



What's Happening

MAIN LINE UNITARIAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2017

PATHWAY OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Believers Discussion Group

Second Thursdays, 10:00 a.m.-Noon in the Wonder Room

Facilitated by Carl Stevens and Ed Barrett (ends June 9)

Among UUs, there are a wide range of theological beliefs. We bring agnostic, theist, atheist, humanist, Buddhist and many other traditions to our shared search for meaning. Some of us refer to this greater entity as God, which has a different meaning to each individual. Honoring this perspective, our discussion group will recognize various aspects of spirituality.



The Gospel According to Luke: What Surprises Await Us

Wednesdays, February 8, 15, and 22, 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the Greeley Library

Led by Rev. Dave Hunter, semi-retired UU minister and MLUC member

Luke's story is the most popular among UUs and other religious liberals of the four New Testament accounts of Jesus. Is that popularity justified? Let's explore Luke together.

Black History Month Film Series & Discussion: Many Rivers to Cross

This series discusses the evolution of the African-American people, as well as the multiplicity of cultural institutions, political strategies, and social perspectives they developed - forging their own history, culture, and society against unimaginable odds.

- *Part 1: Friday, February 10, 7:30-9:00 p.m. | Into the Fire*
1861 to 1896 | With the breakout of the Civil War, the plight of slaves was plunged into chaos along with the rest of the country. A half million escaped the South. Many fought for and helped the North win. After the war: the struggle to build communities, the quest for citizenship, the desire to hold office - all of which eventually led to the white South's deadly reaction.
- *Part 2: Sunday, February 12, 12:30-2:00 p.m. | Making a Way Out of No Way*
1897 to 1940 | This looks at the large migration to the North and West from the South to escape the continued persecution of Jim Crow laws, the Klan, lynchings, and the destruction of black-owned businesses and communities. Several African American pioneers and leaders emerged in this period and forged the way ahead, creating a new black culture. Lunch will be served.

Who Am I? And Why?

Wednesdays, March 8, 15, and 22, 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the Greeley Library

Led by Rev. Dave Hunter, semi-retired UU minister and MLUC member

With Rev. Bruce Marshall's book, *A Holy Curiosity: Stories of a Liberal Religious Faith*, as our starting point, we'll consider a number of life's persistent questions.

To sign up for a course, email register@mluc.org.

*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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MINISTERIAL MUSINGS

Introducing Our Executive Director

It feels strange to introduce our “new” Executive Director, Rich Fritzson, because he is not new at all to MLUC, where he and Sally have been members for over 20 years. In Hollywood, some actors play major roles; some play bit parts. Here at Main Line, Rich has played both major roles and bit parts.

He has taught 5th and 6th grade church school and 8th grade OWL (“Our Whole Lives,” the UU sex ed program), and he has assisted with the Youth Committee. He has co-chaired the Committee on Ministry, chaired the first Offering Outreach Committee, chaired the Stewardship Committee, and co-chaired the Implementation Team of our Capital Campaign. He has served on the Search Committees for a Senior Minister, two Associate Ministers, and an Interim Minister. He has led the SALT (Social Action Leadership Team) and was one of our members who was responsible for bringing MLUC into the Interfaith Hospitality Network, a network of local churches that host homeless families. He has served as President of our Board of Trustees, helping to launch our first Capital Campaign in 25 years. He has led and preached at Sunday services, delivered stewardship and Capital Campaign presentations after services and at new member classes, and aided the launching of the email list-serve Community Matters. In addition, he has attended nine General Assemblies, our national UU conventions.



Rev. Dr. Neal R. Jones
Senior Minister

In the Baptist tradition, we used to call such dedicated leaders “pillars” of the church. At a former congregation, when I used that term, one of the children thought I was saying “pillows” of the church. Actually, Rich is a pillar and a pillow of our church. He has supported our ministries with his time, energy, ideas, money, and leadership, yet as talented and accomplished as he is, he is also modest and unassuming, gentle and kind.

What you probably don’t know about Rich is his professional expertise. At McKesson, a pharmaceutical and medical supply corporation, he was the leader of an international software team. At Sungard Higher Education, he designed software for managing all aspects of university environments. At GlaxoSmithKline, he was the director of the information technology department, responsible for planning, budgeting, hiring, firing, and technical leadership. While at Glaxo, he also developed business dashboards to enable more effective executive decision-making. At Meta4, an HR and payroll software company, he was the manager of the development department. Rich’s corporate experience makes him an ideal Executive Director, and his church experience makes him the ideal Executive Director for MLUC.

It’s important to point out that the position of Executive Director is not a reprise of our former position of Director of Administration. This new position represents a higher level of leadership. The E.D. will oversee our church’s administration, personnel, finances, budgeting, marketing, communications, and facilities. In other words, the E.D. will provide organizational leadership, allowing the Minister to focus on spiritual leadership, overseeing worship, rites of passage, pastoral care and counseling, social action, community-building, religious education (supervising the Director of Lifespan Religious Ed), and the various ministries and programs which fulfill the church’s mission. Separating these two divergent roles - organizational and spiritual leadership - is a win-win strategy. The church’s “manager” and the church’s minister win the opportunity to exercise their developed knowledge and skills, and our church wins the opportunity to benefit from the best contributions of leaders who are pursuing their heartfelt passions. And I win the opportunity to work with a colleague who has already won our trust and respect.

-Neal

MLUC’S ALL-CHURCH POTLUCK: STANDING ON THE SIDE OF LOVE

Friday, February 3, at 6:15 p.m.

Weather make-up date: Saturday, February 4

Come out for fun and fellowship with like-minded people. Please bring an entrée or a side. Desserts and drinks will be provided. It’s a family-friendly event with an after-dinner activity for children. Proudly sponsored by Susan Milles and Tom Farr’s Small Group Ministry.



Questions? Contact Trish Brandon (trishbrandon3@gmail.com) or by phone as provided in the directory.



SOCIAL ACTION CALENDAR: SAVE THE DATES

April 23

Sunday Speaker: Climate Blogger, Chad Tolman
hosted by Green Sanctuary

April 29

Interfaith Potluck Lunch at MLUC
hosted by Rainbow Alliance

June 11

Philly Pride Parade in Philadelphia
MLUC participation organized by Rainbow Alliance

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK (IHN)

Our first hosting for 2017 will begin on February 12 and continue to February 26. Check out the volunteer slots at mluc.org/social-action/interfaith-hospitality-network. Bob Batt and Sally Fritzon will be in the Atrium in February to take signups.

We will celebrate our volunteers with a Baked Potato Potluck Dinner for all MLUC IHN volunteers and their families on Sunday evening, February 26, in the Fireside Room. We provide the potatoes, you supply the toppings. More information to follow.



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RETIRED MEN'S LUNCHEON

Wednesday, February 8, refreshments at 11:30, luncheon following the program

This month features a special Valentine's Day program with Surrey Services Singers. All lovers and sweethearts invited! Cost: \$10 per person. RSVP to Tim Conahan (tim.conahan@gmail.com, 610-449-8521).

WINTER GUIDE FOR VISITORS

If you've recently begun visiting MLUC and would like to get to know this community better, please consider some ways you could do that during the calmer winter weeks ahead. Come out to the church on February 3, at 6:15 p.m. for an All-Church Potluck. Bring a main course or side dish and an item to donate to the food bank. Enjoy a relaxed evening with members of this community. Children will take part in a supervised activity following dinner.

1. Join the *Community Matters* email list and be an active part of email conversations covering a range of topics: UU and social justice news, announcements of MLUC events, requests for rides and other kinds of assistance, the sharing of personal news as well as where to find the very best plumber. Joining this email group will put you in touch with so much that goes on behind the Sunday morning scene. To be added to the list, send an email to changes4communitymatters@gmail.com.
2. Open your weekly E-Notes and see what is on the church calendar for the next week or two. If you're not signed up for E-notes, visit the mluc.org homepage and click the blue "Stay Updated with E-Notes" icon.
3. Attend a class or two from the Pathway of Spiritual Maturity offerings. Find our meditation and yoga schedule at <http://mluc.org/faith-development/adults>.
4. One of the best ways to get to know MLUC is to take on a small volunteer job on Sundays. We're always looking for friendly greeters and ushers to be a welcoming presence as people enter the church. You can also help MLUC reduce reliance on disposable supplies by being a green striper during coffee hour.
5. Consider taking part in Small Group Ministry. It's a great way to get to know a small group of people through conversation and spiritual exploration. Contact Dana Navaline if interested (dnav235@yahoo.com).
6. Check out the Church's Facebook page and follow the activities of the church and members: <https://www.facebook.com/MainLineUnitarianChurch>



Jessica Hirsch Lynn
Membership Coordinator

If through exploring the church this winter, you decide to become a member, please save the date for the Pathway to Membership Orientation on May 6. And always feel free to contact me (jessica@mluc.org) with questions or for more info about getting connected with the MLUC community.

THE GREATER PHILLY UU CLUSTER (GPC)

The Greater Philly UU Cluster (<http://www.greaterphillyuu.org/>) is comprised of 14 nearby UU congregations and is actively connecting these congregations to share our message, grow our faith and strengthen congregations. Here are some opportunities to get involved:



- February 4, 9:00 a.m. at UUCDC - The Heart of Poverty Workshop
- February 8, 7:00 p.m. at First Unitarian Church - *13th* Film Screening (free)
- The SEPTA ad campaign was a success! Thanks so much for contributing. Placement of UU posters at rail platforms will likely occur in February.
- Save the date for MLUC's Labor Day weekend outing in September - All cluster congregations welcome.

Find the full Philly Cluster calendar at www.mluc.org/about/calendar.

REQUEST FOR SGM STEERING COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS

The Small Group Ministry Steering Committee is looking for a few good human beings. Help keep the Small Group Ministry program growing and running smoothly. There are several openings for rewarding tasks with a good cause. Email dnav235@yahoo.com.



NOTES FROM A NEWBIE TRUSTEE

(trustees@mluc.org)

Some of you might wonder: What does the Board of Trustees do? Others might marvel: MLUC has a BoT? I have been a Trustee since the summer of 2016, and I am still trying to figure out that first question. However, I am totally convinced by all the meetings and emails that the second question's answer is yes. Here are some things I've learned as I've participated in and observed the Board:

- The Board is comprised of folks with a lot of different experiences inside and outside of the church, each with a deep commitment to MLUC's mission, wellbeing, and growth. Some Trustees have a long history with MLUC and can share the "been there, done that" of things that worked and things that didn't. Others bring a more recent perspective to the leadership position.
- The Board is focused on policy, stewardship, and oversight. With "governance by policy," there is considerable attention given to our mission, the distinct but aligned roles of the executive team (Senior Minister and Executive Director) and the Board, and how we can best assess the effectiveness of MLUC's programming and the strength of the church. This allows the energies of many other dedicated volunteers within the congregation to support MLUC's many impactful activities.
- Not to contradict my previous point, but there have been many additional focuses in recent months. The Board has tackled some weighty issues – budget constraints, staffing vacancies, leasing to the nursery school, charting a strategy to be a mission-led church, evaluating our ministries, and dealing with the needs and wants of a diverse congregation.

To find out what your Board of Trustees is up to, **read the minutes of our monthly meetings - which can be found on the bulletin board outside the church office** - or better yet, come to one of our meetings. You'll find a full agenda - a thoughtful discussion and new insights into how your Board works for MLUC.

-Bridget Wiedeman

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY TRAINING

Are you concerned about our representation in Harrisburg and Washington DC, but don't know what to do about it? Come to our **Legislative Advocacy Workshop, March 12, from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. in the McGinness Room**. Lunch will be provided.

Learn how to lobby, visit your legislator, write letters, and make phone calls as a Unitarian. We will learn how to use this training and discuss and plan opportunities for doing so.

Let's be the congregation known for putting its values into action.

More information to follow.



Pssst! ... 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

Linda Dubin Garfield and Elsa Wachs have collaborated to create a moving display on the haunting themes of the Holocaust. Both Philadelphia area print-makers, Linda and Elsa will each show 18 of their original works in the Fireside Room from January 15 through February 20. In *Remembering the Past, Confronting the Future*, these artists explore, examine, and express important issues through art.

Their brief, intimate peeks into the lives of those caught in the fiery Holocaust depict the threads that hold humanity together. We see these vignettes becoming the building blocks for our shared existence and hope for a better future. Viewers are challenged to reflect on, deliberate, resolve, and hopefully pledge to help repair the world.



SMALL GROUP MINISTRY: WHAT IS THE STATE OF YOUR SPIRITUALITY?

Eckhart Tolle states that “Life is the dancer and you are the dance.” When was the last time you took the time to think deeply about your dance, your life, and your spirituality?

Find that time by joining a Small Group Ministry (SGM), a regular meeting of about ten persons discussing a thought-provoking session plan led by a trained facilitator. All are welcomed to join.

During meetings you can explore your connection to a higher power, sense of purpose, connections to nature or art, sense of meaning of life, transcendent experiences, inner wisdom, and vital beliefs, among many other possibilities. These discussions have the potential to change the course of your relationships and life.

Along with your own spiritual growth, you will join over one hundred and fifty other SGM members in forging more intimate relationships, bonding with the church community, and reaffirming our shared Unitarian Universalist values. Visit <http://mluc.org/community/small-group-ministry>.

KEYSTONE PROGRESS SUMMIT

February 17-18 in Harrisburg

The folks who make up today’s progressive movement share a set of fundamentally American values: equal opportunity and mutual responsibility, effective government, and hope for a better, more prosperous future for all. Register now for the Keystone Progress Summit. You’ll join hundreds of social justice advocates, labor organizers, and grassroots activists for training, networking, and the catalyst we all need to make real progress. www.keystoneprogresssummit.org



If you’re staying overnight, ask for the Keystone Progress Summit rate at the Hilton (717-233-6000).

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

JOYS AND CONCERNS

We extend our concern and support to ...

Stacy DeClerque, whose mother Caroline died the day after Christmas.

Marile Marshall's mother, who had a stroke on December 27. After being hospitalized at Paoli Hospital, she is now recovering in the rehab unit at Dunwoody.

The family of Helen Mooney, who died on December 27. Helen was a long-term member of our church until she moved to Santa Fe in 2001 to be near her family.

Rachael Beyer, whose grandmother died on December 29.

Leanne Wagner, whose father died on January 4.

We extend our appreciation to ...

Debby Smith, who, along with our Communications Coordinator, **Brianna Johnson**, edited our social action brochure which gives an overview of all of our church's social justice groups, initiatives, and service projects. In addition to the actual tri-fold brochure, you can find it on our website.

Pam Fried for transcribing all the newsprint notes taken during the Summit Retreat weekend for strategic planning. She transcribed 19 documents in all!

Everyone who participated in our Holiday Workshop. Because of you, \$550 in proceeds was raised and donated to the Capital Campaign to be used exclusively for the renovated playground.

Our Acting RE Coordinator, **Este Hart**, for organizing our Christmas Eve No-Rehearsal Christmas pageant, with the help of **Barbara Colton, Michelle, Ava** and **Audrey Blumer, John Hydrisko**, and all the children who volunteered for parts in the play.

The readers of the 6:00 and 8:00 Christmas Eve services: **Trish Brandon, Pat Jordan, Gina Trignani, Madelaine Sayko, Ingrid Deckman, India Dixon, Sandy Gargus**, and **Rebecca Polss**.

Kim Vanderburg and **Scott Turner** for overseeing our middle and high school youth groups in their creation of our Worship Arts around the theme of service – a chalice of hands holding up our planet, symbolizing our support for the whole world, with a heart-shaped flame, representing our love and respect for all people and the environment.

Jay Wiley and **Greg Gaul** for producing a video update of the Capital Campaign featuring **Rev. Neal Jones, Dana Wiley**, and **Rich Fritzson**.

Bruce Pappas, who has served as our Interim Director of Administration for these past 10 months, and to **Rich Fritzson**, who, on January 14, began serving as our church's Executive Director. In this role, he will be responsible for our congregation's administrative and financial affairs, allowing your minister to focus on ministry.

We extend our congratulations to ...

The proud parents, **Carrie Nielsen** and **Bill D'Agostino**, and the proud big sister, **Celia**, on the birth of Anya Grace D'Agostino on Dec. 20. Anya had to spend the first few days of her life at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia due to complications, but now she is home.

SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday, April 2 will be an all-church celebration of our community with lunch, live music, a bounce house, and more. Don't miss it! More details to come.

*sponsored by your Stewardship Team



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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 **February 10** for the March issue. Submit material to **news@mluc.org**. To learn more about communications at MLUC, contact Brianna Johnson (brianna@mluc.org).

ON THE WEB

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

