



What's Happening

MAIN LINE UNITARIAN

FEBRUARY 2019

THE PLAYGROUND IS COMPLETED!

The final pieces of the playground, two small spinners and a complex climbing system, have been installed. Even though it might not be the perfect season to enjoy them, take a moment to appreciate what a great range of play equipment is now available to our children. Many thanks to all those who designed, debated, planned, and worked on bringing this project to fruition.



STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

The Stewardship Team helps discern a collective understanding of MLUC's financial side that includes more than just how we raise and spend money. The Stewardship Team also hopes to sustain and further a culture of meaningful talk about commitment to our finances. The stewardship campaign for 2019 will begin soon, and this year's campaign will include home visits to some congregants. Home visits were a great part of our success during the Capital Campaign, not just as a means to raise funds for an important project. Visits were enjoyable for everyone involved and a wonderful way to learn from and about each other. Visitor and host alike cherished these visits and valued the opportunity to raise concerns, share hopes and dreams, and make deeper personal connections. So please consider taking part in or leading one of these "get acquainted" conversations. Visitors will include members of the Board of Trustees, church leaders, teachers, and even Rev. Neal. If you're asked to participate, please say yes! Email rich@mluc.org to arrange your visit. Thank you for your continued support of this congregation and our shared mission!

ALL-CHURCH SECOND-SATURDAY POTLUCK

We are officially halfway through our second-Saturday potluck schedule for the year. If you haven't made it out to a meal yet, join us on February 9 at 5:15 p.m. This potluck will include board games (Feel free to bring your favorite game)! We'll finish up by 7:30 so you'll be home early with the kids (or, you'll have plenty of time to do something afterwards). Lets make family mealtime a regular practice at MLUC.

RSVP and let us know what food you'll bring: www.tinyurl.com/mlucpotluck9.

*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.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Staff Columns	2
Ministerial Survey	3
QC2 Year in Review	4
Insight Book Group	4
Coming of Age Class	5
Jubilee Workshop	5
Artist of the Month	6
Offering Outreach	6
Members Art Show	7

MINISTERIAL MUSINGS

Some New Sermon Illustrations

A few Sundays ago, I preached a sermon, "Religious Liberty: A Sword or a Shield," in which I described the intent of the Free Exercise clause of the First Amendment to protect religion from political meddling. It keeps the government from instructing preachers what to preach, believers what to believe, and houses of worship how to worship. In other words, the First Amendment acts as a shield. Yet the Religious Right is currently using the First Amendment as a sword of discrimination. Just as segregationists used to argue that religious liberty allowed them to turn away African Americans from their stores, restaurants, hotels, universities, and other public places, the Religious Right claims that religious liberty should exempt them from anti-discrimination laws protecting the civil rights of LGBTQ people and women's access to birth control, abortion, and family planning information.



Rev. Dr. Neal R. Jones
Senior Minister

Since that sermon, two new swords of discrimination have caught the public's attention, and both involve foster care. The first case comes from my former residence. The state of South Carolina has a federally funded contract with Miracle Hill Ministries, a religious foster care agency which places foster children only in Protestant families. It turns away parents who are Catholic, Jewish, or any other religion, in addition to LGBTQ parents. The SC governor, Henry McMaster, requested and received a waiver from the Trump administration to allow the agency to continue its discriminatory practice, in the administration's words, "to protect religious freedom." The other case comes from my present residence. Catholic Social Services had a publicly funded contract with Philadelphia to find homes for foster children, yet it would not place children with LGBTQ parents. Since this practice violates the city's nondiscrimination ordinance for city contractors, their contract was cancelled.

To be clear: These two religious agencies are treating people as second-class citizens in the name of their religion and with your tax money, whether you subscribe to their religion or not. They are distorting the true meaning of religious liberty. Religious liberty means that they – and anyone else in America – have the right to view anyone as less than human. They even have the right to treat others as less than human on their own dime. But they do not have the right to discriminate against others with public money for a public service. These bogus "religious liberty" arguments to justify discrimination were wrong in the '60s, and they are wrong today. Catholic Social Services is suing the city of Philadelphia, and it is also likely that the South Carolina case will be challenged in court by Americans United for Separation of Church & State, the organization I chair. I fear that, with the packing of the federal judiciary, including the Supreme Court, with conservative judges, these unconstitutional practices could be ruled constitutional. I also fear that these actions will embolden others to attempt to legalize their bigotry.

Thomas Jefferson, who coined the phrase "wall of separation of church and state," also said, "The price of freedom is eternal vigilance." That is still true.

With hope,
Neal

DAWNING THOUGHTS

Our fifth Principle as Unitarian Universalists is "the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large." And our theme for the month of February is Democracy. One way to paraphrase this principle, which I often use with younger people, is "everybody should have a say in matters that affect them." That, in a nutshell, is the point of the democratic process.



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

Voting, elections, legislation, leadership, and a fair judiciary are all important. There are also much simpler ways to choose to listen to what people feel is right in their hearts, and make sure we are taking each other's perspectives into account. Here at MLUC, we do elect Trustees and we do have processes for how to make decisions, etc. We are an organization, and organizations are more efficient when they have structure. More importantly, we have leaders who make an effort to find out what the members, friends, and kids of the congregation think is important and want to have happen before making decisions. We ask each other what we want and how we can reach those goals. This is what democracy looks like.

Dawn Star



GREATER PHILLY CLUSTER HIGHLIGHTS

Volunteerism Training: March 16, 9:00 a.m. - Noon (8:30 Meet and Greet), at Unitarian Society of Germantown, facilitated by Pat Infante. Details to come.

Calling All Singers! April 13, 12:00-5:00 p.m. at UU Church of Delaware County. Participate in group exercises and workshops to develop your voice.

For the full cluster calendar, visit mluc.org/about/calendar.

SUNDAY SERVICES

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

FEBRUARY 3: SOMEBODY'S CALLING MY NAME

Guest Minister

Music: MLUC Choir

During times of pain, division, and hate, what if we had the power to manifest love?

FEBRUARY 10: WHAT LOVE IS AND ISN'T

Rev. Dr. Neal R. Jones

As we approach Valentine's, let us examine what real love looks like, as opposed to four of its imposters.

FEBRUARY 17: A FAILURE OF BLESSING

Rev. Dr. Neal R. Jones

The Biblical book of Genesis tells the story of a failed blessing when Jacob stole his brother Esau's blessing from their father Jacob. We will reflect on how to be successful at being blessed and being a blessing.

FEBRUARY 24: A WOUNDED MATURITY

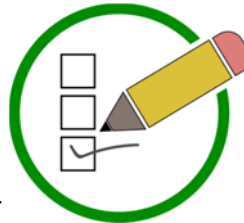
Rev. Dr. Neal R. Jones

Music: MLUC Choir

The legend of Iron John and the Biblical story of Jacob will serve as our texts for considering the stages of maturity.

MINISTERIAL SURVEY

This year, the Board has tasked the Committee on Ministry Health with conducting a 360° evaluation of our Senior Minister to provide Reverend Jones with constructive developmental performance information relative to various aspects of his ministerial responsibilities. To do this, those with whom he works most closely — lay leaders, staff, other UU ministers in the area, etc. — will be asked to provide feedback. In addition, a limited sample of congregants from different (age, etc.) groups will also be sent surveys. If you receive such a survey, please help us by returning it promptly. Other members who feel that they have had substantive interactions with Reverend Jones (such as through pastoral care) may, if they wish, also participate by emailing comh@mluc.org.



LECTURE LUNCHEON

Wednesday, February 13 in the Fireside Room, lecture at 11:30, luncheon at noon
Jan Cauffman RN MSN will speak about her 9 years as the Parish Nurse at MLUC. We'll learn about the types of things she does to provide support and guidance to members of the MLUC community. Please join us. RSVP to tim.conahan@gmail.com.

MAIN LINE UNITARIAN CHURCH
816 S. VALLEY FORGE ROAD, DEVON, PA 19333
PHONE 610-688-8332, FAX 610-964-1195
DEVONU@MLUC.ORG
WWW.MLUC.ORG

Rev. Dr. Neal R. Jones
Senior Minister
ext. 12, neal@mluc.org

Richard Fritzon
Executive Director
ext. 15, rich@mluc.org

Dr. Vincent Craig
Music Director
ext. 22, vincent@mluc.org

Dawn Star Sarahs-Borchelt
Director of Lifespan Religious Education
ext. 23, dawnstar@mluc.org

Jessica Hirsch Lynn
Membership Coordinator
ext. 26, jessica@mluc.org

Brianna Johnson
Communications Coordinator
ext. 14, news@mluc.org

Jan Cauffman
Parish Nurse
ext. 16, jan@mluc.org

Mary Heil
Administrative Assistant
ext. 10, mary@mluc.org

Chelsea Brown
Childcare Coordinator
childcare@mluc.org

Bill Mullen
Accountant
ext. 17, bill@mluc.org

Ron D'Annunzio
Facilities Coordinator
ext. 20, ron@mluc.org

Tom Brady
Facilities Associate

David McEvoy
Facilities Assistant

QC2 YEAR IN REVIEW: WE HEARD YOU

After our first full year listening to you, MLUC's QC2 Committee heard more than 40 questions, compliments, and concerns in 2018. Established by the Board of Trustees to connect members, friends, and staff with the appropriate church representative, QC2 has been available after services and by email. While some were just curious about the new committee, others addressed a variety of specific concerns.

There were 18 much-appreciated compliments for our minister, staff, and member volunteers. They ranged from the serious (e.g. praise for worship associates) to the joy of finding donuts during coffee hour. Questions helped people find out about Church School, Community Matters, the music program, and Buildings & Grounds. But the majority of QC2 issues were concerns, ranging from easily-addressed comments to broader topics for ongoing discussion. Most focused on Worship, Membership, Buildings and Grounds, and Social Action. Perspectives fell on both sides of the aisle, for example: Applause during services annoys some, while others see spontaneous expressions as positive ways to energize worship. While at least one member appreciated the annual water ceremony, another found it too "new age." Our minister and Worship Committee encourage such feedback as an important part of planning.



Concerns about our mission statement brought about some editorial change and new perspectives. E.g., the order of service now lists "Our Mission" instead of the more corporate "Mission Statement," communicating a deeper meaning to what we as a congregation believe. In-depth discussions about such issues as multigenerational involvement, spirituality, and inclusiveness have been triggered by QC2 input. One member finds too much emphasis on spirituality and uniformity; another misses more time for spiritual introspection; both want more open dialogue about a topic very important to them. QC2 triggers these conversations by including Board representation on the committee and communicating regularly with trustees, the senior minister, staff, and congregation.

QC2 is a one-stop shop to connect you with the appropriate MLUC resource, no matter what the question, compliment, or concern. "We not only make sure that you are heard," says QC2 Chair Nancy McDowell, "but that you get a response. And issues such as law or policy violations can be directed immediately to the Board."

Other QC2 committee members are Eileen Andrews, Anders Back, Adam Beck, John Heller, Dana Kelly, Sarah Kinder, and Irene Mehnert, with Board liaison Carolyn Jaeger. To share your question, compliment, or concern, stop by the Fireside table after any service, email qc2mluc@gmail.com, or talk to any of us when the opportunity arises. We'll hear you!

INSIGHT BOOK GROUP

The selection for February 14 is *Sing, Unburied, Sing*, by Jesmyn Ward, the "One Book, One Philadelphia" choice for this year. This powerful novel tells the story of a poor African-American family traveling through Louisiana and Mississippi to pick up their white father from prison. An historical saga bridging three generations, Ward's newest work has been called majestic, stirring, and timeless. The March 21 book is *Educated*, a memoir by Tara Westover, a tale of journeying from fundamental Mormonism to a Cambridge PhD. Insight meets monthly at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday evenings at MLUC. Discussions are open to all interested readers. For more information, contact Eileen Andrews (jricka@verizon.net).

PATHWAY TO MEMBERSHIP ORIENTATION – DISCOVER, CONNECT, SHARE, AND INTEGRATE

If you've begun visiting MLUC and want to learn more about the UU faith and this church, consider attending the next Pathway to Membership Orientation on **February 23 and April 27**. Whether you attend services, Small Group Ministry, meditations, book groups, or anything else, you are welcome to join us.

At the first class Rev. Jones will speak about UU history and how it is practiced today. Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Dawn Star Sarahs-Borchelt will give an overview of Faith Development offerings and opportunities for people of all ages. We'll then cover the ways in which members live the mission of the church, how they create this vibrant, caring, supportive, and socially



active church community. We'll offer suggestions for newcomers to integrate into the community through church events, volunteering, and being engaged in social action work. Member mentors will serve as guides in the exploration process, facilitating introductions to members and helping participants forge connections to groups and programs. The best way to get to know a community is to become part of it. The two months between the first and second class are for exploring, connecting, and integrating.

At the second class, we'll experience a Small Group Ministry sample session, hear a presentation from the Executive Director, Rich Fritzson, have a general Q&A, and share some experiences had while exploring the church. For those who choose to join MLUC after the class, there will be a ceremony at the Sunday service on May 12 and a New Member Dinner on May 18. If you'd like to hear more or register, please email jessica@mluc.org.

THE GREATER PHILLY UU CLUSTER'S JUBILEE WORKSHOP

March 8 - March 10 at MLUC

Are you ready to take a leading role to nurture your congregation's multicultural future in the face of opposing cultural currents? Do you wish to deepen your understanding of how race and ethnicity play out in our institutions and our daily lives? The Jubilee Workshop helps participants to understand what is involved in fostering a multicultural community and working against racism in all of its forms. The training includes presentations, discussions, videos, exercises, small group work, worship services, and shared meals. Open to members of any UU congregation. Church leaders are especially encouraged to attend.



Workshop Schedule:

Friday, March 8 - 6:00 - 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 9 - 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 10 - 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (with a break for worship service)

Agenda Topics

- The history of racism and resistance to racism in the Americas
- Defining Racism
- The effects of racism on people of color and on white people
- Dismantling racism
- Claiming and shaping an anti-racist identity
- Racism in the UUA

Enrollment: limited to 40 participants.

Fee: \$160 per participant (includes cost for trainers, meals and materials).

Register at: www.tinyurl.com/jubilee2019

Homestays may be possible for those coming from far away. Contact Lisa Jochum (lisajochum@verizon.net) by February 15.

COMING OF AGE

In January, our 8th-9th grade Coming of Age class had fun considering expressions of their beliefs in alternative formats. There is an emotional component to one's beliefs, and it is important to recognize that some meaningful beliefs may guide our lives but not be easy to articulate verbally. This photo captures the classes' energy as they cut up colorful paint samples and other materials to express "wonder" and "community." One student explored the sense of wonder that the names of the various paint colors connote, while another explored the wonder inherent in world religions.



The two main themes of the Coming of Age spring semester will be: creating a credo, or belief statement in response to the questions explored in the fall, and planning the Coming of Age worship service. Mark your calendars for this service on May 19 at 10:00 a.m.

In the credo-writing classes, teachers provide the youth with lots of support. Each student will have one of the four teachers working with them. Rev Neal Jones and Religious Education Director, Dawn Star Sarahs-Borchelt will guide the class in building their worship service.

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.

ARTIST OF THE MONTH: LIBBIE SOFFER

sew on and sew forth; a visual essay on the process of stitching a life

Award-winning area artist, Libbie Soffer will display her fiber artwork exhibit inspired by a life long affair with cloth and sewing. Libbie learned to sew as a child and considers her sewing machine an integral tool in her artmaking. Sculptures, wall hangings, and mixed media dominate the exhibit using cloth's gestural potential with historic and biographic connection. She creates new surfaces with paper and cloth for building tales of non-figurative storytelling.

Libbie and her colleague Thora Jacobson will lead a discussion/Q&A during the opening reception at 2:00 p.m. on February 24. (Event runs from 1:00-4:00 p.m.)

On February 26, Libby will host a **Mixed Media Collage Workshop**, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Cost: \$40; 10-Person Limit; All materials provided; Bring a bagged lunch. To register for this hands-on workshop, contact Mary Kane (marykaneart@gmail.com). Seven spaces remain.



JUSTICE ON EARTH

Sundays, February 10 and 17 at 11:30 a.m., led by Doug Hunt and Ruth Bowen

Join us for a group discussion on this year's UUA Common Read: *Justice on Earth: People of Faith Working at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Environment*. "This highly anticipated anthology presents a powerful and penetrating look at environmental justice from some of the key thinkers and activists in Unitarian Universalism today. Fourteen activist ministers and lay leaders apply a keen intersectional analysis to the environmental crisis, revealing ways that capitalism, white supremacy, patriarchy, and other systems of oppression intersect with and contribute to ecological devastation." Learn more and purchase the book at uua.org/books/read. Childcare available upon request: Email childcare@mluc.org.

FEBRUARY OFFERING OUTREACH

The mission of the Women's Resource Center (WRC) is to help women and girls successfully navigate life's transitions and inspire others to do the same. By providing resources, tools and support for today, the organization creates hope for tomorrow. Located in Wayne, the WRC was founded in 1975. It currently provides an Information and Referral Helpline 5 days per week, family law legal consultations at 5 sites, the Ladies in Charge Program at the Domestic Abuse Project in Delaware County, the Girls Lead Program at 11 schools, and a Divorce Resource event and Divorce Support Group.

Most of the women served are from Delaware, Montgomery and Chester Counties. They are a diverse clientele with an average age of 56. Over 70% of clients have a household income of less than \$25,000. Women often contact WRC in dire straits at the end of a marriage, termination of a job, loss of a loved one, or change in health. A significant number have experienced financial abuse by a partner. The organization has a small staff and benefits from the work of 200 volunteers, including pro bono professionals who support their programs. Visit <https://womensresourcecenter.net>.

THEOLOGY EXPLORERS

Second Wednesdays, 10:00-11:30 a.m., in Greeley Library, led by group members

This group searches for truth, meaning, and spiritual growth by discussing life's big questions. By listening and sharing, we hope to gain wisdom and place our faith and ideals into practice. No registration required. Discussion materials coming up in 2019:

- ◆ February: *Drawing Down the Moon* by Margot Adler
- ◆ March: Choose from a selection of books like *The Science of Mind* by Ernest Holmes, provided by a group member
- ◆ April: *The Reason For God*

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

CANDLES OF COMMUNITY

We express our support and concern for ...

Keith Swift, son-in-law of **Pat Jordan**, who is recovering from injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident.

Alan Silverman, who donated a kidney to his sister Laura on December 17. Both are recovering from their surgeries.

Ron Rose's sister, who was diagnosed this summer with aggressive peritoneal cancer and who has opted out of chemotherapy and is now under hospice care.

Irene Milliken-Owens, who suffered a stroke on January 6 and has moved to Assisted Living at Kendal at Longwood. She welcomes visitors and cards: Kendal-Crosslands Communities, PO Box 100, Kennett Square, PA 19348.

Steve Rhoades, whose friend, 54-year-old Vanina Lepissier, died from cancer on January 6.

Leslie Wright-Riley, whose friend Lauren's 16-year-old son, Oliver, died from cancer on January 7.

Nini Ingersoll, whose friend, Sam Christiansen, died suddenly on January 16.

Norman Vadner, whose sister, Nancy Vadner Chance, died at age 90 after several years of living with dementia. Nancy was a two-time all American in women's sports.

We express our appreciation to ...

Everyone who contributed socks for homeless men, women, and children of the Norristown Hospitality Center, many of which were used as ornaments on our MLUC Christmas tree. A total of 75 lbs of socks were donated. Thank you, **Betsy McIlwain**, for organizing our sock drive.

Jim & Wendy Schmid for their slide presentation of their trip in the fall to Romania, including their visit to our Partner Church in Várfalva; and to the **Partner Church Committee** for hosting the event, as well as reenacting a play about King John Sigismund and displaying gifts from Várfalva during our January 13 service – a pulpit crown, an embroidered pulpit cloth, and vases.

Caryn Kayser, Patrick Wright-Riley, Dawn Star Sarahs-Borchelt, and Rich Fritzson who served on the final playground planning committee and completed the full installation of our church playground for all ages.

We express our congratulations to ...

Rick Andrews, who has completed his last radiation treatment for prostate cancer.

Bob Holdsworth, who turned 95, and to **Betty Johnston**, who turned 99 in January.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

People come into our church community looking for a place to belong (intimacy) and a place to seek meaning (ultimacy) about living and dying and the spaces between. Small group ministry helps provide this! Learn more about Small Group Ministry and fill out an interest form at <http://mluc.org/community/small-group-ministry>.

MEMBERS ART SHOW

April 7 - April 28

Calling all MLUC artists! This year's theme is: What I Care About. Your subject could be something that speaks to the environment, justice, and peace, the people or places you love, or whatever moves and inspires you to create. Whether you make art every day, every week, or produce just one masterpiece on occasion, we want your work in our show! Youth are welcome to participate. It is always amazing to see the talent and creativity blooming, sometimes secretly, within our congregation!

Intake will be on Sunday, March 31 in Greeley Library. Bring one or two pieces, any medium, wired ready to hang, with an artist's statement explaining the topic of your work. Two dimensions are generally preferred, but 3-D artists may contact Barbara Bugliani (b2bugliani@gmail.com) to inquire about exhibition space. Look for Visual Arts Committee members in the Atrium on March 17 and 24 to answer your questions.





MAIN LINE UNITARIAN CHURCH

816 SOUTH VALLEY FORGE RD · DEVON PA 19333

PHONE 610-688-8332

FAX 610-964-1195

WWW.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 **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).