

# AlleghenyADVOCATE

Monthly Newsletter of Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church

## Notes from Rev. Dave's Desk

Board President John Engberg says that we have had a great response to calls for assistance in the church office. Thanks to John and thanks to those who have come forward to help move *all* of us forward toward our goals.

There's been another first at Allegheny. The Board and Committee Chairs got together the other night under the guidance of our out-going Treasurer, Jill Brethauer, and put together a plan for next year's budget. It was great to have all those dedicated minds & hearts working together, inspiring one another, and envisioning this congregation's future. Well done, all! And especially well done, Jill!

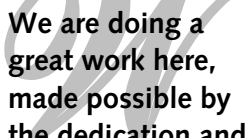
Speaking of Jill, I hope all of you will support Jill, the Board, and the Nominating Committee as they search for Jill's replacement as Treasurer. It's a tough job. And we've gotta do it. There will come a time for profuse gratitude to Jill in other forms and other forums, but now the biggest way we can say "Thank You" for Jill's wonderful service to our congregation is by finding our new Treasurer! Might that be you? Please consider contributing to creating this community in this important way. If you can't be it yourself, perhaps you can support another dedicated member in making her or his decision to do so.

By the time you read this, I will have become a *trained* PIIN leader! Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network (PIIN) is one of our programs in which we participate in direct social justice action and advocacy. There are several leadership trainings throughout the year, and this summer there'll be one in Pittsburgh!

As you reflect on how you grow in spirit at Allegheny, consider whether a deeper connection to the social justice work of PIIN might be part of your path. Talk to Allegheny's Core Team Leader, Gregg Dietz, for more details.

As we continue in spiritual growth together during this centennial year, I commend to you one of my Buddhist-inspired mantras: Show up fully, pay attention, act with integrity, and let go of attachment to results. We are doing a great work here, made possible by the dedication and commitment of the members of this beloved community. How we treat our commitment to our chosen community speaks more than any professions of faith or espousal of ideals. Presence matters. Attention matters. Integrity and actions matter! See you in church.

*Reverend Dave*



**We are doing a great work here, made possible by the dedication and commitment of the members of this beloved community.**

## From the Congregation

### Guest at Your Table - Thank You

Thank you to all who were able to participate in the Unitarian Universalist's *Guest at Your Table* program. Allegheny raised a very generous \$918 in support of this nonsectarian organization that promotes human rights and social justice within this country and worldwide. In addition to the \$918 US dollars we also collected \$2.41 Canadian money and a 5 cent Euro.

### Membership

The Social Hour after church, coffee or tea and something to eat after the service is important to all of us: visitors, new and old members and the children. It is a time to reflect on the service, to catch up with people we may only see here at Allegheny, and to relax a little before jumping back into busy lives. A long time ago (when the Women's Movement was railing against "Women's Work") I was told to think long and hard about giving up the magic of the kitchen.

The Membership Committee is responsible for this meeting time after the service. We are looking for people to share some of their kitchen magic with us and the congregation. You do not become part of the committee and a member of the committee will teach you the ropes of how to set up the coffee pot and how to clean up afterwards. Committee members have signed up for all of the dates in February and March. Please offer to participate with us. Talk to me during the social hour.

*Ellen Kerr*

### Introduction to Tai Chi

Come join a Tai Chi Yang style class at Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church, on Thursdays, 8:00–9:00 p.m. The class is taught by Dr. David Clippinger who has trained with many famous Tai Chi masters and is an ordained Ch'an Buddhist Monk (and member of South Hills UU Church).

The class introduces the fundamentals of Tai Chi, which is a 'soft' martial art that melds self-defense with deep meditative breathing and spiritual inquiry. In addition, the class covers the Taoist and Buddhist philosophies that are central to Tai Chi. Meditation is also part of the course.

The class is open to beginners as well as continuing students. In addition to the instructor, two assistants are on hand so everyone can receive individual instruction. The cost is \$50 per month.

For inquiries or registration, contact David Clippinger, director of Still Mountain Tai Chi and Chi Kung.

\_\_\_\_\_ You can also talk to Tim Nuttle at church or drop into one of our Sunday morning practice sessions (10:30 a.m. in Founders Hall) to find out more.

**We are looking for people to share some of their kitchen magic with us and the congregation.**

## Sundays in March

### March 5

#### Mind & Body: Wholly Living

Rev. David McFarland

Exploring the mind/body connection, Rev. Dave reflects on the integrated life.

### March 12

#### Love, Honor, and Negotiate

Amy Collins, CLL

Amy Collins, a Lifelong UU and Commissioned Lay Leader at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Cleveland, will reflect on the UU struggle to live the “agree to disagree” walk that we talk.

### March 18

#### Communion Service 10:00 am

Reader: Mac McMahon

Monthly gathering that celebrates community.

#### Hoping in the Dark 11:00 am

Rev. Dave McFarland

As winter is waning, Rev. Dave explores the gifts that come of dark days.

### March 26

#### Justice Sunday

Jeanne Zang

Allegheny UU will join with other UU churches around the country to celebrate Justice Sunday. Member Jeanne Zang will speak about workers' rights, including the issue of a living wage.

**Sunday Service at  
Allegheny Unitarian  
Universalist Church  
starts at 11 o'clock.  
All are welcome!**

## Serving the Congregation in March

### Greeters

#### March 5

Chris Stygar and Lisa Carvajal

#### March 12

Pete McQuillin

#### March 19

Pat Dittig

#### March 26

TBA

### Refreshments

#### March 5

Lisa Carvajal and Chris Stygar

#### March 12

Lynn Glorieux

#### March 19

Pat Downey

#### March 26

Ellen Kerr

## March 2006

			<b>1</b> ▪ Ash Wednesday ▪ Ash Wednesday Service	<b>2</b> ▪ Tai Chi 8:00 pm	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> ▪ Giant Eagle certificate sign-up ▪ Choir 9:30 am ▪ District NA 1:30 pm	<b>6</b> ▪ Board of Trustees 7:30 pm ▪ NA 7:00 pm	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> ▪ PIIN meeting ▪ RE Committee 7:30 pm ▪ Tai Chi 8:00 pm	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> ▪ Giant Eagle certificate sign-up ▪ Choir 9:30 am	<b>13</b> ▪ NA 7:00 pm	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> ▪ Shelter Meal 9:00 pm ▪ Tai Chi 8:00 pm	<b>17</b> ▪ St. Patricks Day ▪ Newsletter Deadline	<b>18</b> ▪ Dinner/Auction/Talent Show
<b>19</b> ▪ Choir 9:30 am ▪ Communion Service 10:00 am ▪ Religious Education Spring Equinox Party	<b>20</b> ▪ NA 7:00 pm	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> ▪ Tai Chi 8:00 pm	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> ▪ Choir 9:30 am	<b>27</b> ▪ NA 7:00 pm	<b>28</b> ▪ Program Committee 7:30 pm	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	

## April 2006

						<b>1</b>
<b>2</b> ▪ Giant Eagle certificate sign-up ▪ Choir 9:30 am ▪ District NA 1:30 pm	<b>3</b> ▪ Board of Trustees 7:30 pm ▪ NA 7:00 pm	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> ▪ Tai Chi 8:00 pm	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> ▪ Giant Eagle certificate sign-up ▪ Choir 9:30 am	<b>10</b> ▪ NA 7:00 pm	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> ▪ Maundy Service ▪ PIIN meeting ▪ RE Comm 7:30 pm ▪ Tai Chi 8:00 pm	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> ▪ Easter Breakfast 9:00 am ▪ Choir 9:30 am ▪ Communion Service 10:00 am ▪ Membership Sunday	<b>17</b> ▪ NA 7:00 pm	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> ▪ OMD Annual Meeting ▪ Tai Chi 8:00 pm ▪ Shelter Meal 9:00 pm	<b>21</b> ▪ OMD Annual Meeting ▪ Newsletter Deadline	<b>22</b> ▪ Down Under Coffeehouse 7:00 pm
<b>23</b> ▪ Choir 9:30 am <b>30</b> ▪ Choir 9:30 am	<b>24</b> ▪ NA 7:00 pm	<b>25</b> ▪ Program Committee 7:30 pm	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> ▪ Tai Chi 8:00 pm	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>

## Financial Matters

### Finance Update

Thanks to Ed Kinley for preparing nearly 100 letters summarizing your financial contributions during calendar year 2005 and your pledge status at the midpoint of fiscal year 2006. And special thanks to those members and friends who contacted Ed and other members of the Finance Committee with questions, clarifications, and corrections. The accuracy of our record-keeping and the integrity of the Church's financial reports are of utmost importance and we appreciate your efforts to help us in that regard.

At the close of the first seven months of our current fiscal year, the church has a positive 'bottom line.' Sunday offerings exceed budget, thanks to a combination of the following: members contributing more than they pledged, members paying their pledges sooner than anticipated, and offerings from new members and friends who didn't make a pledge last year at this time. Also helping the bottom line is the fact that our overall expenses during the first 7 months of FY 2006 are less than the amounts budgeted; specifically, utilities and other facilities costs, including supplies, maintenance, and repairs, are lower than anticipated. Cold weather, recent utility rate increases, and the sidewalk replacement that we approved during our mid-year meeting will increase our costs in the coming months, but the trend is positive. Your past and continuing individual and collective efforts make a big difference!

Nearly 20 committee chairs, Trustees, Rev. Dave, and others representing various Church initiatives recently participated in our first-ever budget workshop. Building on the committees' past experience in developing their respective budgets, the two-hour session provided a forum for setting goals and for sharing information and ideas for FY 2007, which will begin on July 1.

Discussion was lively and productive! Based on the theory that a good operating plan is the foundation for a meaningful budget, our budget for FY 2007 is off to a positive start.

The Finance Committee will compile the information gathered during the workshop into a preliminary budget that sets targets for our upcoming pledge canvass. Our Church's goals for FY 2007 are ambitious and include – in addition to pursuing our social justice work – continuing to expand our membership and our programming, reducing our reliance on grants and special fundraising projects, achieving a break-even budget, establishing an endowment fund, working toward hiring support staff and toward having a full-time minister by FY 2010, and much, much more.

*Jill Brethauer, Treasurer*

**At the close of the first seven months of our current fiscal year, the church has a positive 'bottom line.'**

## Music Notes

### Choir Festival

The third annual Choir Festival for Unitarian Universalist churches in the Pittsburgh area will take place at Allegheny on Sunday, March 26. We look forward to hosting the choirs from the South Hills, East Hills, North Hills, and First Church, and perhaps others farther away. We plan to rehearse together from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. and then present a joint concert at 4:00 p.m. followed by light refreshments in Founders Hall.

Please try to attend – it's a lot more fun if we have listeners! The Allegheny Church choir could also use some additional voices, so think about joining us for this special event. All who like to sing are welcome at our rehearsals, 9:30 a.m. each Sunday.

## In the Church

### Black & White Reunion

How much diversity can be seen in our congregation? How about in Unitarian Universalism as a national movement? Not much. This is a nationally recognized problem by the UUA - although we espouse beliefs of acceptance and inclusion there is a great deal of uniformity in our congregations. So what do we do about it?

On 21 January, a few members of AUUC attended a *Summit Against Racism* in celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday. The goal of this conference was to promote activity for change and the "building of bridges" across all race, ethnic and cultural lines, and backgrounds. Through video, music, lecture and small group discussion, we heard of different issues around race relations. Most importantly, we had time to brainstorm practical responses to a mainly divided society.

After a little time to digest what we had learned, we started a group to spearhead AUUC's engagement with the issues of interracial relations and fellowship. One meeting later, we have a seminarian intern working with the church for social justice, a potluck in the planning and a youth liaison to other North Side Churches - all for the promotion of social interaction and communication!

- Zoe Engberg is working on youth relations between the churches, and possibly doing a youth-specific event at the proposed potluck. Youth, go to Zoe with your energy and enthusiasm!

- Jay Poliziani is working as head of the group and intern with AUUC to foster and promote social justice through improved interpersonal relations. If you are interested in anything stated above (including joining the group or helping with the potluck).

- As a traditional hymn says (number 406 in our hymnal), "Let Us Break Bread Together..." We are planning a potluck dinner with some of the mainly black churches in our neighborhood. There is no specific date yet, but keep your ears and eyes open!

**Andrew Weber**

### Let Us Break Bread Together

*Let us break bread together on our knees,  
let us break bread together on our knees.  
When I fall on my knees with my face to the  
rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me.  
Let us drink wine together on our knees,  
let us drink wine together on our knees.  
When I fall on my knees with my face to the  
rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me.  
Let us praise God together on our knees,  
let us praise God together on our knees.  
When I fall on my knees with my face to the  
rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me.*

## Religious Education

### RE News

In March, the RE students will be finishing their five units on Jesus' life culminating in the Easter celebration. Our last workshop rotations will focus on Islam and Buddhism, so let us know if you would like to help with either of these units, or with providing snacks that are needed on a weekly basis.

We've enjoyed record attendance at weekly classes, averaging around 30 children a week - they are an inquisitive, lively group, fun to work with. They'd love to talk with you during coffee hour!

The goal of this conference was to promote activity for change and the "building of bridges" across all race, ethnic and cultural lines, and backgrounds.

### Addictions Ministry

*“If there is one thing you should know about people who abuse drugs and alcohol - something that should be in your head and your heart when you are in contact with them - it is this: In most important ways, they are just like you and me.”*

This is the opening sentence from UU minister Denis Meacham’s book, The Addiction Ministry Handbook. I had the recent pleasure of attending a conference where Rev. Meacham gave a presentation and answered many questions posed to him from interested area UUs.

According to statistics on addiction, two-thirds of our congregation has been seriously affected by this issue.

Addictions Ministry is a movement in many congregations to recognize this impact and respond helpfully and lovingly to those who touched by this difficulty. We are a small church with many people already feeling stretched to their limits - but we can still make a difference in our policies and activities.

Although we may not have the means to start up a new committee and/or task force, there are certain things which can be done to make our congregation a more loving and tolerant place for community and worship. At some church events there is alcohol served, at times the only option apart from tap water. When alcoholic beverages are set out on a table for general consumption, it creates a difficult and possibly dangerous environment for someone in early recovery from a dependence on this substance.

The issues are not only alcohol; many people suffer from problematic relationships with food. Overeating is closely linked to the addictive nature of some foods, mainly those with wheat, dairy, sugar and chocolate; caffeine can have similar affects. (See [www.nutramed.com](http://www.nutramed.com)). When our refreshments after church have no feasible option for those with eating disorders, again we are creating an insensitive and challenging situation.

What are some reasonable and easy responses?

- Demote alcohol to a less prominent position at church social functions.
- Provide appealing alternatives to alcohol, as we do in our communion services (good job)!
- Offer attractive snacks apart from cookies and cakes.
- Supply decaffeinated drinks at Fellowship Hour (we have been fairly good on this).
- Talk to the Worship Committee about addiction based services.
- For anyone interested in discussing this further or borrowing the aforementioned book, contact me.

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*Andrew Weber*

**Addictions Ministry is a movement in many congregations to recognize this impact and respond helpfully and lovingly to those who touched by this difficulty.**

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Allegheny Unitarian  
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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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### Allegheny Web Site

[www.alleghenyuu.org](http://www.alleghenyuu.org)



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We are a spiritually-diverse, activist congregation.