

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY
OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD
P.O. Box 1236, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568
A Welcoming Congregation
December 2007

The Rev. Judith Campbell, Minister Judith Neeld, Editor
Carol Loud, Music Director – Peg Thayer, Office Administrator
www.uusmv.info - Church Office: 508-693-8982 – uusmv@uusmv.info
Minister's Office Hours: *By Appointment*
Church Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

-----Parish Committee-----

Sarah Shepard, President – Mimi Davisson, Vice President
Catherine DeVito, Secretary – Blair Shick, Treasurer
Members-at-large:
Peter Palches – Mike Kobran (seasonal) – Betsy Buck
-----Next Copy Deadline: December 15-----

SUNDAY SERVICES – 11:00 a.m.

Dec. 2 - **Looking Backwards, Looking Forward**, Rev. Judith Campbell. "A Sermon for a UUSMV Advent. (*First Sunday, please bring a non-perishable contribution for The Food Pantry.*)

Dec. 9 - **What Is a Church**, Nis Kildegaard. Former editor of *The Vineyard Gazette* and current editor of *Frameworks*, a journal of affordable housing on the island, Nis is from a church family—his father a Lutheran minister. Knowing that UUSMV is in transition and thus asking "who are we and what can we be", Nis will talk about belief and non-belief and their core roles in establishing a church's identity.

Dec. 16- **A Panel/Conversation on Mindfulness and Insight Meditation**. Chas Di Capua. noted Teacher-in-Residence of the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, MA. What is Mindfulness and how does the process of Insight Meditation enrich our lives, contribute to our mental health and help us appreciate present moments? Jo Rice and Peg Thayer of our local Mindfulness group, along with two members of UUSMV's Worship Committee will also help lead this informal presentation.

Annual Candlelight Service at 7:00 p.m. in the chapel. Seasonal readings, reflections and special music by the Spirituals Choir (formerly NAACP Choir). Annual Holiday Celebration afterwards to take place at Grace Episcopal Church.

Dec. 23- **Ghosts of Christmas Past and Ghosts of Now**. Holly Nadler. Oak Bluffs ghost hunter, author and journalist, Holly will discuss true-life ghost stories from the island, and other brushes with the spirit world—all to be included in her sequel to *Haunted Island*, to be published by Downeast Books in the fall of 2008. Please consider sharing your own ghost stories during this hour.

Dec. 30- **Relationships**. Ken Beebe. This 30-year member of UUSMV has spoken to us many times but today, by popular demand, he is asked to repeat his message on July 8, 2007. With wit, common sense and a wealth of personal experience, Ken will describe not only people-to-people relationships, but also those between people and institutions, material objects and ideas—and how these relationships help or hinder our goals. A skilled teacher and school administrator before retirement, Ken is now a seasoned fisherman and guide for visiting fishermen

-,AND.....

Yvonne LaBreque, who joined UUSMV in 1981, is planning to move to Portland, OR, on December 17 to be near her family. A reception honoring Yvonne and her many contributions to UUSMV is planned for the social hour following the service on Sunday, December 2. Yvonne has contributed much to the island as well, being active in the League of Women Voters, the Hazardous Waste collections, the gardening efforts which evolved into COMSOG and the improved French of many. We will miss her among us.

Trustees of UUSMV – Buildings and Grounds Concerns

Steve Engh – Mary Miller– Jack Street –

From Your Minister,

When I wrote my first letter to our monthly newsletter, I could never have anticipated how it would feel to be writing my last. This is new territory. There is so much I want to say...about how we have grown together, how much I have learned from you, how my faith has deepened—but...I think you know that. How could you not?

So instead, I'll turn to practical matters, and tell you, in writing, what I can do, and can not do once I am no longer YOUR MINISTER. I do this, because you keep asking me, and it is important for us all to understand that the limits and restrictions on my participation in UUSMV activities once I step down are for the good of the whole, and not designed to make you or me feel locked out of one another's lives.

What I can and can not do at UUSMV once I leave my position.

For two years after I leave, my husband and I may not participate in worship, other than by special invitation. This is to insure a healthy transition to and for the new minister...and for us too! This is not punitive... it is constructive and a part of my ordained ministerial code of ethics.

When Chris and I return to the Island in the spring of 2008 we can still socialize with those people we socialized with when I was the minister; the difference is, I can not and will not talk about UUSMV business or worship or internal politics. It is important that I maintain a loving and respectful distance and "hands off" stance until you have a new minister.

I will be returning to my Community Ministry, a ministry without walls. As such, I'll continue my own creative and theological writing, lead retreats and workshops locally and nationally, act as a consultant when asked, and continue to perform non-UUSMV weddings, funerals and child dedications anywhere on the island. I can perform a UUSMV service only with the consent of the minister and the Parish committee for 2 years, and it needs to be a very special occasion, or at the request of an overly busy minister. I will never initiate it.

When you have an interim, and again when you have a settled minister, the protocol is for me to meet with him/her and offer the hand of fellowship, and let that person decide what my connection/role with UUSMV shall be. This is how it should be.

If a member of UUSMV wants me to do a special service, a wedding or a funeral or a dedication of a child, the family must ask and receive the permission of the acting or called minister even before speaking with me. If there is no minister in place, the Parish Committee would be consulted. After Dec. 31, 2007, I would be considered a visiting minister, and would be paid according to UUMA guidelines.

If a person calls the church and asks for a minister to do a wedding or a funeral, then that call must be referred to the acting, interim or new minister. If someone calls

the church looking to locate, or specifically asking for Rev. Judy Campbell, that call must be referred to me because it might be personal, and not be related to UUSMV business. The church must trust that I will make the proper decision as to how to respond to that call.

Finally, The Interim minister is NOT just a place holder. The interim minister is a real minister, and does a very specialized job in helping a congregation clarify who they are and where they want to go next, and what kind of minister they will need to realize that vision. Never discount the interim minister by holding off matters of importance until the “real” minister is called.

In closing, I offer a poem I wrote last week, while in New Hampshire leading a writing retreat.

**I watch the night sky shifting into dawn.
A sun-streaked glow of hope and promise.
My days are going faster now,
Less time between this sunrise and the next
...I savor it all while I can.**

Love and Blessings for the last time as...
YOUR, Minister

Deck the Halls Deck the Halls Deck the Halls:

Join us on Monday Dec 3 at 6:00 p.m. for a church decorating party. We will trim the tree and put some holiday touches on our lovely chapel. A light soup supper will be served along with some yummy desserts. See you there. **Celeste Stickney**

**SAVE THE DATE
Sunday, January 6, 2008, 4:00 p.m.
Stevens Memorial Chapel
for a
Celebration of Rev. Judy's
Seven Years with UUSMV**

Letter from the President of the Parish Committee:

Unitarian Universalist churches are identified with social action and have made many contributions in this area. Often, a particular church is identified with a specific effort, be it eradicating hunger, bringing justice to an oppressed group or righting a wrong. We, at UUSMV, a few years ago, met with much anticipation of identifying a cause which we could call our own and around which we could come together as a community. Although this effort did not work out, I am continuously amazed at how much our members and friends DO contribute to the community. Mary Miller and Chris Stokes have recently spent another week with the New England Nailers building houses for Habitat for Humanity in Mississippi. Mimi Davison serves on the Martha's Vineyard Commission and she and Peter Palches are on the Oak Bluffs Finance Committee. Dorothy Packer has delivered Meals on Wheels for YEARS, Betty Burton chairs the Vineyard Committee on Hunger and has just rallied the community to provide Thanksgiving dinners for those in need. Clara Kennedy has also spent years working with the Island Food Pantry. Norman and Celeste Stickney have headed SERVE, a low cost food program on the Vineyard. Dick Mezger has worked with Bridge Housing for many years to build some low cost housing in Vineyard Haven. And, as I write this, I am acutely conscious that I am omitting more worthy efforts than I am mentioning. As a congregation we DO do the Crop Walk, the Guest at Your Table contributions, and the

walk for Habitat, but otherwise our considerable efforts reflect our valued diversity - and maybe it is good that this should be so. Congratulations and a warm thank you to all who serve in any capacity - we are much enriched by your efforts. **Sarah Shepard**

In Our UUSMV Community:

In our community: The lunch party honoring Ray and Georgia Franklin on October 20 was a happy success with over forty members and friends attending. Rev. Judy presented them with a framed photograph of our chapel. We wish them well and look forward to their spring and fall visits.... We thank Sandy Raymond for taking one of our hymn books to a recent performance by Holly Near who autographed Hymn # 170, "We are a gentle, angry people" for us. This is on display on top of the bookcase in the office. ...Thanks to Laurie Lambert who, after a morning with the Meditation Group, expertly neatened our cupboard by the clock.

Thanks also to Mimi Davisson for the wonderful new Directories. One has been sent/delivered to every member and friend and, if you loose yours or need two for a special reason, there are spares in the office. From time to time, there will be updates of new information printed in the Newsletter and we urge you to update your directories each month....Mimi Davisson made plans to go to the BCD Cape and Islands cluster meeting in Hyannis, but the boat did not run; thanks for trying Mimi...Janet Holladay has facilitated a book discussion of *A Chosen Faith*, an Introduction to Unitarian Universalism, by Rev. John Buehrens and Rev. Forrest Church, both well known UU clergymen and former presidents of the UUA. Thirteen people signed up for four sessions on Sunday mornings and the discussions have been spirited and informative.

Invite A Guest To Your Table:

There's still time to invite a Guest to Your Table. Please pick up a cardboard bank at the back of the chapel for depositing your loose change during the holiday season. Proceeds will go to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) to assist people in need all over the world.

Thanks from the **UUSMV Social Action Network**

Caring Coordinator: Pamela Street
Hospitality Coordinator: Catherine DeVito

The Neighborhood Convention:

Tuesday, December 4, 10:45 a.m. The Neighborhood Convention will present the MV Regional High School Minesingers at the Trinity United Methodist Church in the Campground in Oak Bluffs. The program will be followed by lunch in the Parish Hall where we will follow the usual pattern of bringing our sandwich/salad and our hosts will provide beverages and dessert.

Crop Walk Report:

The annual Crop Walk took place on Sunday November 4 and five members of UUSMV took part, Betsy Buck, Janet Holladay, Ardell Otten, Jack Street and Chris Stokes. (I had intended to list the walkers by age, but decided not to on the ground that, not only might I incriminate myself, but I might get into trouble if I got it wrong) Nonetheless, the youngest creature there was Betsy's dog, who came along for the fun. Unlike other Crop Walks, the weather was fine and a good temperature for walking. There seemed to be very few cheer-leaders along the route, so I may become a cheer-leader myself, next year. The first half was done in fine style and everyone was glad to do the return leg from Oak Bluffs to Vineyard Haven, except Chris Stokes, who muttered

some truly feeble excuse about an appointment and limped off up the hill to home.

In spite of this, four of the walkers raised \$590.00 between them, and the fifth has not yet reported back. At the last estimate, Crop Walk pledges were believed to be between \$15,000.00 and \$20,000.00. A final, or near final, total should be known soon and will be published in the January newsletter. **Chris Stokes**

New UUSMV Directory Change:

Just after the new directory had gone to press, we received a correction to Raymond and Georgia Franklin's e-mail and post office addresses: 54 Medford Leas, Medford, NJ, 08055, georgiafranklin@medleas.com , re franklin@medleas.com . The phone number in the new directory is correct.

The Island Food Pantry:

The Island Food Pantry is open and, it is our custom to bring our donations to UUSMV the first Sunday of each month where they are placed in the vestibule bookcase. **We need someone to volunteer to take them to the Food Pantry each month.** It is located in Christ Methodist Church (the stone church) in Vineyard Haven, is open from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday. If you can do this, please contact Sarah Shepard.

Report of the Parish Committee Meeting on November 7, 2007

A plan by Betty Burton to provide an Adult Religious Education program in January-February, "Voluntary Simplicity" was endorsed.

Arlene Conroy has agreed to audit the UUSMV financial records for which we are very grateful.

During the period after Rev. Judy has departed, the Discretionary Fund will be administered by Celeste Stickney and Sarah Shepard.

The Spirituals Choir, under the direction of Jim Thomas, is no longer under the umbrella of the NAACP. We have offered rehearsal space for December and January. The choir is going to sing at our Candlelight Service and at the service on Martin Luther King Day.

Winter Movie Potluck/Discussions were proposed by Myra Stark and Sunny Wilson. We endorsed this proposal.

Submitted by **Sarah Shepard** in the absence of Catherine DeVito, secretary

News from the BCD (Ballou Channing District):

Cedar Hill Retreat Center is a 12 acre parcel that is owned by BCD in Duxbury, MA, on Plymouth Bay. It includes a two-story house used for accommodations and meetings and a small cottage. The Board of BCD is currently considering an offer by a neighbor of Cedar Hill to make a financial gift to the District in return for placing a permanent conversation restriction on the property. BCD would continue to own the property with the rights to use it as a retreat center. The Board is planning to hold four open regional meetings during November and early December to consider the proposal. Input is welcome. Send your comments to President Rosemarie Donahoe, rdonahoe@uaa.org. **News from the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association):** The UUA has sent our congregation a DVD, Voices of a Liberal Faith. Copies are in the UUSMV Library. **Mike Kobran**, Denominational Affairs Chair

B&B Weekend Guests Speak Out:

Following the successful Columbus Day B&B Weekend on October 6-7-8, the

B&B Steering Committee sent out opinion surveys to all of our guests in order to obtain feedback for the planning of next year's event. We'd like to share with the Congregation some of the comments we received:

"Thoroughly enjoyed your island, our first time over, your church was most welcoming."

"It was a terrific weekend!"

"Your weekend was well-organized and we appreciate all of the hard work done by members of your congregation."

"The weekend was wonderful!. Our hostess went out of her way to make us feel comfortable and enjoy the weekend."

"We had a marvelous time and hope you offer this again next year. The church supper was delightful. The people were welcoming, dinner was delicious and I loved the music and the dancing."

"You are a delightful group of people."

"We so enjoyed meeting people from your fellowship and your Sunday service was beautiful."

"The weekend was wonderful!"

Enough said. Thanks to all of you who participated in the B&B Weekend.

Jack Street, for B&B Weekend Committee

Report from Our Transition Team

After conversation with congregation members and consideration of the September-through-August calendar that guides most UU ministers, we have proposed to the Parish Committee that we hire a part-time Consulting Minister for six months, from February through July 2008.

The Consulting Minister will fill the gap in time between Rev. Judy's departure and late summer when Interim Ministers traditionally begin year-long engagements. Our plan is for the Consulting Minister to lead two services a month, provide pastoral care, help us define what we will want from an Interim Minister, help us recognize and deal with internal congregational issues, and help us determine our longer range direction. The Parish Committee has endorsed this proposal, as long as we stay within the Transition budget for the year.

Finding a six-month Consulting Minister is our immediate goal. We are hopeful and cautiously optimistic that we will find one. It is likely that a Consulting Minister will be a commuter, coming to the Island several times a month to be with us. This means that we will probably need to find suitable, yet economical, housing and local transportation for the Consulting Minister. If you have any ideas about how to accomplish these challenges please talk with us.

A member of the Parish Committee has asked that we also explore the possibility of engaging Island-resident retired clergy for the Consulting Ministry period – even though they might not be UU ministers. We will honor that request, but we will focus on clergy whose styles and belief-systems are UU-compatible.

Rev. Judith Downing, our district Transition Consultant, will lead the January 13,

2008, service at the chapel. After the service she will meet with the congregation to discuss transition issues and to answer questions. This discussion is for everybody, so please plan to attend and participate.

Thanks for your continuing interest in creating a successful transition. We welcome your suggestions and ideas.

The Transition Team

Mary Miller - Convener, Mimi Davisson, Sarah Shepard, Andi Suter, Jim Thomas



Unitarian Universalist Society of Martha's Vineyard

PO Box 1236, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568

Phone: 508-693-8982 Email: uusmv@uusmv.info Website:
www.uusmv.info

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1 – 4 pm

Caring Coordinator: Catherine DeVito

Hospitality Coordinator: Pamela Street