February 2016

I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it.

--Nelson Mandela

In this issue...

Sunday Services
Minister's Notes
Religious Education
Chips from the Board
Homeward Bound
Designated Offering
Up, Up, and Away!
Caring Committee
News, Events, & Other Stuff
News from the OMD

Sunday Services in February

Feb. 7, 9:00 a.m. & 11:30 a.m. How Music Changes Us. Rev. Jim Magaw.
Music is more than a distraction. Listening to music changes us not just psychologically and emotionally but physiologically as well. How can we use music to train our minds and to connect with others in deeper ways?

Feb. 14, 9:00 a.m. & 11:30 a.m. Love Front Porch. Vanessa German.
Artist Vanessa German established Love Front Porch in Pittsburgh's Homewood neighborhood as place for children to make art as a means of building peace and love and courage in the community. Vanessa will share her thoughts about her work and how we can help. Our designated offering this morning will support Love Front Porch.

Feb. 21, 9:00 a.m. & 11:30 a.m. The Good, the Bad, and the Simpsons. Rev. Jim Magaw.
In this service we will take a look at some of the underlying theological themes and messages in the long-running animated TV show "The Simpsons." What does the show have to say about the nature of life? A designated offering to support the LREDA Endowment will be collected this morning.

Feb. 28, 9:00 a.m. & 11:30 a.m. The Life and Times of Viola Liuzzo. Rev. Jim Magaw.
Viola Liuzzo was a Unitarian Universalist who was killed after participating in the march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. Her story is compelling and offers inspiration for us today.

Minister's Notes
Rev. Jim Magaw

As our congregation in on the cusp of some major changes-with our new building project starting this...
spring—I thought it might be appropriate to share some thoughts on transformation and process.

The past is churning into and under the future on the edge of this very moment. And it is on the edge of this very fine line that life happens and transformation takes place—if we are awake to what is going on in and around us.

Rabbi Moshe Leib said: "The way in this world is like the edge of a blade. On this side is the netherworld, and on that side is the netherworld, and the way of life lies in between."

Some things may be etched in stone, but they won't be etched in stone forever, because even the stone itself is in the process of transforming. When we are aware of and engaged with this process, this "way of life in between," we are doing the work of transformation.

Catherine Keller is a theologian who writes about process. She describes life as a world of becoming, a "way of open-ended interactivity." She says: "Faith is not settled belief but living process. It is the very edge and opening of life in process. To live is to step with trust into the next moment: into the unpredictable."

So what can we do to take this step into the next moment, to live faithfully on the path of transformation?

Process thinker and political scientist William E. Connolly talks about two modes of perception: "We participate in at least two registers of temporal experience, action-oriented perception and the slower experience of the past folding into the present and both flowing toward the future. The first is necessary to life; the second is indispensable to its richness."

Action-oriented perception comes more easily to us, but we cannot fully appreciate the fullness of life unless we can couple our action-oriented perception with the churning of past into future that takes place moment by moment, on the edge of the knife that is now.

In other words, we must cultivate an awareness that goes beyond "this versus this" (a world of false dualisms) toward "this becoming this" (a world of process and constant change). Always.

--Rev. Jim Magaw

Religious Education
Jennifer McGlothlin, Director of Religious Education

"Justice is what love looks like in public, tenderness is what love feels like in private." —Cornel West

Mystery Friends Continues!
Through January and February students and adults from the UUCSH community are getting to know one another through our Mystery Friends program. Each week the new "friends" have been corresponding through notes, riddles, and little surprises. It is exciting for both the kids and adults to wonder who their pen pal might be. On **February 14** we will celebrate with a grand reveal party! The result is a budding friendship that bridges generation gaps for years to come.

**Boston here we come! January 29 COA Coffeehouse Fun-raiser**
Our Coming of Age class 2016 is hosting a coffeehouse cabaret on Fri, Jan 29, 7:00 and you’re invited! We will be selling fancy coffee drinks, fresh juice smoothies, baked goods, and gifts to raise money for our Coming of Age Boston trip in May.

Performers and Musicians will include:
- Catherine Palmer (debut of her Moth radio show presentation)
- Mike Gravitt (stand-up comedy)
- Rev. Jim
- Michael & Mary-Jo Hennessy
• Cheryl & John Kelley
• And wonderful youth musicians from Youth Group, Coming of Age, and RE!

More performers are signing up every day! If you’d like to perform we’d love to have you - sign up in the dining room! Admission for audience member or performer is $10/person or $20/family. See you there!

—Coming of Age 2016 Class: Simon, Elliot, Grayden, Emma, Danny, & Clara

The Italian Dinner is back!
Come enjoy an Italian Dinner on February 27. This dinner is organized and run by the Youth Group and they will be your wait staff for the evening. They transform the entire church into an Italian Bistro, serve wonderful food, and provide tableside music throughout the evening. Water and soft drinks will be provided, but you are welcome to bring your own beverage. Our strolling youth musicians will entertain you throughout the evening. There will be a 5pm and 7:30pm seating. Sign-up for the dinner will be in the dining room starting Sunday, January 31. The last day to sign up will be Sunday February 21. You can sign up with your favorite group of people or sign up individually and we will seat you with fun, interesting people. You'll be contributing $15.00 for anyone over 12 years of age, and $10.00 for each child between 4 and 12 years. Children under 4 eat free. The proceeds of this fun evening will support the Youth Group.

Chips from the Board

The Board of Trustees met on January 12, 2016.

• Staff reports were approved.
• Service Auction date was set.
• The board discussed the social justice committee hosting a film and discussion on fracking.
• New Home Committee update: the building project is on course. The church offices will remain on location. All moving and storage must happen during the month of April with demolition set to begin on May 1st.
• The board approved George Williams and John Hemington as trustees for Sunnyhill Trust III, with a third person to be identified in the near future.
• Bank loans for the construction look promising.
• The board discussed signage to help direct people to our new location during construction.
• The board continues further work and discussion on the Toward a Safe Congregation Policy.

Respectfully Submitted,
—Jay Thornton, Member at Large
Treasurer’s Report

As we wrapped up 2015, we ended up with a little more income than expenses for the year, which was great! This money may come in handy in 2016, since some of the income and expenses will be unusual, and as such a challenge to accurately predict. We will not have our usual income from Mushroom Family Learning Center and other renters, but we will have rental expenses for a place to hold services during construction. Thank you all for your making and meeting your pledges! That kind of support will also help us with possible bank financing for the new construction, because it shows the strong support of the congregation. Let’s have another successful year in 2016!

–Nina Balsamo, Treasurer

Members are welcome to attend UUCSH board meetings. If you have an issue you want to bring to the board’s attention at the monthly meeting, please contact Denny McCracken at president@sunnyhill.org to be added to the agenda. Request the board agenda and minutes from the church administrator at admin@sunnyhill.org or contact Nanette Miller, Secretary, at board@sunnyhill.org. Board Meetings for the 2015-16 church year will be the second Tuesday of the month. The next board meeting will be on Feb. 9, 2016, at 7 p.m. in Room 15.

Homeward Bound - Status Report

Capital Campaign Update

Thanks again to everyone that has generously supported the Capital Campaign. As of December 31, 2015 we have total Commitments of $1,565,298 and have collected $1,345,208. In addition, we have raised $20,590 in annual commitments toward the 5-year Supplemental Debt Service Campaign (there is still time to help get to our goal of $28,000 by clicking here!). This is a remarkable accomplishment for a congregation of our size, and is a reflection of the value placed on Sunnyhill by our Members and Friends.

We are currently working with Members interested in participating in Sunnyhill Trust III and a number of banks to secure financing for the remainder of funds needed to complete the building expansion project. We are also working to ensure that remaining Phase I payments are received by the deadline of March 31st. If you have any questions regarding the status of payments or amounts due for Phase I, please contact Denny McCracken at dennymccracken@yahoo.com or by phone at (412) 498-6748.

Getting Ready for our New Home Construction

Our New Home Committee and their professional resources have done a marvelous job preparing the plans and meeting the associated demands involved in the process. Before construction begins in a few months, however, a number of things will need to happen within our current building and with the services it provides. Demolition followed by construction will occur on the Northern half of the building while the staff will be relocated to and operate from the Southern half. It is expected that we will cease using the building around April 1 with construction to begin around May 1 with Sunday services being held at the Mt Lebanon Recreation Center. Before construction a number of things will be happening including:

1. Asbestos abatement probably just before construction in April.
2. Relocation of the staff and office equipment to the Southern half of the building with adequate electrical and communication services.
3. The 2nd floor remaining in the Southern half above the foyer, dining room, and kitchen will become storage and maybe accessed only by pull down stairs. This will require removal of large 2nd floor items and sorting through many other stored items before the current stairs to the 2nd floor are removed during demolition.
4. Removal of room contents and many structural and decorative features for sale or donation in the Northern half before demolition.
5. Removal of the folding chair rack and folding chairs from the furnace room.
6. With more details which are constantly evolving as we approach construction.
Each item contains a number of tasks all of which will need membership resources in addition to professionals. A more detailed list of activities and needs will be forthcoming but for now we need to begin creating a list of membership resources. The resources that will be needed will be intellectual (sorting through stuff) and physical (moving stuff). We also will need to know who has responsibility for (or knowledge about) building contents to facilitate the sorting and triaging process. Add your name to a list of resources by contacting either Charlie Cook (412-833-2261 or charliec9113@gmail.com) or John Armstrong (412-388-0131 or judydolph@verizon.net) and indicate your physical and intellectual interests and availability (time of day and days of the week). It won’t be long before this exciting process will begin - actually it already has begun.

Designated Offering for February

The Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) is our Designated Offering recipient this February. The timing is critical due to a $35,000 Matching Challenge that will be ending very soon.

Congregations around the continent are contributing to the current LREDA campaign to increase its Endowment Fund, thereby increasing the services it can provide to UU religious educators and religious education in the US and Canada. Many congregations are doing this in honor of their RE program and the religious educators who have served them over the years.

UUCSH has a tradition of strong support for, and volunteer participation in, its Religious Education program, and encouragement for leadership development. The congregation has recognized that religious education is an all-church program, for adults as well as children and youth.

Any of the religious educators who have served here, or in other UU congregations, can tell you of the invaluable support religious education professionals receive from LREDA. LREDA cannot raise from dues alone the funds it requires to support members in all the ways they need. As the UUA increasingly removes itself from the business of supporting and training religious educators, the need is great - and growing.

The current campaign to increase the LREDA Endowment Fund has the goals of providing more direct support to religious educators, programming for their professional development, support of chapters (ours is the Ohio-Meadville Chapter), and scholarship support to attend trainings and conferences. $70,000 (the total from a successful Matching Challenge) will help ensure adequate funding for the campaign goals.

The Designated Offering to support the LREDA Endowment will take place on February 21, 2016.

Come Up, Up, and Away with Sunnyhill on March 19!

Mark your calendar now for the 2016 Service Auction on March 19 at Sunnyhill, 5:00 - 8:30 PM. Do you remember the Fifth Dimension and their beautiful 60’s anthem about sailing along the silver sky? Well Sunnyhill is about to enter our next dimension. This year’s Auction will be the final celebration in the “old” Sunnyhill before we move to temporary quarters during the construction of our wonderful new home.

In keeping with the theme, this year will be all about “out with the old!” We’ll auction off pieces of Sunnyhill history that won’t be needed in our new space. Solid wood doors, marble mantles, fireplace surrounds...and.... the Toto Toilet! Silent bidding for these items will begin prior to the auction. Stay tuned for more details on this.

Dinner will be provided, prepared by the incomparable team of Will Page and Donna Kaufman, along
with age-appropriate beverages. $15 buys you dinner and admission, and sign-ups will begin in February between services (and after 2nd service) in the dining room. Childcare will be available.

Donation forms will be available in the dining room and online Sunday, January 24th. This year we’re asking that all submissions, including items for raffle baskets, be submitted by February 28th.

Come ride our beautiful balloon along Sunnyhill’s diverse rainbow of auction delights -- and at the rainbow’s end there will be a pot of gold for Sunnyhill!

Let's send our old building Up, Up, and Away with a Service Auction that's a huge success!

Questions? See Elizabeth Mortimer, Margaret Hamstead, or Nanette Miller.

From the Caring Committee
Jean Furlan and Jeanie McQuillin, Co-Chairs

We mourn the loss of our friends and loved ones this month.

- Staceyanne Cawley, friend of Cindy Mentzer.
- Rita Anderhub, mother of Tanya Chothani.

If there is news about a life change in your family that you would like included in The Drummer, please contact a co-chair from the Caring Committee or e-mail the information to drummer@sunnyhill.org. Baby and grandkid pictures always welcome!

News, Events, and Other Stuff

Sacred Chanting at Sunnyhill: Friday, February 5
"Sacred Chanting at Sunnyhill" takes place on the first Friday of each month at 7:00 p.m. and lasts about one hour. This is a relaxed and informal event, and all who are interested are invited to attend--no background in music or chanting is required, only an interest and a willingness to try something new. For more information, contact Rev. Jim (minister@sunnyhill.org).

Second Saturday at Sunnyhill: February 13
"Second Saturday at Sunnyhill" is a family-friendly program that takes place on the second Saturday of each month. This program is designed as a way to build closer relationships with other members and friends while doing some deep sharing and listening around a particular topic each month. These events are both fun and engaging. At each of these events, we gather at 4:00 for some informal socializing and begin at 4:15 with a story and some singing. At 4:30, we split into small groups (with separate related activities for children) to do some chalice circle-style sharing based our monthly topic. At about 5:30 we share a potluck supper and more informal conversation. Our next Second Saturday program will take place February 13. All are welcome! For more information, please contact Rev. Jim (minister@sunnyhill.org) or Bethany Thornton (membership@sunnyhill.org).

Sunnyhill Book Group
On February 15 at 7:30pm the Sunnyhill Book Group will meet to discuss the book Master Georgie by Byrel Bainbridge. This is a change from the original schedule. The Man in My Basement by Walter Mosley discussion has moved to March 21st. Everyone is welcome!

Craft Swap with Spiritways CUUPS
Sunday Feb 21, 2-5pm
In an effort to clear some space out of our shelves at Sunnyhill before renovations on the church begin AND a chance to spring clean our own Pagan related stockpiles we're hosting another "craft" swap. Do you have Pagan related supplies that you no longer use? Are they taking up space? Or are you new to paganism and lacking supplies, funds, or ideas? Spiritways invites you to our 2nd "Craft" Swap - bring your old supplies: ritual items, decorations, candles, tarot cards, stones, books, jewelry, clothes, etc to share with others - give some, get some! It is alright to arrive empty handed and go home with items! We will be doing short workshops during the event about cleansing and
consecrating your new tools. There will be a $5 cover charge at the door - proceeds will benefit the Spiritways Ritual Fund, to help fund future Spiritways events and rituals. A portion of your donation goes to Sunnyhill's renovation fund. This is not a sale event - only bring items you are willing to trade or give freely. Facebook event page for more info: https://www.facebook.com/events/171532956528238/

News from the OMD
Beth Casebolt, District Administrator

Details about upcoming events are available at the OMD website.

The UU Leadership Institute (www.uuinstitute.org) is opening our spring semester on January 22nd and we've got a bunch of new classes to add to the old favorites - see below for the list! Don't forget, the Institute is online, on demand, and only $30.

Want your new members to have an overview of healthy congregational participation? Encourage them to try out Healthy Membership 101.

Want your new leaders to have an overview of healthy systems thinking? They'll learn a lot in Healthy Leadership 101, the online alternative to the Healthy Congregations workshop you may have participated in previously.

Want your congregation to improve their intercultural skills in the age of #BlackLivesMatter? Rob Keithan will be offering a course on the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), an online alternative to the Who Are Our Neighbors training offered to ministers a few years ago.

Want to focus on outreach and membership? Seasoned Membership Professional Lori Emison Clair will share her wisdom and practical tips for membership committees and staff. And UUA the outreach specialists Carey McDonald and Sarah Gibb Millspaugh will help your congregation communicate our message of Universal Love.

There are courses by Tom Schade, Susan Ritchie, and more. See below for the complete list. (Nothing like learning about the history and theology of covenant straight from Susan Ritchie, right?)

Registration is happening now for the January 22 start date (though folks can register late until mid-March), so please get the word out!

The Drummer is published monthly. Submit copy and photos to the editor, Michael Farb, via email to drummer@sunnyhill.org by the 15th of each month. If you don't have email, please call the office at 412-561-6277. We will be happy to have copies mailed to you. To be removed from the e-mail distribution list or to submit an e-mail address change, please send request to admin@sunnyhill.org.

Unitarian Universalist Church of S. Hills, 1240 Washington Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228