



What's Happening

MAIN LINE UNITARIAN

MAY 2019

DAWNING THOUGHTS

There will be a FIRE DRILL on Sunday, May 5 right at the very end of the worship service!

Now that I've got your attention, let me tell you a little more. This congregation is very fire-safety-aware because our building burned down less than a generation ago. We have most of the fire safety equipment there is. However, we haven't practiced how to respond as a community to a fire or other emergency in our building in a while. So that's what we'll do this month.



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

At the end of the service, just before the postlude, the fire alarm will go off. Those of you who are in the Sanctuary will evacuate through the doors at the back of the room that lead directly to the patio. From there, a completely paved path will take us around to the front of the building, where we'll go down the exit lane of the driveway and cross the street to Ditmar Park. Ushers will be in charge of helping people stay on track and get all the way to this meeting place, assisting those for whom this might be a long walk. We know it's a long walk, and it may not seem urgent for you personally to go all that way. But we ask that you try, as the one thing that really helps in emergencies is if people have **practiced** what to do and can respond automatically rather than thinking everything through. Ditmar Park is out of the way of emergency responders and not completely visible from the building, should we ever have (gods forbid) an active shooter situation.

Those who are elsewhere in the building (mostly kids and teachers in religious education classes) will exit and proceed to Ditmar Park as well. It's very important that kids stay **with** their teachers until they have arrived as a group at the meeting place. In a real emergency, it could create a lot of confusion if a parent took their child away from their group before an orderly check-out with the teachers. Note: If your child will have a very hard time being in the building with a loud fire alarm, please let me know ahead of time or on the day of, and I can arrange for them to head out a little early.

I get to have a bullhorn to let everyone know when the drill is over and it's time to come back to the building! Don't head back inside until you hear the all-clear from me. Once we're inside, anyone who is interested is invited to join Rev. Neal and I for a Q&A session about our newly-revised Safe Congregations Policy. We encourage every member to read through the policies, and bring any questions or concerns to this meeting. The policy can be read at <http://mluc.org/community/safe-congregations>.

We aligned our policies with new state laws regarding background checks and child abuse/neglect reporting and incorporated a variety of other policies previously adopted piecemeal. We also revived the Congregational Response Team to provide leadership in any situation where there is a report of abuse or neglect, a disruptive incident, or another safety concern in the congregation. The Congregational Response Team consists of the Senior Minister, the Director of Lifespan Religious Education, the Board President, and one other trusted member (This year it is Don Walker.)

*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

Welcoming Wonder

Last month, we celebrated two religious holidays that feature miracles. The Easter story celebrates the coming back to life of a man who had been dead for three days, and the Passover story is packed with miracles – a bush that burns without burning up, a staff that turns into a snake, ten nasty plagues (water turning to blood, a frog infestation, swarms of locusts, and an outbreak of boils, to name just a few), and a sea which opens so that people can pass through. I dare say there is no one in our congregation who takes these stories literally, so why do we bother retelling them each year? Because a story can be true without being literally true.



Rev. Dr. Neal R. Jones
Senior Minister

In seminary, I learned that a more accurate translation of the word typically translated as ‘miracle’ would be signs and wonders. A miracle is something that catches your attention, filling you with awe and wonder and pointing you toward a truth you might otherwise miss. In this sense, the miracle of resurrection is true: Endings do give rise to beginnings, and new life springs forth from death. Just look around at the resurrection of spring blossoms from their winter death. And the Passover miracle is true, as well. Walls of oppression that have stood forever do unexpectedly come tumbling down, and as my African American minister friends say, “A way is made out of no way.” Just look around at the high and mighty male celebrities who have sexually assaulted women for decades who have suddenly been brought down from their perches of privilege and made to face the consequences of their actions thanks to the #MeToo movement.

I think the value of retelling miracle stories is that they keep us open to awe and wonder. It’s easy to get caught up in the daily grind of our routines and start seeing life as a series of reruns and, worse, start believing that things don’t change, that life doesn’t change, that people don’t change, that we don’t change. But every now and then, something happens to jolt us out of sleep-walking and help us see a bigger picture, feel a deeper emotion, or aspire to a higher ideal. Maybe reading a moving book, climbing to the top of a mountain, or calling an old friend will spark wonder.

Miracles abound in the Bible. They also abound in our lives ... if our eyes are open to wonder.

With eyes wide open,
Neal

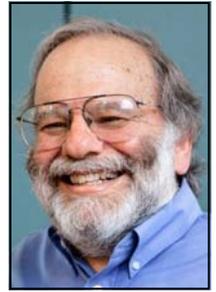
I’m writing this about a week before the end of April and about one half of the pledge cards for the annual campaign have been returned to the office.

When you read this, we will be preparing the budget for 2019-2020 which you will vote on at the **Congregational Meeting on June 2**.

If you have not yet returned a pledge card for 2019-2020 to the office, please do so as soon as you can. Every single pledge makes a difference. We need to count your pledge in this budget.

Thank you for your generous support of our church.

- Rich



Rich Fritzson,
Executive Director

ALL-CHURCH POTLUCK

Saturday, May 11, 5:15-7:30 p.m.

This potluck will honor our Welcoming Congregation, which celebrates all kinds of families and the different ways our members live and love in the world. The usual food and fellowship will be shared, and there will be rainbows everywhere! RSVP and let us know what you’ll bring at <http://tinyurl.com/maypotluck1>.

PA SCHOOL FUNDING – FREE WORKSHOP

Sunday, May 19 at 11:45 in the Children's Rec. Room, light refreshments served

Members of Power Metro will speak on proposed legislation that impacts how funds are distributed to public schools. Power believes that all children deserve great schools, regardless of race, ethnicity, or income. Power is organizing and mobilizing members of the Pennsylvania faith community to confront widespread, systemic, and educational inequality in Philadelphia and statewide. They represent congregations and faith leaders in Bucks, Delaware, Montgomery, and Chester counties. In addition, mark your calendars for June 12 for a trip to Harrisburg to advocate for PA Fair Funding legislation.

- Request childcare by emailing childcare@mluc.org.
- Register at <https://tinyurl.com/y627lmup>.
- Learn more at powerinterfaith.org/campaigns/education.

FOLK SING

The next folk sing will take place Saturday, June 1 at MLUC. All who enjoy informal group singing are welcome.

SUNDAY SERVICES

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

MAY 5: CHOOSING YOUR PROBLEMS

Rev. Dr. Neal R. Jones

Music: Wolfgang Jaeger, piano

By trying to be happy, we make ourselves miserable. A better tactic is to choose your problems.

MAY 12: MOVING FROM NO TO YES

Rev. Dr. Neal R. Jones

Music: MLUC Choir

On this New Member Sunday, we will note the typical process of membership for UUs - moving from rejecting our religious past to affirming our self-chosen convictions.

MAY 19: COMING OF AGE SERVICE

Led by MLUC's Coming of Age Class

MAY 26: THE ART OF PLAY

Rev. Pamela Wat

Music: Helen Avakian, guitar and vocals

Rev. Pam joins us to share her passion for play. She will take us beyond play structures and bouncing balls, beyond doll houses and building blocks, to a kind of playfulness that has the power to transform our lives.

STICKY BUN SATURDAY

(LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR YOU!)

Please join us on Saturday, May 4 from 9:00 a.m. to noon for leadership development and a sweet sticky bun treat. We'll talk about how your committee's work connects to the mission of the church, what it means to be of service, how folks get invited into leadership here, and some how-tos for anyone that wants to make things happen! Current and future leaders are invited - even if you're not sure that's you, the meeting is open to all.



MAY OFFERING OUTREACH

Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Main Line (IHN) has been selected as the Offering Outreach recipient for May. IHN provides a caring and positive environment for homeless families while they design and implement a plan to break the cycle of homelessness in their lives. Using area congregations and the energy of several hundred community volunteers, IHN is dedicated to helping families strive for a better tomorrow. MLUC is one of ten host congregations that periodically provide homeless families with home cooked meals and a place to sleep and feel safe. For more information, visit www.ihncares.org.

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A DAY APART: EXPLORING THE LABYRINTH AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Saturday, May 11, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at MLUC

Carmel Stabley, a Veriditas Advanced Certified Labyrinth Facilitator, will help us explore the power of labyrinth walking as a spiritual practice. Navigating these ancient and mythical paths can provide many benefits, including helping us develop greater mindfulness and gain profound personal and spiritual insights. Take this opportunity to increase your spiritual development and nurture your inner self. In addition to exploring both Baltic and Medieval-style labyrinths, you will learn about the history and significance of different labyrinth patterns, discover how to personalize your walk by setting intentions, and to deepen your experience through a process called Key Word Journaling.



- ◆ Members, non-members, and persons of all faith traditions and experience levels are welcome. Please feel free to invite a friend.
- ◆ There will be a short ceremony to celebrate the construction and dedicate MLUC's new labyrinth at 3:30 p.m.
- ◆ Suggested donation for the day: \$20
- ◆ Optional bag lunch: \$10 (includes sandwich, side, and cupcake; drinks, snacks, and fruit provided)
- ◆ Free childcare will be available

Space is limited to 40 participants so please register as soon as possible at <https://tinyurl.com/adayapart>
Questions? Contact Sue Compton (suemcompton@gmail.com; 610-947-3699).

INSIGHT BOOK GROUP

Thursday, May 23, at 7:00 p.m. in Room 208

The book selection for May is *There, There* by Tommy Orange, a member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes who writes a powerful story of urban Indians attending a powwow. Insight is open to all interested readers. Email Eileen Andrews with any questions (jricka@verizon.net).

MAY LECTURE LUNCHEON

Wednesday, May 15, Refreshments at 11:30, luncheon at Noon

Our guest is MLUC's own Music Director, Dr. Vincent Craig, who will discuss and perform music. This is always a popular event, and reservations are necessary. RSVP to Gene Ramsbottom (earamsbottom@gmail.com) by Sunday, May 12. (Luncheons typically occur on the second Wednesday, but this has been rescheduled to the third Wednesday in May).

ENDING HOMELESSNESS ONE FAMILY AT A TIME

We're preparing to welcome our guest families for our third hosting of 2019, which runs May 26 through June 2. Opportunities for volunteers are available, and sign-ups are now available online at <https://tinyurl.com/ihn44> and on the MLUC IHN webpage. You can also see us in the Atrium after services to sign up.

Please join us in welcoming our guests! Training will be made available as needed for new volunteers. Contact us at ihn@mluc.org with any questions.

- Bob Batt and Donna Monturo, MLUC coordinators

UUMAC

July 7-13 at DeSales University

UUMAC participants gather together for one week each year to build community and deepen our Unitarian Universalist faith through fun, friendship, music, dancing, learning and worship. UUMAC is many things to many people: a spiritual retreat, time for reflection and celebration, a reunion with friends, and a time to revel in a community of fun-loving and like-minded people of all ages. For more info and to register, visit www.uumac.org.

PARTNER CHURCH NEWS

MLUC's partner church, the Várfalva Unitarian Church in the village of Várfalva in Transylvania, Romania, is undergoing an extensive renovation to restore its historic 700-year-old building. To help our partners celebrate the completion of the renovation, projected to occur in 2020, and strengthen our partnership, the MLUC Partner Church Committee (PCC) will organize a pilgrimage to Transylvania that will include a stay in Várfalva and visits to sites associated with the origins of Unitarianism.

To prepare for the trip, the committee will hold a series of information sessions for all those who are interested in making the pilgrimage to Transylvania or simply in learning more about Unitarian history and our partner church and their Hungarian language and culture. To get started, we will introduce some of the members of the Várfalva Unitarian Church, beginning with the minister, Zsolt Barabas, his wife, Aliz, and his two daughters, Dorka, a first grader, and Kincső, in kindergartener.

In a letter to the PCC sent just before Christmas, Zsolt reports that he is happy with the progress of the renovation but that it takes so much of his time ("Weekly I am going to Kolozsvar with papers, stamp, signature, stamp, signature, discussions ...") that by evening he is so tired that he just "sleeps through reading evening tales for the girls." "We had a rich autumn," he writes, "with lot of fruits in garden. I will have for Christmas fresh palinka [the traditional fruit brandy that accompanies most meals and any occasions] and homemade wine, too :)."



Dorka, Aliz, and Kincső Barabas show off their bountiful fall harvest.



Dorka and Kincső Barabas and a friend visit the site of the Várfalva church renovation.

THEOLOGY EXPLORERS

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

This group searches for truth, meaning, and spiritual growth by discussing life's big questions. The next meeting will be on May 8 to discuss *The Reason For God - Belief in an Age of Skepticism* by Timothy Keller. No registration required.

READY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN HARRISBURG?

UUPLAN is joining government grassroots organizations - Common Cause PA, MarchOnHarrisburg, League of Women Voters, and Represent Us PA to create the Democracy Partnership of Pennsylvania. We're working together to fight to end corruption, make voting more accessible, and make the democracy of the Commonwealth stronger and more inclusive. Our first series of events will be the Democracy Town Hall tour where we will discuss the type of reforms needed to improve our commonwealth. The town hall will be interactive, engaging, and empowering for all in attendance. Register by visiting www.facebook.com/pg/MarchOnHarrisburg2/events.



Democracy Town Hall Schedule for May:

- April 27 through May 5: March from Philadelphia to Harrisburg to Make Corruption Illegal
- Thursday, May 9: Town hall at Pittston
- Thursday, May 16: Town hall at UU Congregation of Lehigh Valley

For more UUPLAN news and events, please visit www.uuplan.org.

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

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

ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Abstract impressionist painter, Alan Soffer's exhibition, *To Be or Not to Be*, will be displayed in the Fireside Room May 3 through June 17. Soffer's exhibitions have traveled throughout the US, Argentina, Cuba, and Kurdistan. His use of encaustics began in 1998 and continues to be an integral feature of his work. Reduction and distillation both buries and exposes bits of his images and sentiments infused in the multilayered paintings. Soffer's use of this ancient technique of hot pigmented wax, through its inherent translucency, supports his vocabulary for expressing space. Space, from the microscopic to the galactic, is a frequent theme.

A reception and panel discussion will take place on **Friday, May 3 from 5:00-8:00 p.m.** with Rev. Jones, Dr. Grant Grissom, and Jean Arnold.

See some of Alan's stunning work at <https://www.alansofferart.com>.



CONVERSATIONS ON AGING

Conversations on Aging is an open group that meets on the final Wednesday of each month. We have been exploring different models for this continuously evolving group, and have decided that a support group format might be the most useful way to hold these conversations. Participants come to share their thoughts and concerns about the experience of growing older. Beginning with the May 29 meeting and throughout the summer, we will continue to gather from 1:00-2:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room for thoughtful discussion about this unique time in life. The topic of our gathering in May will be: Facing Our Mortality. Please join us!

NEW HOPE CELEBRATES PRIDE PARADE

Saturday, May 18, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (meet at 11:00 a.m.)

Local UU congregations have participated in this parade for the past 7 years, joining other faiths in affirming and promoting the inherent worth and dignity of every person. If you plan to join in, please contact welcoming@uufnb.org or find UU Fellowship of Lower Bucks members in the staging area by 11:00 a.m. on the day of the parade. For details, visit:

www.greaterphillyuu.org/events/new-hope-celebrates-pride-parade-2019/



GUEST AT YOUR TABLE

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee extends its gratitude to MLUC for raising \$1,026.59 during the 2018 Guest at Your Table program. These funds will support displaced persons from Central American nations like Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, while helping to change the narrative about migrants and border control. For more information visit www.uusc.org.

NAMI THANKS

The National Alliance on Mental Health would like to thank MLUC for its generous Offering Outreach donation that will help the organization expand and provide mental health services to more families and individuals with mental illness. For more information visit <https://namimainlinepa.org>.

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 ...

Mary Sohler, who fell and broke her hip on March 27 and had a hip replacement at Paoli Hospital. She is undergoing rehab at Powerback Rehabilitation in Exton.

Marjorie Gingles, who was hospitalized after a fall on April 4. She is undergoing rehab at Park Lane at Bellingham in West Chester.

Ann Miller, whose brother, Tom Fosnocht, died on April 16.

Christopher Merken, son of **Laurie Rogers** and **Gary Merken**, who was recently a patient at Bryn Mawr Hospital with a strep infection in his leg.

Molly Simon's dear friend, Bill, who was recently diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer.

JB Hillman, who is recovering from hip replacement surgery he had on April 24.

John Dent, whose father has been hospitalized.

We express our appreciation to ...

The 40 members and friends of MLUC who are exhibiting 61 pieces of their artwork in the MLUC Community Art Show in the Fireside Room: **Frank Osgood, Jay Wiley, Julia Hurle, Mark Hurle, Jeff Weikel, Rich Alliger, Marile Marshall, Ann Miller, Luke Cavanagh, Greg Gaul, Eden Kayser, Janet Levy, Sabine Rehm, David Huckler, Linda Farr, Roderick Wolfson, Julia Hodgson, Pat Jordan, Lin Koenig, Mary Stromquist, Emma Mellon, Kerry Mueller, Ann Keech, Deva Kayser, Sally Fritzson, Mary Kane, Barbara Bugliani, Donna Monturo, Steve Banks, Kit Burns, Sandy Gargus, Joanne Rose, Denise Pettit, Bill Siple, Matthew Borchelt, C.J. Cona, Rick Rickert, Caryn Kayser, Madeline Sayko, and Lee Dastur.**

We express our congratulations to ...

Sarah Kinder, who will take her second tour in the Peace Corps when she retires from the Agnes Irwin School at the end of the school year. She took her first tour after college. This time, she is going to Namibia.

UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Registration and housing reservations for GA are open! Join thousands of UUs from all over the US in Spokane, Washington from June 19 to 23 for this annual meeting of UUs. The theme this year is "The Power of We." Main Line Unitarian Church is eligible to send eleven members as delegates to GA. **If interested in being a delegate, please send a note to Rich Fritzson (rich@mluc.org).** Visit <http://www.uua.org/ga>.

UNIRONDAK

Unirondack is a UU camp and conference center in the Adirondacks offering a variety of programs including the Queer-Straight Alliance Retreat, Young Adult Weekend, Women's and Men's Weekends, and more. They offer several youth summer camps for age groups 9-12, 12-14, 14-16, and 16-18. Learn more about the programs and register at <https://www.unirondack.org>.



GPC SUMMIT

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

Leaders, Ministers, Staff, and Members of the 14 congregations of the GPC are invited to attend to explore and determine the organizational structure and future of the Cluster. Mark Bernstein will facilitate the meeting, and Pat Infante will provide an overview of regionalization/clusters. For more details and to register, visit: www.greaterphillyuu.org/events/gpc-summit/.



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