



August 2006

Volume 51, No. 8

News

Reaching In . . .
Reaching Out

From the Minister . . .

DAVID AND I HAVE JUST

RETURNED from our UU pilgrimage in Transylvania and Hungary with a renewed sense of the possibility for unity (not uniformity) and peace among individuals striving to answer life’s ultimate questions. The trip began with a theological symposium of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists held at the Unitarian Seminary in the Transylvanian city of Kolosvár.



We met with Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist representatives from all over the world, including Australia, Bolivia, Burundi, Canada, Czech Republic, England, France, Hungary, Indonesia, Italy, New Zealand, Transylvania (Romania), South Africa, Spain, United States and Wales. The theme was “Unitarian/



Touring Sinfalva, Transylvania, and its environs with our partner church minister: Ildikó and Rev. Dénes Pálfi with Rev. Alison Miller and David Snedden

Universalism: Liberal Religion for a Changing Global Society.”

During the conference we discovered that there are several differences among the various countries in the way we do theology and practice religion, but what we have in common is *freedom, reason, and tolerance* as core components for all of our respective religious traditions. In the midst of current global strife among nations and

religionists who claim to have sole authority on the one Truth, these essential Unitarian and Universalist ideas remain radically liberal. It is hard to believe that the Transylvanian Unitarian founder, Ferencz Dávid, proclaimed, “We need not think alike to love alike,” as early as the sixteenth century. The world is still desperately in need of this healing perspective.

After the conference, we traveled to our partner church in the village of Sinfalva and experienced firsthand their well-deserved reputation for hospitality. It was an honor to meet with our sister Unitarians on Sunday morning and to have the chance to get to know their minister, Rev. Dénes Pálfi, and his family.

I have many details to share with you about these new friends in the coming months. For now, let me share just a couple of facts—approximately one-third of the villagers are Unitarians and most of them are farmers, including Dénes. They have survived very difficult times as an ethnic and religious minority under Soviet Communism and under the dictatorship of Ceausescu until 1989. In many ways, it is a miracle that Unitarianism survived at all in this part of the world, often called its birthplace.

In faith,
Alison

Alison will be available by appointment only during August.

IN THIS ISSUE	
From the Minister	1
Board of Trustees	2
We Have a Music Director!, Financial Health	3
Upcoming Events, GA Report	4
Social Responsibilities Report, Piano Concert	5
Joys and Concerns, Fall Cleanup/Poker Tournament, Normandy Chorale Seeks Voices	6
Events Calendar, John & Jami’s Thanks	7
Summer Sunday Services	8

Morristown Unitarian Fellowship

21 Normandy Heights Road
Morristown, New Jersey 07960-4611

President: Joe Uhrhane

Minister: Rev. Alison B. Miller

Editor, Layout and Graphics Design: Pat Baxter
(melodylingers@verizon.net)



Summer Sunday Services: 10 a.m.

Office Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Wednesday: 10 a.m.-7 p.m.

Friday: 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Tel: 973-540-1177, ext. 201

Fax: 973-539-8218

www.mUuf.org

Mission and Covenant Statement

WE, the members of the **Morristown Unitarian Fellowship**, mindful of the rich diversity and essential oneness of human experience, covenant to weave the fabric of community from the strands of our separate lives.

This is our pledge:

- To create for ourselves and our children a spiritual home which will nurture, challenge and offer us renewal.
- To seek what is true even as we celebrate the mystery of existence.
- To reach out to all who share our liberal religious values and participate in the broader Unitarian-Universalist movement.
- To work for social justice and the well-being of our planet Earth.

Please E-Mail All NEWSLETTER Articles

—both print and online versions—

to editor **PAT BAXTER** at
melodylingers@verizon.net

by the **15th** of the month
preceding the one in which they will appear.

Thank you!

From the Board of Trustees

Deeds Well Done

The Board wishes to acknowledge and gratefully thank the following members for their service to the Fellowship:

Ken Nemeth for adopting the grounds at the front gate. He has donated his time and the material to beautify the space with an assortment of plants and flowers.

Gary Kunz for serving as Board Vice President-Program Network for two years. Gary was the first person in this position, and we appreciate his leadership.

Recent Developments

Maggie is at a seminar for church administrators.

Janine Torsiello is recruiting a search committee for the position of interim Director of Religious Education.

The networks will review the recommendations brought to them by the Sunday Morning Experience Task Force and decide what items need Board attention.

The sprinkler system is installed but has not yet been approved by the Township.

Upcoming Board of Trustees and Network Meetings

Meetings are open to all Fellowship members. The meeting time is 7 p.m. *It is especially important for committee chairs and members who participate in Fellowship administration and programming to attend and participate in the Network meetings.*

The Board of Trustees will meet on August 9.

The Administrative and Program Networks will not meet in August.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the June meetings have been approved and are now posted on the bulletin board in Room 100 and on the website in the Members Only section. Reading the minutes will keep you up to date on developments within Fellowship Committees, recommendations made to the Board, and decisions made on behalf of the Fellowship.

Be a knowledgeable member of your Fellowship!

 * To sponsor a coffee hour after one of our Sunday *
 * morning services beginning in September, contact Dan *
 * Cohen at danielcohen@optonline.net. *
 * *****

Jim Blanton Chosen as MUF's Music Director

We are proud to announce that Dr. Jim Blanton will be joining us as Music Director this fall. Jim has extensive experience as music director of a large Catholic church in northern New Jersey where he built an exceptional music program directing a 35-voice adult choir and a large children's choir and two instrumental ensembles. He is the founder and general director of the Goliard Concerts, a professional Queens-based chamber music ensemble now in its 23d year.



Jim has been a professional singer in opera, oratorio and chamber music as well as an accompanist for chamber and choral groups. He is also the creator and producer of *Kids Classics*, an educationally based series of children's and family performances.

Jim has a Doctorate in Musical Arts from Florida State University, and extensive performance experience as a pianist, organist and singer. He is well organized and an experienced administrator. As Jim looks forward to work with us, he feels he will find spiritual fulfillment and a place consonant with his social conscience.

Jim was chosen after an extensive search by the Music Director Search Committee, consisting of Paul Ferm and Ken Piascik, chairs, Irene Bush, Rev. Alison Miller, Steve Parker, David Stasiak and Beth Wilson. The search committee received more than 25 resumes in response to extensive advertising, conducted 12 phone interviews and five in-person audition interviews at the Fellowship. The finalists were outstanding and the search committee was extremely pleased that their first choice, Jim Blanton, has accepted the position.

See Our Website (Members Only) for Reminder on Pledging/Financial Support

Our Financial Health (Figures may not add up exactly due to truncation and/or rounding.)

	July 2005 through June 2006	June 06 Actual	June 06 Budget	\$ Variance	Year to Date	YTD Budget	YTD \$ Variance	Annual Budget
INCOME	Pledges, collections, donations	16,951	26,333	-9,382	328,463	315,000	13,463	315,000
	Rentals	2,942	2,533	409	29,717	30,400	-683	30,400
	Fund Raising	4,724	5,000	-277	37,528	39,100	-1,572	39,100
	Other	0	1,892	-1,892	25,185	22,425	2,760	22,425
	TOTAL INCOME	24,617	35,758	-11,141	420,893	406,925	13,968	406,925
EXPENSES	Salaries, wages & benefits	30,225	22,668	7,557	264,101	277,422	-13,321	277,422
	Administrative, program	9,733	9,895	-162	84,283	80,686	3,597	80,686
	Building and other	4,429	5,371	-942	69,935	68,152	1,783	68,152
	TOTAL EXPENSES	44,387	37,934	6,452	418,320	426,260	-7,940	426,260
	TOTAL GAIN/(LOSS)		-19,770	-2,176	-17,594	2,574	-19,335	21,909

NOTES

1. We have finished the year with a surplus of \$2,574 when we budgeted for a deficit of \$19,335. Therefore, we are ahead of our budget by almost \$22,000.
2. Our pledge drive has resulted in pledges of over \$348,000; we anticipate additional pledges from those who have not yet responded, as well as from new members and friends.
3. About \$19,000 in pre-paid pledges will be applied to next month's income.
4. Our available reserves at the end of June were \$77,834.
5. The Yard Sale in June netted almost \$5,000. This was a very successful fundraiser. We are grateful for the very hard work put in by the organizers and helpers.

Respectfully submitted by Anne Paust, Treasurer

Upcoming Events

First Monday Book Group

First Monday of the month, 7 p.m.

This group will not meet in August, but will read *Beloved*, by Toni Morrison, in September. For more info, contact Nancy Lee McLure at nlmclure@msn.com.



EVENSONG

Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m.

Evensong services will not be held in August. For further information contact Drew Hayes at drwhayes@netscape.net or Danelle Simonelli at dksimonelli@hotmail.com.

Minstrel Coffeehouse

Fridays, 8:30 p.m.

August 4, 11, 18, 25

More information from 973-335-9489 or www.folkproject.org/fp_minstopen.html.

Democracy for America

Saturday, August 5, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Democracy for America (DFA) supports House Resolution 543, and those Representatives, Senators and candidates who back it – demanding a 17-hour Iraq War Debate in Congress! This summer they are holding forums nationwide in support of HR 543. Invited speakers include union members, Iraq veterans, congresspersons and members of other PACs, as well as grassroots individuals who are weary of watching the death toll rise daily. Come demand congressional oversight and show your support!

The Comedy of Errors

Monday, August 7, 8 p.m.

Performed at MUF by the Next Stage Ensemble of the NJ Shakespeare Theatre, hosted by the Gay Activist Alliance in Morris County. Admission is \$4 for GAAMC members, \$6 for nonmembers.

UUA General Assembly

by Eleanor Mason, MUF Delegate



An extremely representative Fellowship delegation attended the UUA General Assembly in St. Louis from Wednesday, June 21, to Monday, June 26. Meetings and workshops were exceptional as always. Look for a more detailed account soon. Those attending included the Rev. Alison Miller, Robin Slaw, Joe Uhrhane, Rita Morris, Karen and Tony Rutigliano, Linda Clark and Eleanor Mason.

Important actions were taken on the following resolutions:

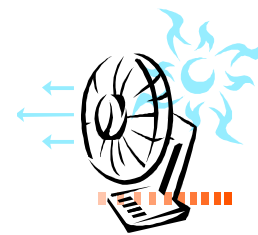
- The new Study/Action Issue - "Peacemaking" *
- Networking on the Current Study/Action Issue, "Moral Values for a Pluralistic Society," at GA meetings
- Adopted as a Statement of Conscience (SOC), "Global Warming, Climate Change"
- And the following five Actions of Immediate Witness (AIWs):
 1. End Mountaintop Removal Coal Mining
 2. Endorse "The Declaration of Peace" Campaign (mostly about removing ourselves from Iraq)
 3. Pass the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act
 4. Stand Up for the United Nations Human Rights Council (presented by our UU-UN Office)
 5. Support Immigrant Justice

Needless to say, some of these actions were debated longer than others. It takes a 2/3 majority of the delegates to General Assembly to adopt them. You should be able to find the extremely interesting details of these actions on the website of the UUA Commission on Social Witness. Try www.UUA.org.

Please speak to Rita Morris or Joe Uhrhane if you would like an evening event on UUA-GA 2006.

* (Study materials available from UUA Washington Office, 10/06)

Social Responsibilities Committee August Update -- Helping Neighbors in Need



Study Action Group “Immigrant Concerns & Support” will meet on Sunday, August 6, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. – in Room 209 to set MUF support priorities/activities for the coming year. The UUA at our General Assembly in June adopted an Action of Immediate Witness to support humane immigration support and policy reform. We are examining ways to bring to this goal that we are called *in faith* to pursue. Join us.

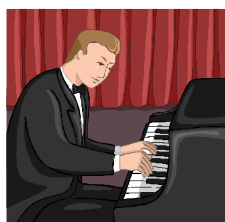
Two Family-style dinners – for Eric Johnson House - Morristown AIDS/HIV Recovery Residence – Wednesdays, August 2 and 16, 5:30-7:00 p.m. We’re helping even more now...and this is a terrific chance to share your hospitality and/or kitchen skills by participating in hosting our MUF monthly dinners for the wonderful residents of EJH. Contact MUF Coordinator Susan Spencer at sespencer@optonline.net to receive your “assignment” – you’ll be added to the rotation.

Morristown Soup Kitchen –Tuesday, August 8 – It is a sad fact that on our July date we served 160 people their lunch – that is very high for summertime! Chili, soup and cold salads are much needed. Supplies are dwindling. And hands-on serving help is also needed (and gratifying) too!! Contact Sharon Glickman, MUF Coordinator, at foxwood2@optonline.net to confirm that you can help either way.

Next Social Responsibilities Committee Meeting, Thursday, August 10, 7:30 p.m. at MUF – Help set, organize and fulfill MUF SR agenda including supporting existing Social Action groups, shared SR projects across MUF, and seasonal/special efforts. Help visit support agencies; help assess/allocate MUF collection funds for charities. Contact: rathsa@umdnj.edu or karenburns@casaessex.org or mbkunz@gmail.com.

Morris Habitat for Humanity – Invites MUF members to Saturday Work Parties – 8 a.m.-5 p.m. – Construction and nonconstruction jobs. Great expansion in 2006 with 11 projects in Morris County – both new construction and rehabs. Must be 14+ (with adult supervision) or adult. All must first attend “Habitat Orientation Session,” given monthly in evenings. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Suzanne Hartman.

The Interfaith Council for Homeless Families (ICHF) needs volunteers during the week of Sunday, August 27 through September 3, to help provide the homeless with beds and meals. If you’d like to help out then or any other time MUF supports the host congregation, contact Lee Wuenn at lilowuenn@att.net.



Save the Date!

Save October 21 for the opening night of the Saturday Evening Concert Series, with pianist Paul Zeigler! The concert will begin at 8 p.m.; doors open at 7:30. Tickets go on sale in mid-September, at \$15 until October 1, afterwards they’ll be \$20. Contact Pat Baxter at melodylingers@verizon.net for more information.



Sharing Our Joys & Concerns

To assure the privacy of our members and friends, we have now removed all "Joys and Concerns" and personal telephone numbers from the online newsletter. A copy of the Newsletter in the Members Only section of our website includes the complete information.

Mark Your Calendars!

Fall cleanup and poker tournament

Saturday, November 18

(December 2: rain/snow date)

We need as many people as we can get. Last fall we had many hands to do the work, and as a result our grounds looked better and, happily ~ thanks to so many of you who volunteered ~ the spring cleanup easier. Folks of all ages are welcome. Yes, the children can come too; there are many jobs they can do.

Beautification and Preservation Committee

Address Change:

Val Davia/Warren Luce's new,
NEW address is:
P.O. Box 770659
Steamboat Springs, CO 80487



(Mail sent to their street address was returned after July 10.)

Normandy Chorale Seeking Singers

This group of approximately 25 mixed voices sings a variety of music, both with accompaniment and a cappella. They rehearse at the Fellowship on Tuesdays from 7:30 to 9:45 p.m. Rehearsals will begin on Tuesday, September 19. The first of its three 2006-07 concerts is scheduled for Sunday, December 10. Singers in all parts are welcome; no formal audition is required. Please contact director Bruce Sidelnik.

Upcoming Joys & Concerns

In these summer days, we may not all get to the Fellowship as often as we do through the rest of the year. If you have a joy or concern that you would like to share with other members of the congregation – whether or not you announce it on Sunday morning – please send it to Newsletter editor Pat Baxter at melodylingers@verizon.net. Specify that it is for Joys and Concerns.

Thanks!



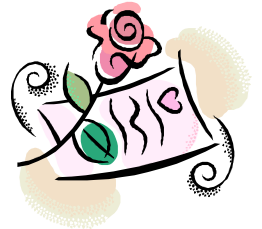
Upcoming Events Calendar

Date	Time	Event	Details
Fridays, August 4, 11, 18, 25	8:30 p.m.	Minstrel Coffeehouse	p. 4
Saturday, August 5	10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Democracy for America	p. 4

.....

Sunday, June 18, 2006

Rev. Alison Miller, Senior High Habitat Reunion Committee, Habitat Alums and Habitat Supporters
Senior High Youth Program
Morristown Unitarian Fellowship



Dear Friends and Family,

The Habitat Reunion was wonderful beyond belief. When we watched all those slides of all those great moments we just didn't want them to end. It was a great reminder of what we were doing lo these many years.

We are so grateful for all we've been given during the past 14 years at MUF. Looking back it's still hard to understand how a one-year commitment became a true vocation for both of us. Clearly, in retrospect, we were both headed in that direction, following our own paths, but fate intervened in the form of our Senior High program. We discovered a place, and a partnership, where we could contribute and put our own values into action. And over the years we seem to have developed a vibrant youth program, with what we hope is a solid foundation and some good strong roots with which it can continue to grow.

We were so moved to hear some of you speak about how YG was helpful in your spiritual growth. And we're delighted to learn that so many of you are living up to your UU principles and putting those values to work every day in your professional lives.

We thought this was all about building a few houses and building a youth group and we felt pretty good about that; but now that we've seen our youth group grown up and we can see how it has grown into an international tour de force for peace, justice and caring for others, the meaning of it all -- the purpose of all the hours of work and sleepless nights ~ the importance of being together under the guidance of our UU principles, in the shelter of our UU community ~ has become clear; we were also building a future for our Unitarian Universalist faith.

We too have been on a spiritual journey together. And just like building a house, that journey began before we teamed up 14 years ago on the third floor at MUF. And just like Habitat, that journey will continue. We look forward to seeing what lies ahead. We remain committed with all of our hearts to supporting and empowering our UU youth.

We are so grateful to all of you. We could have received no greater tribute than the sight of all of you at the Fellowship on that Saturday of the Habitat Reunion. That was a gift that will nourish our spirits for years to come. Thank you!

X O X O

J2/John and Jami



***TO ASSURE PRIVACY** of our members and friends, all "Joys and Concerns," personal telephone numbers and home addresses are removed from the *public* online newsletter. This Members Only copy includes the full information.

August 2006

Volume 51, No. 8



Dated Material – Mailed: July 27, 2006
Deadline for the SEPTEMBER issue is

AUGUST 15

Summer Sunday Services (At 10 a.m. only. There will be nursery care for infants and toddlers aged 3 and younger throughout the summer months.)



August 6 **UUs Crack the Da Vinci Code!**

What's all the fuss about the book and film *The Da Vinci Code*? We'll offer some Unitarian Universalist perspectives on the theology, history and impact of this phenomenon. Music by George Aronson and Marjorie Wormser.

Coordinated by Danelle Simonelli, Pat de la Fuente and Claire Dixon

August 13 **Lionizing Dandelions**

If you were a flower, what flower would you want to be? The Rev. Betsy Scheuerman thinks there's a lot to be said for that bane of suburban existence, the lowly and loathed dandelion.

August 20 **Why Prison Ministry?**

If we believe in "the inherent worth and dignity of every person," then UUs have a faith message that is desperately needed in prisons. When people enter prison they are stripped of their humanity and hope. Gloria Jackson leads a service showing how we, as UUs, can come in from the outside and acknowledge our shared humanity. We can give them hope and a connection to the world outside the walls.

August 27 **Singing for Our Lives**

Beth Wilson feels that music, in particular singing, has been a comfort and joy throughout her life. We will explore what singing means to us throughout our lives in a service of singing together.