day (PLACE)
13 8:45a-10:15a Child Care (32) 8:45a-9:45a Choir Rehearsal (SANC) 9a-9:45a Meditation 10a-11:30a Religious Ed 10:15a-11:45a Worship/Coffee Hour	14 7p-8p Tai Chi (FH)	15 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal 7:30p-9p Worship Assoc. Committee	16	17 7p-8p Budget Forum (FH)	18 6p-10p CoA Rehearsal (SANC)	19 3p-5p CoA Ceremony (SANC)
20 Communitarian Deadline CoA Service (SANC) 8:30a-10a CoA Service Rehearsal (Sanc) 8:45a-10:15a Child Care (32) 10a-11:30a Religious Ed 10a-10:25a Children Service (FH) 10:15a-11:45a Worship/Coffee Hour 11:15a-11:45a Newcomers Orientation 11:45a-12:45p (FH) Forum Annual Budget	21 7p-8p Tai Chi (FH) 8p-9:30p Finance Committee (41)	22 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal (SANC,24)	23 7:30p-9p RE Council (41)	24 10a-11a COMMUNITARIAN mailing (FA) 11:30a-1p Science and Spirituality (41)	25	26
27 8:45a-10:15a Child Care (32) 10a-11:30a RE Special Sunday (FH) 10:15a-11:45a Worship/Coffee Hour 11:30a-12:30p Welcome Committee	28 OFFICE CLOSED 7p-8p Tai Chi (FH) 7:30p-9:30p Play Reading Group (41)	29 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal (SANC,24)	30	31		

COMMUNITY UNITARIAN CHURCH
468 Rosedale Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605



If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, write 'refused' across your address and return it unopened. No postage is required.

LOOKING AHEAD...

CUC CONCERT SERIES

Saturday, June 2nd, 7 pm

Chopin

Pianist and CUC Music Director Adam Kent, performs beloved works by Poland's legendary Romantic composer.

Admission is a donation of \$20, \$10 for Seniors and Students. For more information, call CUC at 914-946-1660, ext. 8.

**Annual Congregational
Meeting**

Sunday, June 3rd

After Services

For latest news and updates go to our website at www.cucwp.org. To stop receiving a hardcopy of this newsletter and to start receiving email announcements instead, please send an email to admin@cucwp.org.