

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY
OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD
P.O. Box 1236, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568
A Welcoming Congregation
November 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: November 15**-----

SUNDAY SERVICES – 11:00 a.m.

Nov. 4 - **Olympia Brown Visits UUSMV.** Nancy Cox with Rev. Judith Campbell narrating. In 1863, Olympia Brown was the first woman ordained to professional ministry in the United States. She served as a full-time Universalist pastor first in New England and then in the mid-west for ten years before reducing her hours to part-time in order to be an activist for the women's suffrage movement. She lived to be 91 years old and in her 90th year voted in the first election that allowed women to vote. Hers is a story of passion, dedication and vision. She will be portrayed by Nancy Cox with narration by Rev. Judy.

Nov. 11 - **Age-ing to Sage-ing: The Challenges and Gifts in Life after Sixty.** Jane Thayer. We are living longer today. What are we going to do with all this time? By generating longevity has Western society created a monster or an unprecedented opportunity? Jane is a clinical psychologist, a mediator for the Martha's Vineyard Mediation Program and co-author with her daughter Peg Thayer—UUSMV's church administrator—of *Elderscence: The Gift of Longevity*. Jane is the wife of Roger Thayer, the mother of two adult children (other than Peg) and the grandmother of David.

Nov. 18 - **The Experience, the Attitude, the Prejudice.** The Rev. Judith Campbell with Jane Thayer as facilitator of this congregational speak-out service on Aging and Ageism. Guest speakers also.

Nov. 25 - **Traditions and the Transfer of Meaning.** Marianne Goldsmith. On this Thanksgiving weekend Marianne returns to UUSMV to explore what this family-centered holiday means today. When it started, this North American tradition was about scarcity, getting through the winter and gratitude for whatever harvest was available. Now there is abundance and we tend to gorge. For most, the meaning of food is no longer gratitude for survival. But is it? This nation comes alive for the holiday—just to be together. Despite scattered families and travel complexities, what is the force behind the food? Marianne is a pediatrician, a psychiatrist and a psychoanalyst.

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, December 1—2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the chapel. Rev. Judy will be inviting island children to come and make **Kirigami** (that's cut paper in Japanese)

snowflakes. She will need helpers because quite a few children are expected. This is an excellent way to advertise ourselves and spread the word that we are kid-friendly. Helpers needed at 1:00 p.m. to set up and afterwards to take down.

Caring Coordinator: Pamela Street, 696-1893. **Hospitality Coordinator:** Philisse Barrows, 508-693-3143

Trustees of UUSMV – Buildings and Grounds Concerns

Steve Engh – Mary Miller – Jack Street

From Your Minister:

In early October, I wrote a prayer/poem entitled “Autumn Ritual” for the special B&B service on Oct 7. As is my custom when I write something that I feel would be of benefit to others, I send it on to a special list of friends and colleagues who have asked for my poetic scribbles. Over the years people who have received my poems have thanked me, offered suggestions, used them in worship and sent them on to their friends and colleagues. I see my poetry as part of my ministry here, as well as part of my larger ministry...but recently I was amazed, and humbled, to find out just how far some of my writings have traveled.

My English Unitarian colleagues use them regularly and tell me so, but recently a Lutheran Minister friend who lives on the West Coast, sent “Autumn Ritual” off to a Lutheran bishop living in the Ukraine, who pronounced it “Spiritually observant”...and the same day, another friend, who was in Jerusalem on religious business, opened her e-mail, and read my poem. She was moved enough by it that she printed it out, and read it aloud at the Wailing Wall, and then, as is the custom, folded it up and tucked into one of the crevasses in the wall, to join the hundreds of thousands of prayers and blessings and petitions which have been left there by the faithful over the centuries. I can not tell you what that meant to me. So in that spirit of gratitude and wonder and endings and beginnings, I offer it to you all again. Love and Blessings, **Your Minister**

Autumn Ritual

Annually, autumnally,
I watch the seasons playing hide and seek
First warm, then cool, then almost frost.
I think to take the houseplants in,
And then it's warm again.
And so I let them be
For one more week
Of outside bliss
Before the cold and darkening breath of winter
Casts her icy cloak
And calls us in...
This time to stay.

A rusty hush is spreading out across the marsh
White egrets stand attention
Sharp against the ending day
Calling out across the sunlit pond
Before they fly to roost
And then one day,
They're gone.
These fey October summer days deceive me.
One day warm enough to swim
Or have that one last outside shower
Standing in the morning mist
Before the sun breaks through and calls me into
day
Unsure if it be tears or dew that cloud my eyes

This beauty is unspeakable
And like the egrets, quickly gone.

Each year in early fall,
A dusky burst of vagrant summer warmth
Lulls me into thinking
This will be the year I'll have more time.
I know we won't.
And dimming days grow short.
Until
The darkness comes.

But deep within my mortal human soul,
The spirit song of gladness sings
And hope springs once again, eternal
With neither sound nor word
It says all living things must die to live again.

The autumn sunset fades
Dark winds chill and still
Our frantic flutterings.
I burrow in and down
To rest and be renewed.

In ordinary time,
I will be raised once more and borne aloft
Like milkweed on the wind.

NOVEMBER 27 (Saturday) 10:00 a.m. until finished:

We need 10 people with lawn rakes, 1 person with a leaf blower, 3 people with hand clippers, loppers, limb saw, 5 people to bag leaves and brush, 2 people with lawn mowers, 1 person with a good broom to clean steps, walkways, and ramp, 2 people with shovels(spade type) to move some dirt and a stump, 1 person with a pick-up truck. That's 25 people, 47% of the 53 people who answered the Transition Team's questionnaire seeking better participation in church functions in the FUTURE--NOV. 27 IS THE FUTURE.

LET'S HAVE A GOOD TURN-OUT AND WRAP THIS UP QUICKLY AND BEAUTIFULLY. Bring your lunch and tools to church

RAIN DATE: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28 AFTER CHURCH SERVICE. We'll make quick work of it. Many thanks in advance for your co-operation, **The Landscape Committee** for the Trustees

Letter from the President of the Parish Committee:

As we begin a new year, FY 2008, we find ourselves in a time of transition because Rev. Judy is retiring from her seven years of ministry with us. We are very grateful to her for the strong position she leaves us in and very grateful to the Transition Team which is working diligently to make the change a smooth one. We should be very proud that 53 people filled out the Transition Team survey and very proud that 53 members and friends attended the retreat with Rev. Bill Zelazny. We had a wonderful turnout, also, of over thirty people for the discussion of the survey results after the service on October 14th.

We should also be proud of our fundraising B&B weekend. The committee did a splendid job, many people participated in making the event a happy one, twenty guests was a record and \$3800 was raised. This put a nice dent in the \$6200 we budgeted for fundraising in FY 2008.

Very early in January 2008, we will need to have another congregational meeting to decide IF we want to call a new minister and, if so, to elect a Search Committee as stipulated in our By-laws. We urge you to consider these choices carefully and to share your thoughts with the Parish Committee and the Transition Team.

Sarah Shepard

Invite A Guest To Your Table:

The fast-approaching holiday season is a time of plenty for us on the Vineyard, and a time of harshness for many others around the world. Please consider inviting a symbolic guest to your table to help in a small, but important, way to relieve that harshness.

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (a.k.a. the UUSC) devotes its resources to assisting people in need all over the world, from Katrina victims to displaced victims in Darfur. One of their annual fundraising tools is the Guest at Your Table program. It's simple – we invite a symbolic guest to our table by taking home a small cardboard bank. We put the box on our table or on a counter near our door-side dump station for mail and loose change. During the holiday season we put coins in the bank for the UUSC program.

Some of us make a holiday ritual of putting coins in the box at the start of each meal; others simply put loose change in the box when we empty our pockets at night. After the holidays when our Guest boxes are full, we send the contents to the UUSC to support their good works. Guest at Your Table banks will be available on November 18. Please plan to take a bank home to share the richness of your holidays.

Thanks from the UUSMV **Social Action Network**

It's Poinsettia Time:

Our UUSMV Candlelight Service is scheduled for December 16. While that may seem a distant date, it is time to plan for the traditional poinsettia decorations. You can help provide a colorful seasonal display for the Candlelight Service and the following Sunday. Simply write a check to UUSMV for \$15, mail to treasurer Blair Shick (see masthead for address) or take it to the church office.

Donors will be acknowledged in the Candlelight Service program. If you wish, you may make your donation "in memory of" or "in honor of" someone. Please include a note with your check indicating your designation and your poinsettia color preference, if any. Donors are welcome to take home a poinsettia plant after the service on Sunday, December 23, to enjoy for the holidays.

Deadline for receipt of contributions: Thursday, December 8.

In Our UUSMV Community:

Susan Johnson has a new e-mail address: mvsusieque@netzero.net. We are glad to see Susan out and about and feeling better. Our warm get well wishes to Wanda Moreis as she and her truck mend from being rear-ended. UUSMV president Sarah Shepard has acquired a new "boot", i.e., the kind one wears to help support a broken foot. We hope the injured bones will heal quickly but, meanwhile, our intrepid leader will not let this impede her activities on behalf of UUSMV and elsewhere, not the least of which is her support of husband Mike as he recuperates from knee surgery.

"If music be the food of love, play on":

*The man that hath no music in himself
Nor is moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagem and spoils.
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections as dark as Erebus.
Let no such man be trusted.*

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!

*Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep into our ears: soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.*

Well, we bet you recognized the first one and you will probably recognize the style of the other two – Shakespeare (or Shaksper, or Shickspaw, or one of a dozen other signatures)

The Music Committee meets generally once a month. The members currently in place are Nancy Cox, Margie Haven, Carol Loud, Jim Thomas and Chris Stokes. The liaison member from the Parish Committee was Chuck Ratte, but is now Betsy Buck, to whom we will extend a very warm welcome when she comes to her first meeting.

At the end of this year, Chris will be resigning from the position of chair of the Committee, and will be off-island for some parts of the new year. Now is a great opportunity for interested members or friends of the Society to get involved in the work of the Music Committee. What do they do? you ask yourself. The answer is not always easy to give, because our concerns are both wide ranging and concerned with minutiae. Probably our highest profile is seen at the "fifth Sunday" services, which we sponsor, and which usually contain extra music and are sometimes associated with visiting musicians. But now is the opportunity to come to grips with the music program of the church by joining the committee. You can sample the process by attending the November and December meetings, to which all members and friends are welcome. The next one is scheduled for November 8 at the Church, at noon and we would love to greet

members, whether they are interested in becoming committee members or not.

Please let Chris Stokes know, as soon as possible, about your attendance at the next meeting, whether you are coming out of curiosity or with more serious intent. As chair, Chris aims to keep meetings to one hour's duration or less, so it needn't be a big bite out of your day.

Mindfulness News:

~ A PUMPKIN STORY 🍷 for Halloween 🍷 ~

In the Theravada tradition (the earliest form of Buddhism which we have been studying here at the UU with Chas Di Capua, Jo & Peg) there was an analogy:

"The mind *without mindfulness* is sometimes compared to a *pumpkin*, and the mind established *in mindfulness* to a stone. A pumpkin placed on the surface of a pond soon floats away and always remains on the water's surface. But a stone does not float away; it stays where it is put and at once sinks into the water until it reaches bottom. Similarly when mindfulness is strong, the mind stays with its object and penetrates its characteristics deeply. It does not wander and merely skim the surface *as the mind destitute of mindfulness* does." (P. 78, Chapter 6, The Noble Eightfold Path by Bhikkhu Bodhi..)

So please be "mindful" of what is going on in our UU Chapel approximately 2 X per month now. *Keep an eye peeled for the following:* Chas Di Capua, the teacher in residence at the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, MA, is driving down to be with our island population and UU members for 3 hours on Saturday morning 9 a.m.-noon on October 27 and at 8:30-11:30 a.m. on Dec. 15. Smaller sitting groups led by Jo or Peg will be meeting in our Chapel from 9:00-10:15 a.m. on the Saturdays of November 10 and December 1. **Please contact Jo or Peg at uusmv@uusmv.info for details.**

The VINEYARD COMMITTEE ON HUNGER (VCOH) urgently requests donations of \$25 for their annual Thanksgiving program of meals for Vineyarders who can't afford their own. Turkeys, bags of potatoes—all the fixings. Mail your check to: VCOH, c/o Betty Burton, P.O. B. 2641, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568.

Columbus Day B&B Weekend Fundraiser a Success:

With 20 off-Island guests and enthusiastic participation by the UUSMV congregation, the B&B Weekend fundraiser held over the Columbus Day weekend was a grand success. The number of guests was double that of any previous B&B Weekend, and the nearly \$4,000 raised (after all expenses) exceeded all expectations. Highlight of the weekend was the seafood supper where some 65 members and friends packed the chapel to greet our guests, and to enjoy lobster rolls, chowder and a lot more, capped off by foot-tapping and dancing to the Flying Elbows band. One long-time member later remarked that she had never seen the UUSMV membership so enthusiastic, so joyful, so "on-board" as she did at the B&B supper. Kudos to all those who played a role in making the B&B Weekend a success, and heartfelt appreciation to the entire congregation for coming together to be a part of it. **Jack Street**

October Parish Committee : (In the President's absence Mimi Davisson presided.)

There was a **Motion** to approve Al Harris as assistant treasurer. The motion **Passed.**

Mimi passed out a chart to assign liaisons from the PC to committees. The liaison's responsibility is to be a conduit between the committee and the PC for better communication and awareness of what is happening in our UU community.

There was a **Motion** to Re-appoint Janet Holladay as Pastoral Associate until the end of the year. The motion **Passed**

There was a **Motion** to reserve Grace Church Hall at a cost of \$150 for our Christmas reception on December 16, 2007. The motion **Passed**.

The B&B Columbus Day Weekend: Catherine reported that we netted about \$4,000 and that the weekend was a huge success. We had twenty guests who stayed in seven homes. Host families were the Shepards, Campbells, Streets, Colons, Crawfords, DeVitos and Jane and Roger Thayer. Johanna Kobran and her crew orchestrated a wonderful dinner. It was generally felt that we should hold the dinner in a larger place and that next year we could assign more members to give island tours. Mimi praised the committee's effort to keep the congregation involved.

Peter reported that the Transition Team will be responsible for the first and third services of the month after the minister's retirement. The Transition Team will find speakers for these services.

The next PC meeting will be on November 7 at 7:00 p.m. in the chapel. The meeting is open to all members and friends of the Society. **Catherine DeVito**, secretary

(Minutes of the September Parish Committee meeting are posted on the bulletin board near the front door of the chapel, if you would like to refer to them.)

News from the BCD (Ballou Channing District):

Mimi Davisson and Sarah Shepard attended the BCD Presidents' Meeting in Taunton on September 29. This allowed us to connect with other parish presidents in the district and to discuss mutual concerns.

The BCD Fall Meeting was in Worcester on October 27. Rev. Judy Cambell, Janet Holladay and Mimi Davisson attended. An APB was sent to all UUSMV members inviting them to this event. Keynote speakers were Gini Courter, UUA Moderator and Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs, UU Ministers Association President. Workshops were held on worship, religious education, social justice, pastoral care, church finances and fund raising and fostering good minister-lay leader relationships.

The BCD will join other New England districts for the Spring Meeting on May 17, 2008, for an old fashioned Revival with preaching and hymn singing.

News from the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association)

The General Assembly of the UUA will be in Fort Lauderdale, FL, June 25 to 29. Nationwide, the UUA has asked us to participate in "Association Sunday", an effort to "Strengthen our connection and combine our resources, empowering us to *Grow Our Faith and Numbers*, because our religious values are needed to help heal a wounded world." Look for the UUA ads in TIME magazine which began October 15.

The Food Pantry Is Open:

The Food Pantry, located in the First Methodist Church (the Stone Church) on Church Street in Vineyard Haven, is open from October 15 through April. The UUSMV tradition is to bring non-perishable items to donate on the first Sunday of each month. Donations may be left on the bookcase shelves in the vestibule and will be taken to the Food Pantry monthly. Although we are a rich and privileged community in many ways, we are also one of the poorest in the state. Once the summer jobs are gone, many people find themselves in difficulty as well as people who are experiencing unexpected emergencies. It is time for us to share our bounty by contributing monthly and generously. Cash or checks are also welcome and can be given to Clara Kennedy or Betty Burton.

Neighborhood Convention:

The November meeting of the Neighborhood Convention will be on Tuesday, November 6, 10:45 AM at the Tribal Council Headquarters, 20 Black Brook Rd., Aquinnah. The program will be "Keepers of Our Ancient Cliffs". We are invited to bring a sandwich/salad and our hosts will provide beverages and desserts.

An Interesting Bit of Unitarian History: (From *The New Yorker* of October 15, 2007)

"Jill Lepore's article on the Presidential-election contest of 1800 between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson speaks of the candidates' religious, philosophical, and cultural differences (Books, September 17th). Yet they had in common a background in Unitarianism. Adams was a member of the First Parish Church in Quincy, Massachusetts, which became Unitarian in the latter half of the eighteenth century, and is buried in its crypt. Jefferson, despite being best known as a deist, also had ties to the Unitarian faith, noting that because 'the population of my neighborhood is too slender ... I must therefore be contented to be a Unitarian by myself.' Adams's Unitarian roots were very different. Adams's Unitarianism emerged from the split of the churches of the Standing Order (the Puritans) into the Unitarian and Congregational churches in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Jefferson's came more from the Enlightenment, in the person of Joseph Priestley, the English scientist and Unitarian minister who left England in 1794 because of his religious views and settled in Pennsylvania where he and Jefferson developed a close friendship. The different visions for the newborn American nation taken by the two men and their parties came, to some extent, from the opposing values of their Puritan and Enlightenment origins. Edwin A. Lane, Wellesley, Mass."

Report from Our Transition Team

More than thirty members of the congregation met recently to discuss the results of the August transition survey. Here are some key points from the discussion:

- Martha's Vineyard has a unique population – more liberal and well-educated than mainstream U.S.A. The most feasible target audience for new UUs is probably new retirees and younger adults without children.
- Maybe Children's RE is not where our resources should be focused. Devoting resources to Adult RE would be more valuable for our population. We don't have the facilities for a youth program and the demographics of the Vineyard suggest that re-thinking conventional wisdom that growth comes from families with children would be useful. If we do decide to devote resources to a Children's RE program it should be at a different time than the Sunday services so volunteers can participate in both activities.
- UUSMV is not well-known in the community. We need to let the community know about us and our inclusive community. There are many ways to do this. If we share our passion they will come.
- It would be useful to learn why our recent new members joined us and how they found us. Some have come through adjunct groups, others through Adult RE programs, and there are no doubt other avenues too.
- Are we tapped out in terms of congregation size? Substantial focus on growth in the mid-90s yielded very little growth.
- The theological positions in the congregation clearly demonstrate an inclusive, liberal mindset. This will need to be considered in our choice of settled minister. Our average age suggests that we probably know what we think and won't have much patience for evangelism.
- Pastoral care and a caring personality are critical for our settled minister.
- We need to be realistic about our expectations of a settled minister. The minister we call will have a direct impact both on us and on attracting future members. We'll want to be as clear as possible about what ministerial attributes are most important.
- We need to pay attention to those congregation attributes where we rated the importance noticeably higher than our assessment. Why are the differences so

- great and do we want to do anything about them?
- We are a really neat congregation that has grown in spirit and activity since Rev. Judy arrived. We should be confident that ministerial candidates are out there and eager to come to our congregation.

During our interim time of self-assessment we will have lots of opportunities to discuss these results and other facets of our UU community. Thanks for being so interested.

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: Pamela Street

Hospitality Coordinator: Philisse Barrows