

FEBRUARY 2004

Allegheny ADVOCATE

monthly newsletter of allegheny unitarian universalist church

FEBRUARY 1

Black History Month: Absent Friends

Rev. Dave Lutz

At Allegheny we will be remembering friends and neighbors who are absent. Even those of us who care can be part of white cutoff; bridging efforts lead to complications. What is our response?

FEBRUARY 8

Being A Good Neighbor

Janice Parks

Friend and neighbor Janice Parks wants us to think about what we can do in our neighborhoods to help those who don't have—what programs and initiatives can be developed and sustained, and how this work can be informed by our neighbors themselves.

FEBRUARY 15

Communion Service 10:00 AM

Reader: Donald Zeilman

Monthly gathering that celebrates our community of faith in action—please join us.

When Democracy Makes Us Antsy 11:00 AM

Rev. Dave Lutz

Often democratic institutions, whether government or churches, get restless with this messy, inefficient process, and regularly move to curtail it. How do we take our community stands without running over our minority voices?

FEBRUARY 22

Negotiating with Religion, Searching for Myth

Lawrence Wray

The religious function of mythology, Joseph Campbell says, represents our recognition of the mystery of being. Many of us travel from one religion to another looking for a deepened experience of this mystery, having tried to come to terms with the old practices and received truths. What does this traveling and searching mean about our sense of spiritual truth?

FEBRUARY 25

Ash Wednesday Service 7:30 PM

Rev. Dave Lutz

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, of being “in the wilderness”—never a popular place to be, yet perhaps a place of new possibilities. Come join us for this brief Service of reflection.

FEBRUARY 29

Remembering Art

Rev. Dave Lutz

Part of preparing for a new chapter in the life of Allegheny is celebrating the past, especially the past pastor. Come and share a favorite story, photo or memento about Art McDonald, as we celebrate the past in anticipation of our future.

Sunday Services
at Allegheny
Unitarian
Universalist
Church begin
at 11 o'clock.
All are welcome!

BOARD BUSINESS

Kathy Kozachenko, President

Town Meeting Fruitful

A hearty group of over 35 braved frigid temperatures to attend our Mid-Year Congregational Meeting on January 25. No formal business was conducted, but communication and conversation focused on the following areas:

Unitarian House—Peter Adams reported that discussions are on-going with the UUA regarding Allegheny taking over ownership of Unitarian House. Peter will continue to represent the congregation and Board and work with the UUA to find resolution.

Sacred Spaces—Linda Deafenbaugh reported that the congregation has been selected to participate in a training by Partners for Sacred Places/Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation. The training will explore ways that congregations with limited resources can raise funds for major capital improvements.

Search Committee—Pat Downey reported that we have had eight ministers express interest in Allegheny, and that, after initial discussions, four remain viable. The Search Committee is far enough along in the process to have set up two pre-candidate weekends.

Pledge Campaign—A Task Force with Linda Lefever as chair will spearhead our Pledge Campaign this year. The group's goal is to help Allegheny move toward fiscal stability. Their two-fold approach is 1) share information with the membership on expenditures, and 2) determine our operating income for 2004–05 with congregational participation.

Long-Range Goals—There was great input at the meeting on the proposed goals and objectives. The detailed document may be found on the Church's web page.

The proposed long-range plan document will be posted on the web site. Watch for it!

ADVOCACY AND MINISTRY

Rev. Dave Lutz

State of the Church

Now that we're into what is probably the middle of this year between Church pastors, I wanted to give you an informal update as to how the Church seems to be doing, from my point of view as interim pastor, which is, in short: really well.

A lot of you have stepped forward to take responsibility in one way or another. Lots of you had already owned some form of leadership and just continued to do so after Art left.

It may seem obvious to say that the membership acts like the Church belongs to them (and not to the pastor), but to someone coming in from the outside, it's not a foregone conclusion, and so I note it as a sign of congregational health.

There are difficulties some churches have to deal with after a pastor leaves, such as divisions and fundamental conflicts. I've seen them, and they're not here. Other signs of health I see include energy for the projects and work of the Church, a lack of gossip, a lot of genuine car-

ing between members, and humor. Churches that are stressed and in conflict, like families, don't tend to laugh much.

Not that there aren't challenges to work on: like money – raising the funds to cover the annual budget. Taking financial responsibility as seriously as we take our commitments of time and energy is a "must do" if Allegheny is going to move successfully into this new era.

There are a great group of folks, though, under the lead of Linda Lefever, who are planning a well thought-out pledge drive process. When it comes time to respond, you can help by not playing hard to get.

Finally, the Ministerial Search Committee has been doing an outstanding job; you may know that if you've seen the binder they put together, or you've been following their work. (Rave reviews for their binder have come from outside as well as inside our church.) Watch for their updates!

Peace, Dave

From The Heart . . .

On Saturday, February 7, at 7:30 pm, the Second Annual From the Heart Award for outstanding contributions to the Church will be presented to Walter and Martha Brethauer.

The event, sponsored by the Board of Trustees, will feature the award presentations, musical entertainment by John Meikle, and an array of tasty hors d'oeuvres and desserts. In addition to non-alcoholic beverages, some beer and wine will be available, but please feel free to bring your own.

There is no charge for the evening's food and entertainment but we will be highlighting a modest building project and asking for your support! Don't miss the fun and the chance to thank Walt and Martha for all they have done and continue to do!

Ministry as and "Art" Form

The *Ministry as an Art Form* tapes and CDs fundraiser was a huge success and raised \$285 for the capital fund of the Church last month.

If you missed ordering your copy, a limited number will be available through the end of the month. Contact Steve Hirtle at 412/242-5166 or hirtle+@pitt.edu for more information.

DownUnder Coffeehouse

This month the DownUnder Coffee House will feature jazz pianist Tom Roberts. Tom is regarded by many as one of the finest pianists today in the exciting Harlem stride piano style. He toured with Leon Redbone for six years, has performed on The Tonight Show and on A Prairie Home Companion.

Tom has recorded over 20 compact discs and has performed throughout the United States and Europe.

He recently returned to Pittsburgh and lives near the church, in the Mexican War Streets.

The coffeehouse is open from 7:30 to 9:30 pm on the third Saturday of every month. Baked goods, desserts and beverages will be for sale during the concert and coffee is always free. Suggested donation is \$5.

Mark Your Calendars!

The Annual Spaghetti Dinner/Talent Show/Silent Auction is Saturday, March 20.

Start practicing your act because rumor has it the Talent Show will be limited to the first 40 groups that sign up. Talent has never been a requirement for being in Allegheny's Talent Show, but if by chance you are talented, please don't let that get in the way of your being in the show. Talk to Jane Dirks or Pat Downey about your act.

Also, start thinking about what service you might donate to the Silent Auction. In the past items such as pet sitting, kids night out (otherwise known as parents night out), tutoring, piano lessons, baking and homemade pasta making have been a few of the items. See Linda Deafenbaugh for details

This traditionally has been a fun night for all. Look to March's *Advocate* for further details.

Winter Institute Anyone?

Sheryl Rodriguez and Hazel Leroy have an extra bed in their suite at the lodge for Winter Institute.

Sheryl, Hazel, and Hazel's son Charlie will be occupying the other three beds, but they need a roommate. If they can get another child, Hazel won't have to sleep on the lower bunk bed! Contact Sheryl at 412/741-0447 or Hazel at 412/422-9267 if you are interested.

Guest at Your Table

Please return the *Guest at Your Table* boxes to Pat Downey by Sunday, February 8. Proceeds from these boxes go the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

New to AUUC?

There is a session of the *What We're About* orientation scheduled for February 1 after Service at 12:30.

This is an information and discussion for people new to the church who are considering membership

A.P.B.—
We are missing
Hymnal No 3
from the pews!
Please check to see
if you might have it
and return it as
soon as possible.

SEARCH COMMITTEE NEWS

Pat Downey, Committee Chair

Steady Progress

The Search Committee continues to make steady progress toward our goal of finding a great minister for Allegheny.

We have received inquiries from ministers who learned of us through our UUA settlement site, the *UUWorld* ad, and by word of mouth. We have exchanged ministerial/congregational records with multiple individuals and have decided to exchange packets and continue the process with some of them.

During the month of January we conducted initial phone interviews with ministers who appear to have the experience, interests, and skills that the congregation has identified as being important.

We are currently deciding which pre-candidates to bring to Pittsburgh for a weekend of more intensive interviewing and mutual exploration.

These weekends will entail a casual get-together on Friday evening at a committee member's house and a more formal interview followed by a tour of the church and neighborhood, some sights of Pittsburgh and dinner with the committee on Saturday. On Sunday morning we will travel to a "neutral pulpit" outside of Pittsburgh, where the pre-candidate will conduct a service, following which we will have lunch together, ask final questions, then say good-bye.

The Committee would like to thank the congregants who have provided us with questions to ask during the phone and/or face-to-face interviews. If you have questions you want us to include in these interviews, it is not too late to pass them along to a member of the committee.

Pre-candidate interviews start this month—talk to a Search Committee member if you have questions that you would like them to include in the interviews.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Kris Thomas, DRE

Heifer Project

During the month of January, we took a break from our usual workshop rotation and the children worked on a service project. Thanks to everyone who sponsored participants in the Heifer Project Read to Feed program. This month, the children will be singing a special song for the congregation on Sunday morning, called, *What Can One Little Person Do*. This song is about unity and justice, and introduces young people to individuals who truly model what it means to be courageous and make a difference in the world. The verses of the song are about the examples set by Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Rosa Parks, and Dr. Martin Luther King. The children spent two weeks learning about the great things these individuals did for justice, and they are excited to share this special song with all of you.

Valentines Exchange

Sunday, February 15 will be our annual Valentines exchange. Please bring enough Valentines, either homemade or store-bought, for forty children and youth. This is something the kids really look forward to every year, and they love getting Valentines from all the adults in the congregation. Their Valentines bags will be in the back of the sanctuary on Sunday morning, for easy delivery.

Snacks

Thanks to everyone who has signed up to bring snacks for the children. We still have lots of open spots on our calendar, which is hanging on the bulletin board in the first floor hallway of Unitarian House. Please consider signing up to bring the snack one week.

February 2004

1 Giant Eagle certificate sign-up Choir 9:30 am What We're About orientation 12:30 pm District NA 1:30 pm	2 Board of Trustees 7:00 pm NA 7:00 pm	3	4	5	6	7 2nd Annual <i>From The Heart</i> member recognition night
8 G.E. cert. delivery Choir 9:30 am Cooking Program 2:00 pm	9 Program Comm. 7:30 pm NA 7:00 pm	10	11 RE Comm. 7:30 pm	12 PIIN Monthly Meeting 7:00 pm Wesley Center AME Zion	13	14 St. Valentine's Day
15 Choir 9:00 am Communion Service 10:00 am Valentine exchange	16 Presidents Day NA 7:00 pm	17	18	19 Shelter Meal 9:00 pm	20 Newsletter Deadline!!	21 Coffee House 7:30 pm
22 Choir 9:30 am Finance 12:30 pm	23 NA 7:00 pm	24	25 Ash Wednesday Service 7:30 pm	26	27	28
29 Choir 9:30 am						

March 2004

	1 Board of Trustees 7:00 pm NA 7:00 pm	2	3	4	5	6
7 Giant Eagle certificate sign-up Choir 9:30 am District NA 1:30 pm	8 Program Comm. 7:30 pm NA 7:00 pm	9	10 RE Comm. 7:30 pm	11	12	13
14 G.E. cert. delivery Choir 9:30 am Cooking Program 2:00 pm	15 NA 7:00 pm	16	17	18 PIIN Monthly Meeting 7:00 pm UUA Conference on Urban Ministries begins in Boston	19 Newsletter Deadline!! OMD Men's Retreat in W.V. begins	20 Pasta Dinner/ Silent Auction 5:30 pm Talent Show 7:30 pm
21 Choir 9:00 am Communion Service 10:00 am	22 NA 7:00 pm	23	24	25 Shelter Meal 9:00 pm	26	27
28 Choir 9:30 am Finance 12:30 pm Choir Festival at Allegheny 3:00 pm	29 NA 7:00 pm	30	31			

GREEN PERSPECTIVE

Lynn Glorieux

Compact Fluorescents For Sale

Green Sanctuary has compact fluorescents for sale at a very low introductory price.

Too few homeowners are purchasing and using the new, improved compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) that are now available. The newer CFLs don't require special fixtures and are only slightly longer than incandescents of similar light output. They don't emit the low buzzing noise that was typical of many older fluorescent fixtures. The color rendition has also been greatly improved. Best of all, CFLs can use as little as a quarter of the electricity, and produce a quarter of the heat of incandescent bulbs, and they last at least ten times longer.

Thanks to a generous donation from Peter

Adams, we have a supply of about 40 assorted compact fluorescent light bulbs that we are offering for sale to benefit the Church. We decided to set the price low to encourage more of our members and friends to try using CFLs in their homes. The requested donation is \$3, but we encourage you to give more if your budget allows. We have a variety of styles and sizes available, including some that are compatible with dimmers. See Lynn Glorieux after Service to make your purchase (while supplies last).

MILESTONES

☞ Ruth Kennedy died on December 21, 2003 at the age of 90. A long-time friend of Allegheny, Ruth was the wife of former member and activist **Robert Emmet Kennedy**, who died in 1997.

Long-time members and friends will remember Ruth's warmth, her volunteer work in the community, her support of our Church's Women's Alliance, her devotion to Bob, and

her wonderful mushroom casserole that she often brought to congregational dinners!

☞ Member **Bev Darwin's** husband, Martin Safin, died on December 19, 2003. Mr. Safin, 72, was a retired teacher of mathematics and science at the Junior High level. For the last few years, he has been in a personal care home. His funeral service was held in New York City.

SERVING THE CONGREGATION

Greeters

February 1

Sheryl Rodriguez and Jeanne Zang

February 8

Martha and Walt Brethauer

February 15

Charlie Snowden and Steve Hirtle

February 22

Melissa Farrington and Jaime McLeod

February 29

Calvin Hadidian and Kathy Kozachenko

Refreshments

February 1

Jane Dirks and Linda Deafenbaugh

February 8

Nicki Perfetti and Gregg Dietz

February 15

Lynn Glorieux and Susan Hillman

February 22

Pat Downey and Hazel Leroy

February 29

Marie Engberg and Betty Schwarz

DOING JUSTICE

Social Justice Committee Enthusiastic

The Social Justice Committee started the New Year full of enthusiasm. Thirteen people convened, combining their own feelings and ideas with the feedback from autumn congregational interviews.

Consensus was reached on taking the broad concerns and focusing toward local action, particularly at the neighborhood level. We will look for local opportunities that could combine with the work of PIIN, as well with neighborhood churches and organizations.

Tasks to be completed by the February 1 meeting are to find out what is going on in some neighborhood organizations, and to continue to seek input from members and friends of the Church.

See John Meikle or Rick Smith if you have questions.

PROGRAM NOTES

Adult RE Interest

If there is enough interest, one of the following three discussion groups will be offered (each to run for three sessions):

How Your Family Works: A Systems Perspective

This is something we don't care much about except at those times when for whatever reasons stress in the family is high. Understanding something of how your family works from a systems perspective gives you more choices for how to respond.

'Bible for Dummies' Workshop

A quick and dirty overview of what's in the Bible and where it came from.

Book Study (one of the following):

- The God We Never Knew* – Borg
- Why Christianity Must Change or Die* – Spong
- Understanding the Bible* – Buehrens

Indicate your interest for one or all of the proposed adult RE topics.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Thanks For Your Support!

“Thank you” to all members and friends who responded to the year-end appeal. A report of the results will be made next month. Thanks, too, to all who responded to the encouragement to get “caught up” on your pledge payments . . . to all newcomers and all who support the Church through your Sunday offerings even though you didn't make a pledge . . . to all who “caught up” on picking up and paying for your grocery certificates . . . to all who were never “behind” on anything . . . to all who have contributed time and energy to develop fundraising projects . . . and to all who are supporting those projects.

If you think that this “thank you” includes just about everyone, you're correct! It is only through the collective efforts of everyone that our community can support our vibrant programming.

We began our current fiscal year in July with a budget that projected a significant deficit from operations. At that time, the Board of Trustees and Dave Lutz committed to working to reduce the budgeted deficit. Six months

Jill Brethauer, Treasurer

into the fiscal year, our receipts are higher than budgeted, and our expenses are lower than budgeted.

We face some large expenditures in the second half of the fiscal year, including heating bills, costs associated with the search for a permanent minister, and some costly repairs and improvements to our facilities; and a deficit still is projected. But thanks to your efforts, it is being reduced.

The Finance Committee has prepared a very preliminary budget for the next fiscal year (July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005). The Canvass Working Group will use this preliminary budget in setting goals for the upcoming pledge drive.

Meanwhile, over the next few weeks, members of the Finance Committee will be contacting the chair of each committee to fine-tune the budget based on each committee's goals and objectives for the coming year. The plan is to present a balanced operating budget for FY 2005 to the congregation at the Annual Meeting in May.

CONTACTS

The *Allegheny Advocate* is published monthly (except August) by Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church. Submissions must be received by the third Friday of the month preceding publication. Contributions or inquiries may be directed to Jaime McLeod or Donald Zeilman

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Allegheny Unitarian
Universalist Church
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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