
**Community Unitarian
Universalist Congregation at
White Plains**

Sunday Services 10:00 am

Religious Education 10:00 am

468 Rosedale Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605
914-946-1660
www.cucwp.org
Established 1909
Accessible to Handicapped

THE COMMUNITARIAN

Meredith's Musings

Last May, in my column for the E-Communitarian, I mentioned the increased emphasis on UU congregations finding ways to collaborate with their neighbor congregations. Across the US, new ways of "doing church" are emerging within many denominations.

Unitarian Universalists, too, are considering alternatives to the long-held model of the isolated "silo" congregation disconnected from its UU neighbors. That model may not be the best way for our movement to thrive in the years ahead.

New models range from "yoked" congregations (two -- possibly more -- congregations share some staff, while they retain distinct bylaws, budgets, and boards) to fully-merged, multi-site congregations (distinct buildings scattered around a region, each holding worship service on Sunday morning and various programs through the week, yet one staff serves all the sites, and one board, one set of bylaws, and one budget governs all the sites) to various in-between or partially merged models.

Since my arrival in White Plains, the ministers of the five UU congregations have been in conversation about ways to collaborate. One result was the 5-way pulpit swap last Sun Mar 29. Another result was the creation of website for all five congregations: westchesteruu.com.

Rev. Peggy Clarke (serving 1st Unitarian Society of Westchester in Hastings) and I have now made plans to collaborate in offering a Friday evening meditative service to last about 35 or 40 minutes. The service will start at 7:00pm and feature a brief reading/reflection, shared silence, meditative singing, and a chance to share joys and sorrows. The location and the minister we'll alternate, with Peggy leading the services at CUUC and me leading the services at Hastings. The first such service will be on Sep 18 at 1USW, the second (Sep 25) at CUUC, the third (Oct 2) at 1USW, etc. We encourage members of both our congregations to attend the services at both places, thus creating a merged congregation on Friday evenings.

In further collaboration, Rev. Clarke, who is new to having themes of the month, and I have decided to use the same themes this year. The first three will be Renewal, Wonder, and Hospitality.

(Continued on next page...)



SEPTEMBER: RENEWAL

I've heard a Unitarian Universalist explanation of why heaven just didn't seem appealing: Who wants to be stuck with this self for all eternity? I'm already frequently tired of myself. The notion of an eternal afterlife for "me" does seem like an overdose of attachment to the illusion of self. Even these few years on Earth can begin to seem tedious without periodic renewal. Renewal, as Deborah Day said, requires opening ourselves to new ways of thinking and feeling.

OCTOBER: WONDER

Not knowing is most intimate. I return often to this insight. It's from a story from China, a dialog between two monks:

Fayan was going on pilgrimage.
 Dizang said, "Where are you going?"
 Fayan said, "Around on pilgrimage."
 Dizang said, "What is the purpose of pilgrimage?"
 Fayan said: "I don't know."
 Dizang said, "Not knowing is most intimate."

When we know about something, we have prior learning that guides us when we encounter it. That can be really valuable, but it also means we are always comparing the present to the past. To let each moment be unique requires setting aside what we think we know and opening to the fresh intimacy of the moment. Our lives are filled with opportunities for wonder.

NOVEMBER: HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is not just having coffee and donuts available after the service. It is not just a greeter at the door. Hospitality is an orientation of our being that sees everyone as a valued guest, visiting our lives, often for an indeterminate time. "Radical hospitality" -- hospitality that goes to the root -- transforms everything we do. Our primary task as human beings is hospitality: to love others into the family of belonging. Legally, the building and grounds of CUUC belong to the membership. Spiritually, a congregation belongs not to its present members but to anyone who needs it, and the members are its stewards and its resources for meeting those needs.

Our 2015-16 year is off and running. There's a lot to do and learn, a lot of love to give and receive.

Yours in the faith we share,

—*Meredith*

How are we doing?

Please join the Committee
 on Ministry for a
Community Chat

Sunday, October 25
 after service

Help us reflect on the start
 of our new year together.
 Bring your coffee – we'll
 have some cookies!

Gratitudes

Many thanks to our
 Summer Services
 Worship Committee:
 John Cavallero, Joann
 Prinzivalli, and Tom
 Rosenbaum. They
 coordinated a wonderful
 summer worship
 experience this summer
 with many inspiring
 speakers, and a new
 locale in air-conditioned
 Fellowship Hall.

Also thanks to the rest of
 the team who made it all
 happen:

Music: Emily
 Economou, Kim & Chris
 Force, Liz Laite, Laura
 Sedehva, and Adine
 Usher

Chair's Report

Welcome back, fellow CUUC'ers!

I've been scratching my head trying to come up with a theme for this opening column, finding myself stuck between Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young's lyric "Our House is a Very, Very, Very Fine House" and PBS's show "This Old House." I've concluded both are completely apropos. Our very fine and beautiful home is approaching middle age at 56, and therefore not as spry and in need of substantial work.

Your Board has been busy this summer with building projects both small and large, near term and long term. On the long-term horizon, we are in the process of hiring a building engineer to provide a long-term repair and maintenance plan for us, to better plan for our building's health. This plan should allow us to move proactively, rather than responding to emergency repairs, which as we all know is more costly in the long run. In the near term, we have a Request for Proposals out to contractors to repair and pave the lower parking lot. While this is not a glamorous repair, it is indeed necessary given the decay and deterioration of the lot. While we had hoped for the lot to be paved over the summer, this proved impossible since contractors were fully booked with public school projects. We expect the paving to be completed in the fall.

On a smaller scale, a standalone portable sound system was purchased for Fellowship Hall. This equipment allowed summer services to move from the sanctuary to the air-conditioned Fellowship Hall, much appreciated given this summer's temperatures! We are also in the process of replacing CUUC's phone system, on which most of the features do not work and are beyond repair.

We will solicit the congregation during the year for your thoughts on what building enhancements you'd like to see going forward, so stay tuned. We will also analyze the financial requirements of potential enhancements.

Our name change process is underway, with various groups of people working to make our new name fully legal and functional. The first step has been completed: filing with the State of New York to legally change our incorporation. Next steps are with our financial institutions, our vendors, tax authorities, and in-house for letterhead, web presence, and physical signage. Be patient – it's all in progress!

Additionally, our Communications Committee has been hard at work this summer. We have an energetic group working on a host of initiatives, including an advertising campaign for the upcoming RE Open House, an evaluation of new logo proposals to reflect our new name, and continual improvements to our website including posting of selected audio sermons.

I cannot end this column without a big thank you to our summer worship team. They have worked hard to provide a terrific lineup of speakers, as well as a diverse selection of music. The drum circle had almost sixty congregants listening and playing as part of the Juneteenth service. The balance of the summer saw an approximately 20% increase in attendance over last summer. And, temperatures in Fellowship Hall provided a very comfortable space for reflection and worship.

And with all of these improvements to our old house in progress, we can look forward to an autumn of wonderful happenings inside of our fine walls. I am greatly looking forward to unleashing our Social Action teams and participating in projects as they get underway. The energy is infectious, and my sense is congregants are primed for community service and social action work. Welcome back to all, and a hearty welcome to all newcomers!

—Karen Schmitt

New In Care/In Covenant Coordinator Named From CUUC

Starting this year, the new In Care/In Covenant Coordinator for the Metro New York UU District is Rev. Dr. Kelly Murphy Mason, one of the affiliated ministers at CUUC. She will offer local programming for UU seminarians and ministerial candidates throughout the 2015-2016 academic year.

Rev. Mason has been a community minister in this district for nearly a decade and currently acts as Managing Director of the Psychotherapy & Spirituality Institute in Manhattan. She has a special concern for the processes of religious calling, vocational discernment, and ministerial formation.

Newer IC/IC programming will include a monthly discussion group, a movie night in the fall, an overnight retreat in the winter, and a seminary commissioning in the spring, among other offerings. Rev. Mason welcomes any contact from interested clergy, congregations, or religious professionals that would like to volunteer time and services in support of local IC/IC initiatives. She can be reached at Rev.KMMason@Gmail.com.

'STITCHING IN SPIRIT' MONTHLY CRAFTING CIRCLE CONTINUES



**LAST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 11:45 IN YOUTH ROOM #14
REV. KELLY MURPHY MASON & SABRINA CLEARY, VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**

Fiber arts and handicrafts have long figured significantly in people's communal and spiritual lives. This has been especially true for women, historically, although these interests now hold very broad-based appeal. Today we see the resurgence gaining ground in the "maker movement" and crafting circles.

Come join CUUC stitchers Sabrina Cleary and Kelly Murphy Mason in this exploration of what it means to those in our particular faith community to be "stitching in spirit." Please feel free to bring with you any handicrafting projects you might have underway – or else just bring an open and inquiring mind.

Written materials will be provided at the SIS circle gatherings, but companion volumes to our continued conversations include *Peace Fibres: Stitching a Soulful World*, *Contemplative Crochet*, and *Knitting Sutra: Craft as Spiritual Practice*, among others. In Fall 2015, the SIS circle is scheduled to meet on September 27, October 25, November 29, and December 27. Anyone with any degree of interest is welcome to join the circle at any time. Always feel free to contact either Sabrina or Kelly for additional information.

Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Denominational Affairs

General Assembly, or “GA” for short, has something for everybody. Worship, workshops, celebrations, music, protests, controversy and of course business meetings called General Sessions. This year I served CUUC as an off-site delegate June 24-28. I watched over 22 hours of worship, witness, lectures and voted at the General Sessions. All 22 hours and more are still available for your viewing at <http://www.uua.org/ga/virtual/2015> or on youtube (search UUA general assembly 2015). I encourage you to explore the links. The General Sessions are where most of our faith work happens at GA.

A Statement of Conscience on Reproductive Justice was passed. A copy of the full report is available on the UU world website. <http://www.uuworld.org/articles/uuaga15-session-3>

Three Actions of Immediate Witness were passed; Act for a Livable Climate, Stop Refugee Child & Family Detention (Private Prison Camps) Now, Supporting the Black Lives Matter Movement. You can read the final statements for the Actions of Immediate Witness on the UU world website. <http://www.uuworld.org/articles/aiw-general-assembly-portland>

I will bring you more news from General Assembly 2015 in Denominational affairs articles in upcoming newsletters.

—Denice Tomlinson

Save the Date

October 3rd – Care for the Dying and People Who Love them Workshop. Stony Brook, NY.

http://uumetrony.org/metronymminute/jul15/Caring_for_dying.pdf

October 23-25th CONdike Bar – Senior High Social Con – Plainfield, NJ

November 14th – Defying Gravity – Shelter Rock, NY

Tag Sale

The CUUC **Tag Sale** will take place on Saturday, April 30, 2016. Please start thinking about what items you have that can be donated. We will be collecting clothes, books, kitchen items, jewelry, etc. We will also need volunteers to work on that day and to help put the sale together. Contact Paula Meighan at paula@changingplaces.infor or Johanna Bauer at johbauer@msn.com for more information and/or if you would like to help.

Religious Education

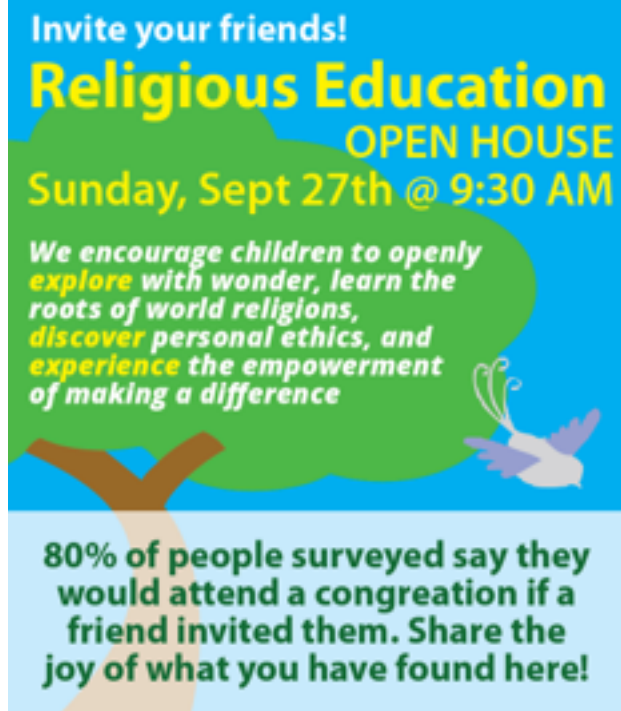
Teacher Orientation: An Opportunity for Preparation and Connection

Sunday, September 13 — 8:15-9:45 a.m.

- ¥ Get to Know the Resources
- ¥ Understand Your Curriculum
- ¥ Meet with Your Team
- ¥ Vision for the year in RE
- ¥ Safe Congregations Review
- ¥ Time for Q&A
- ¥ Bagel Breakfast Served

RSVP to dlre@cucwp.org or 914-946-1660 x4 so Perry knows you will be there. Please attend even if you have taught previously.

Curious about teaching but don't know where to begin? Please contact Perry about easy ways to engage in your own faith development while supporting the growth of our children and youth.



Perry's Ponderings

As I write this article, Barbara and I are anticipating the birth of our child this week. It is fitting for a religious educator's child to start her life at this time of the year. It is the beginning of a new congregational year and the birth of many new endeavors. It is a time of the year when everyone at CUUC has the opportunity to create something newly meaningful.

After summer offered a different flow of time, what will the transition back into the fold mean for you? We gather at the water service to share the essence of our summer experiences and the changes that have taken place. It is always remarkable to see the growth that children and youth make over a couple of summer months.

Our congregational year is a time for a different type of growth that includes subtle movements of spirit and bounding leaps of thought. As we come together for our weekly experiences, we reflect more deeply and push ourselves for those internal shifts that happen to all of us who are human works in progress. Each of us is inherently beautiful the way we are and, yet, ever-changing in layers of unfolding developments.

I encourage you to take a moment to decide how you will connect at CUUC and take another step into your own becoming. Consider what inspires you in life. What is it that stirs your energy, awakens your curiosity, and pulls you toward discovery? Let's talk about how you can engage with that part of yourself at CUUC. Whether it is in our Religious Education Ministry or another area of congregational life, you can explore your own inspiration in unique ways. Our RE Ministry Teams that focus on spiritual growth, social connections, justice work, adult learning, child development, and youth empowerment are a wonderful way to participate. Please ask me about them.

Meet Me in Morocco

Goods & Services Auction
Saturday,
November 14

Our hot night of
bidding, fine dining, fun, and
chance.

Tickets \$40

Success Comes From Your Help

Donate: Remember to ask your local merchants for goods and services– they are usually happy to donate. Tangible items can be dropped off the week before the auction.

Attend: The auction on November 14th @ 5:30pm for a fun filled evening with a wide variety of goods and services in all price ranges. Tickets on sale during coffee hours.

Volunteer on the auction committee: It's a fun group and a short-term commitment.

Questions? Please contact Julie Gans
juliegans@aol.com, Bevin Maguire
bevinmm@gmail.com or Emily Economou
emily.economou@gmail.com



Save the Date – CUC Merry Madrigal Feast, Sun., Dec. 13!

What is a Merry Madrigal Feast? An event filled with music, good food, costumes, games, dance, and entertainment of all sorts from Renaissance times – 1450-1600 a.d. that the whole family can participate in or attend following the morning service.

Lisa Meyer and the CUUC Choir, with assistance from the Brunch Committee, the children in the R.E. program, and hopefully many others, will create an event that all ages will enjoy. A kind of medieval talent cabaret with food, we are looking for:

—Jugglers—Puppeteers—Magicians—Singers—

Dancers—Instrumentalists—Carnival game operators

Also need those to assist with:

—Set up of tables, chairs, etc.—Publicity of all kinds—Box Office—

Stage crew—Extra help with food—Clean-up

Please contact Lisa Meyer, Choir Director at choir@cucwp.org or 516.299.2475 (day) or 347-278-3187 (night) for more information and to sign up to participate.



UU MUSICIANS GROUP AT CUUC

Do you enjoy playing a musical instrument or singing? Are you looking for a forum for meeting other like-minded UU's? Would you like to connect with other musicians to form a band, a chamber group, or any other sort of collaboration? Would you welcome the opportunity to compare notes about practicing, overcoming technical hurdles, coping with performing anxiety? Are you interested in planning music for summer worship services at CUUC?

The UU Musicians Group welcomes musicians at all levels and ages in all musical genres. Facilitated by CUUC Music Director Adam Kent, the group generally convenes on the 3rd Sunday of each month in the Sanctuary following worship. Stay tuned for updates about the first meeting this fall, and feel free to contact Adam at adamkentpianist@gmail.com for more information.



CUUC Choir Happenings

The Choir experienced great excitement and success last year performing Menotti's one-act holiday opera, "Amahl and the Night Visitors" in December and a wonderful program of Rogers and Hammerstein favorites in the spring.

In between, we enjoyed performing a large variety of music from American folk songs and sacred pieces to toe-tapping spirituals and theater pieces. I thank all of the Choir members who worked hard and sounded wonderful for their time and dedication to creating music together that was both beautiful and musically interesting.

Many asked what the Choir would perform this year that could top the great success of Amahl last year. The way to top last year is get more of YOU involved in our Merry Madrigal Feast on Sun., Dec. 13.

This event has opportunities for people of all ages to participate in a fun Renaissance extravaganza where people dress in period costume, eat great food, and have fun playing games, singing, and enjoying the talents of all ages. If you are interested in more information, please contact me at the numbers or email below.

Dates for those interested in participating or hearing the Choir are:

Sunday, October 4 – Choir Open House at 11:45am following the morning's service in the sanctuary. Sit in, sing, and see what we do and how much fun we have.

Sunday, December 13 – Merry Madrigal Feast with Choir and Friends, 12:30pm

—Lisa Meyer, Choir Director

Join the CUUC Choir this Fall

For those who love to sing, the first CUUC Choir rehearsal will take place on **Tues., Sept. 1st from 7:30-9:15pm** in the Sanctuary. We welcome all voice parts, and you DO NOT have to be able to read music. The choir is currently made up of a mix of people that read music and those that do not. The only requirement is to be able to match pitch.

Observe or sit in on a rehearsal! Anyone is welcome to watch a rehearsal, or even sit in for a time to see what we are all about. We rehearse every Tuesday, (except Sept. 8 – Friday Sept. 11 rehearsal instead for that week) and perform in two Sunday services each month.

Please contact me with any questions at choir@cucwp.org or at 516-299-2475 during the day and 347-278-3187 after 7pm and on weekends. I look forward to an exciting fall and hope that you will be inspired to sing with us.

Lisa Meyer
Choir Director

Come Hear Adam Kent in a Solo Piano Recital of Works by Unitarian Composers

On Sunday afternoon, November 8, at 1:30pm, Music at CUUC kicks off the 2015-16 concert series with a program by Music Director Adam Kent, featuring works by celebrated Unitarian composers. Come hear and invite your friends to enjoy the warmly romantic music of Edvard Grieg, the pungent folkloricism of Béla Bartók, and the little-known musical gems of New Englander Arthur Foote. The concert will preceded by a presentation for listeners of all ages at 1pm, and free child care is available by advance arrangement. Contact the church office for more details, and stay tuned for more info about a pre-concert, post-worship brunch.

Visit <http://www.adamkentmusic.com/listen/> to hear Adam Kent in performance, including samples of his all-Grieg CD.

Other upcoming Music at CUUC events include:
Sunday, 12/13/15 at 12:30pm: Merry Madrigal Feast!

Sunday, 1/31/16 at 1:30pm: Enrique Granados
Commemorative Concert

Saturday, 4/2/16 at 7pm: UU Choir Festival

Saturday, 5/14/16 at 8pm: Jazzfest! with the Valerie
Capers Trio

Tickets are \$20 (\$10 students and seniors). For the Madrigal Feast special \$5 tickets for children under 12 are available, as well as a \$45 per family offer. All five events are available for \$80 (\$80 students and seniors).



MUSIC LOVERS! CONSIDER JOINING CUUC's MUSIC COMMITTEE

The Music Committee supports music-making at CUUC and serves as a liaison between the congregation and the church's music staff. One of the committee's primary activities is managing CUUC's concert series, which brings a wide range of performances to congregants and the community at large. The committee meets several times a year at CUUC following Sunday morning worship services and also communicates internally via e-mail.

If you love music and want to help CUUC's music program thrive, becoming a member of the Music Committee is an easy way to share your enthusiasm.

Stay tuned for updates about our first meeting of the 2015-16 church year. Feel free to contact Music Committee Co-Chairs Janet Bear (jsbear1@gmail.com), Kim Force (kim.force@yahoo.com), or Christian Force (force2k1@yahoo.com), or Music Director Adam Kent at adamkentpianist@gmail.com for more information.

