



The UU News

The First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington, Vermont

"We gather to inspire spiritual growth, care for each other
and our community, seek truth, and act for justice."

April 17, 2011 -
May 1, 2011

Calendar

Sunday, April 17

9:00 Worship Service
10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
10:15 UU World Discussion
10:30 Healing Meditation
11:00 Worship Service
12:30 UU World Discussion
12:30 Social Action Forum
5:00 Alanon
6:0 New UU Class

Monday, April 18

***** Zen (Call office for time.)
9:00 Newsletter Deadline
6:30 Membership Committee

Tuesday, April 19

10:00 Seekers SGM
12:00 Staff Lunch
1:00 Afternoon Book Discussion
7:00 Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 20

9:30 Staff Meeting
7:00 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, April 21

9:00 Newsletter Crew
3:45 Creative Spirit SGM

Friday, April 22

6:30 AA Men's Group

Saturday, April 23

9:00 Wise Together SGM

Sunday, April 24

9:00 Worship Service
10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
10:30 Healing Meditation
11:00 Worship Service
5:00 Alanon

Monday, April 25

***** Zen (Call office for time)
9:00 Mondays at Martha's SGM
1:15 Care Network Committee

Tuesday, April 26

9:00 Joyful Parenting SGM
10:00 Sprouts SGM
12:00 Staff Lunch

Wednesday, April 27

9:30 Staff Meeting
6:00 Sapere Aude SGM
7:00 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, April 28

6:00 Finding Our Truth SGM

Friday, April 29

5:00 UU Dungeons & Dragons
6:30 Glebe Land Coffee House
6:30 AA Men's Group

Saturday, April 30

Sunday, May 1

9:00 Worship Service
10:00 Adult Programs Committee
10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
10:30 Healing Meditation
11:00 Worship Service
1:00 Coming of Age
5:00 Alanon
6:30 "Eaarth" Book Discussion

Current Notes

by Rev. Elaine Bomford

I once had a job with "The Homeless Outreach Intervention Project" as one of ten outreach workers, each covering a New Hampshire county. We scoured our counties to document resources for poor people - the former nun who distributed bread and clothing from her little house in Troy, the convenience store owner in Keene who gave homeless youth a discount on food, the religious shelter that provided a meal if folks agreed to sit through a church service.

We also sought and engaged homeless people who were not linked in to the social service system. My brown dog Como and I were a team - reaching out to people on the street, under bridges, in boxcars, abandoned buildings, camped in the woods, even underneath warehouses. Behind a Keene shopping center was a regular haunt - a veritable homeless town, complete with easy chairs and a sleeping shelter woven out of sticks that looked like a beaver's hut. Folks filling their carts in Hannaford's had little notion of the subsistence life behind the scenes. Como and I carried in cans of beans and spam, sterno, flashlights, blankets, rain tarps. We listened to sad sagas. The work was eye-opening and gut-wrenching.

Outreach workers also took shifts on the statewide HELP line, somewhat like Vermont's 211. We answered calls from people facing a night on the street in all weathers, families living in their cars, people at risk of eviction. With full shelters and few resources in the "Live Free or Die" state, "out of the box" thinking and dogged advocacy on behalf of the people were often required. Our first questions to callers always revolved around identifying the resources they, themselves, had at hand. Maybe that "resource" was one more night in a safe place, one more month in the apartment, a friend who would let them stay on the couch for a week (no, it's not the Ritz, but let's be real). And always, we tried to help folks identify their options, for when a person has a choice, they have some dignity.

These lessons have served me well. They have helped me serve you, too. When hard times hit, make a frank and honest assessment. What resources do we, ourselves, have at hand? Perhaps our circumstances are not what we wanted or envisioned. Nobody ever said life was going to be easy or fair. But we have choices, we have dignity, strengths, innovative imagination and the grace to dwell in affirming possibility.

Upcoming Sundays

Sunday, April 17, 9am & 11am

"**Universalist Gems**" Our Universalist heritage yields treasures of the spirit which ground and enrich our liberal religious life. Rev. Elaine preaches.

Sunday, April 24, 9am

In this service for all ages, RE Director Martha Dallas and Rev. Elaine celebrate and explore together the meaning of Easter. The children's choir will sing.

Sunday, April 24, 11am

"Rolling Away the Stones," On this Easter Sunday, the highest Holy Day of the christian tradition, Rev. Holmes will reflect at the 11am service on the new life that comes to us all when we roll away the stones that keep us in the dark places of the soul. Easter bonnets, along with a real sense of the power of the possibility of resurrection, will be most welcome.

Sunday, May 1, 9am & 11am

Yom Ha'Shoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, is marked by reflections and music with Rev. Elaine.

Stewardship Pledge Reminder

Please be reminded that all financial pledges for our upcoming fiscal year are to be returned to the church office by April 22nd. In order to complete our staffing and operating budgets, we need your pledge card returned as soon as possible. If you did not return your card at service on April 10th, please do so now. You may make an online pledge by following the link on our website (www.uusociety.org) or by mailing your card to: FUUSB, Attention: Stewardship, 152 Pearl St., Burlington, VT 05401

Please, don't hesitate or procrastinate. Make your pledge today! Thank you for your generosity and commitment to our faith community.

-Your Stewardship Committee



Message from Martha



Some of you have heard me admit that I'm not particularly interested in ensuring our children know our Seven UU Principles by heart. I don't intend this in a flippant way. What I mean is that in my opinion, being able to rattle them off; stressing over the accuracy of our wording, or knowing the exact order of them is of relatively little value. It's more important to live a life inspired by them, and be able to demonstrate with words and actions that their essence is obviously present in *who you are*.

One way I imagine extracting ourselves from the temptation to memorize the Principles is to choose two of them which we find particularly engaging. If we think about them as a pair and ask ourselves what kinds of dynamic ideas emerge in the pairing, then we create some growing edges for ourselves. For example, pair up the first one about how every single person is unique and special – with the seventh one, about how everything is all related to everything else in a web-like reality which we are bound to respect. Each gets a little more interesting in the context of the other, don't they?

To me, these two pull on each other and give each other a liveliness they wouldn't have if considered alone, or recited in a list. Together, they create a tension necessary to Unitarian Universalism's *living tradition*. I'm reminded of the frequently referenced metaphor of stringed instruments, which can only sound when their strings are taught just so. Too loose, and the sound is weak, flat, or nonexistent. Too tight, and the sound is shrill, piercingly fragile, and the string soon to snap. The tension required for music to sound freely is found somewhere in the middle.

To live in such a way as to be true to both the first and seventh principles means to be regularly tuning in to them. When we do, we will notice situations in our lives where we acutely feel the tension of their presence. And that's a good, good thing! Those situations are gifts which call on us to examine in that moment whether we can become a little better as people, and simultaneously do good for that Wonderful Web of All. Those situations are opportunities for us to tune into that tension, and to choose to play it as if our lives were made of music.

Martha Dallas,
Director of Religious Education

Eaarth: FUUSB & Life on a Tough New Planet

You are invited (and respectfully urged) to read and discuss Bill McKibben's book [Eaarth: Making Life on a Tough New Planet](#). David McFeeters, FUUSB Property Manager and Rev. Elaine facilitate this discussion of practical and visionary steps we are called to make as individuals, families, and a congregation in response to the reality of global warming. 6:30 p.m. Sunday, May 1. Childcare will be provided.

Photo Exhibit Celebrates Our Animal Companions

What animals do you feel most connected to, and has this changed over the course of your life? Do you love to snuggle with your dog, watch your cat perform acrobatic tricks, or notice birds in flight? Do you wonder what it is that animals are telling you with their eyes? Have you watched animals in communities, knowing just what to do, working for the good of all? Has an animal companion ever been your spiritual teacher?

Our Animal Ministry group invites members and friends here at First UU to bring framed (suitable for hanging) photos of the animals in their lives to be displayed in the Meeting House ARC Gallery on the second floor. Please bring your photos to Rev. Elaine's office no later than Sunday, May 8. The exhibit will be ready for all to enjoy on May 15, and will continue for a month.

Please join us on May 15, as we deepen our commitment to our animal companions, and as we celebrate the gifts they share with us. Thank you.
*Rebecca Anderson,
for the UU Animal Ministry Group*

Board Meeting

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on April 19th from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Members are welcome to attend board meetings. If you wish to bring an item before the board, the procedure for doing so can be found in the red Board Minute's Notebook located in the Parlors.

Cheryl Haller, Board Secretary

JUMP Opportunity

For just \$100 to \$499 your business can sponsor the RUN for JUMP. See your business on T-shirts, our website, newsletter and signage on event day. Contact Lynn Douglas for information, 802-644-2197.

The Glebe Land Coffee House for April: "How Time Flies"

Our next coffee house will occur on Friday, April 29th, 2011 in the Parlors at the First UU Society of Burlington Meeting House (at the top of Church Street). The Glebe Land Coffeeshouse presents a wide variety of acoustic music performances by people from our larger community and it is consistently enjoyable and satisfying. Our theme for April will be "How Time Flies" and performers will present a variety of covers and original compositions on the theme. If you want to reserve some microphone time yourself, contact Brian Haas at bhaas@viscc.com or at 802-658-4747. The proceeds from donations will benefit the Joint Urban Ministry Project (JUMP) a local non-profit service organization. Come enjoy the warm experience of good friends, good music, and good things to eat. Doors open at 6:30pm and music will run from 7:00pm to 9:30pm. I'LL SEE YOU AT THE GLEBE LAND!

Memorial Spring Flowers

If you wish to remember someone on Sunday, April 17, the Sunday before Easter, by contributing to the Spring Flower Fund, please send a check made out to The Women's Alliance and mail it to Ann Livingston, 300 Lake Street, Apt. 301, Burlington, Vermont, 05401. Please include the name(s) of the person(s) you wish to remember and your name(s).

Gifts to the Memorial Garden are appreciated as well. The plants used at the April 17 and 24th services will be distributed to our homebound by members of the Care Network Ministry.

Sunday Morning Meditation

From 10:30 to 10:45 on Sunday mornings, in the back of the Sanctuary or outside at the Labyrinth, weather permitting, PSI Symposium folk invite you to join in a healing meditation and prayer. We gather informally for fifteen minutes of quiet, peaceful concentration in the midst of the Sunday bustle. Every person is welcome to sit or walk with us. If you have an issue or person, animal, etc. you would like included in the healing meditation, please speak with Rebecca Anderson, Reverend Elaine, or any other PSI member.

Next NL Deadline:

Monday, April 18, 2011 covering May 1, 2011 through May 15, 2011.

First Unitarian Universalist
Society
862-5630

*Olivia Holmes,
Interim Senior Minister*

*Elaine Bomford,
Assistant Minister*

*Linda Gross,
Board President*

*Martha Dallas, Director
of Religious Education*

*David McFeeters,
Facilities Manager*

*Wayne Schneider,
Music Director
wayne.schneider@uvm.edu*

*Christina Fulton,
Society Administrator*

*Kathleen Kemp,
Administrative Assistant*

Email: office@uusociety.org

Do you want to . . .

feel empowered?
utilize your unique talents?
help the First UU?

The membership committee is looking for additional committee members. We welcome all who want to help. We especially need members who have the following skills and interests:

event planning, graphic art and design, marketing (isn't it obvious) and hospitality skills.

The commitment is five to eight hours a month For more information please contact Jeff Byam, jeffbyam@yahoo.com or (802) 399-2112

Adults Needed

Young and Old: The Adult Programs Committee has been revived and we are looking for a few good members with ideas and energy to develop and implement educational and leisure programming for adults from both FUUSB and the greater Burlington community. Come to a meeting on Sunday May 1, at 10 a.m. at FUUSB or contact Jean Palmer at 288-9566 jeanpa@pshift.com Thanks for your interest!

UU Silver Bay

A weekend on Lake George, NY: It is an educational & fun time for your family. Set aside the days of October 14, 15, & 16, 2011. Contact Rita or Adam Bortz for info, AdamBortz@aol.com and RitaBortz@aol.com.

A Tremendous Thank You

Please join me and the rest of the membership committee in extending a warm hearted thank you to the following people. These dedicated volunteers listed below have worked diligently all year as team leaders, coordinators, greeters and ushers to make sure that newcomers and members are welcomed each Sunday. They also show up early and stay late in order to answer questions about the society, distribute information including the Order of Service, handle the collection and put out materials that make services more accessible. They are listed below in alphabetical order by first name.

Also a special thank you to the Small Group Ministry Steering Committee along with the following small groups: Eighty-Fours, Mondays at Martha's, Sapere Aude, Seekers and Wise Together. Small Group Ministry's commitment to take on many of these roles this past year has been instrumental in our collective effort to make our society welcoming and inclusive to newcomers and members alike!

Team Leaders, Coordinators, Greeters and Ushers (with First Names A-J)

Adam Bortz, Barbara Benton, Barbara Heeter, Bert Munger, Bill West, Bud Etherton, Carol Czina, Charlotte Brody, Cheryl Haller, Dave Conrad, David Patrick Call, Deanna Anderson, Deborah Deladurantaye, Doug Facey, Ellie Skolfield, Gail Beck, Gary Decarolis, Gerry Quinlan, Ginger Hobbs, Helen Douglas, Janice Lange, Jeanne Lynch, Jeanne Parsley, Jill Stevens, Jonathan Sands

Team Leaders, Coordinators, Greeters and Ushers (with First Names K-Z)

Ken Swearingen, Kirsten Wiley, Kristin Kany, Linda Oats, Lisa Gibbons, Lois Holbrook, Marianne Burke, Marla Emery, Martha Fitzgerald, Mary Cox, Mary Silverman, Michelle Grimm, Mike Reed, Nina Harrington, Nina Ridhibinyo, Pat Allen, Peg Twitchell, Peggy Owen Sands, Rita Bortz, Sally Conrad, Shirley McLane, Susan Raimy, Suzie Debrosse, Tammy Strauss, Terry Jeroloman, Terry Rowe

Thank you to all of you for your dedicated service!!!

Submitted by Jeff Byam of the Membership Committee (I apologize in advance for any errors and/or omissions)

Loose Plate for Charity

On February 27 and March 6 our congregation pledged to contribute 50% of our Sunday Loose Plate Collection to Vermont CARES. I am pleased to report that our congregation will be sending a check to them for \$442.80. On March 13 & 20, we pledged to contribute 50% of the loose plate collection to Center City Little League. On these two dates we collected a total of \$944, and we will be sending them a check for \$472.

On April 17 we will be giving half our cash collection to the Burlington Recreation & Nutrition Summer Program. On April 24 & May 1 we will be collecting for Outright Vermont. On May 8 we will be collecting for the Choir's Sheet Music Fund. Please come prepared to be generous!

Our Loose Plate for charity program benefits non-profit agencies that are located in or serve residents of the Old North End of Burlington. If you would like to nominate an agency to receive our collection, please contact Christina Fulton at xina@uusociety.org or 862-5630 ext. 22.

Blessing of the Animals Service Project

In preparation for the Blessing of the Animals service on May 15th, the UUs of Burlington Animal Ministry (UUBAM) is planning a pet food drive. We intend to do something similar to what JUMP does each year. On May 1st and May 8th, UUBAM members will be distributing bags (which were kindly donated by Pet Food Warehouse). Please take these bags home, fill them with pet food, and then return them before or during the Blessing of the Animals service on May 15th. Your donations will be taken to the Food Shelf, where needy people will then be able to get food for their hungry pets. So far this year, you have generously donated about 300 pounds of pet food to the Food Shelf. Thank you for your past...and continuing... compassion. For more information, contact Rosanne Greco at 497-0711 or rosanne499@aol.com.

1,000 Peace Cranes for Japan

On March 27th our congregation began the prayerful project of folding 1,000 origami cranes which we will send later this spring to the Hiroshima Peace Park in Japan. We're reaching across the world with this gesture of compassion and peace. In the coming weeks, you will find origami paper and crane-folding instructions on the round table in the Parlors and downstairs in the Community Room. If you fold cranes at home, bring them to the designated box near the chalice wall in the Community Room. Thank you!

*Martha Dallas,
Director of Religious Education*



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152 Pearl Street
Burlington, Vermont 05401
(802)862-5630
www.uusociety.org

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Interim Musings

Dear Members of FUUSB,

For uncountable years two noble bulletin boards have presented to the larger community many beliefs held dear by Unitarian Universalists and our schedule and subjects of worship on Sunday mornings. Just this year David McFeeters, John Lincoln and others completed the project of wiring them, so that any passerby could read them at night as well as during daylight hours. On a regular basis members of one of the Society's small groups have changed the bulletin board called a Wayside Pulpit, that shares thoughts like, "You need not think alike to love alike," by Francis David (16th century Transylvanian Unitarian)

This past weekend both bulletin boards were vandalized. The damage wasn't terrible, yet vandalism always feels terrible. We ask, how did this happen? Why? Who? Could it happen again? Of course we'll never know exactly who did it, or how, or why it happened. Yes, of course, it could happen again. Still...in the light of the scary things that can, do, and will happen in life, we can still reach out in love.

The vandals scratched a message into the back of the Wayside Pulpit board. In rough splintery letters it spells, "God is Love."

That is a sentiment the vandals might be surprised to discover a great many UUs would agree with. God, however we understand that concept, made manifest in the world through the miracle of life, calls us to be with one another in and through love.

Maybe we can respond to this particular call with a resounding yes. Yes, we can find it in our hearts to forgive the act of vandalism, never to know the how, why or who of it. Yes, we can volunteer to repair the damage, or maybe even create new bulletin boards that speak through their design to today's Burlington community.

Christina remembers a time, some years ago now, that many members of FUUSB talked about creating a new design for the bulletin boards....something inviting the community in, something welcoming and restful as a space for pause in a busy day. Perhaps the vandals have opened this window afresh. John Lincoln, Property Co-Chair, has already volunteered to organize a bulletin board rebuilding team. If you want to help, email or call David McFeeters at david@uusociety.org (802-863-5630).

And remember the wise words of UU theologian, Rev. Dr. James Luther Adams, "Church is a place where you get to practice what it means to be human." To be fully human is to love.

In faith, Olivia

Discuss *UU World*

Take a look at the new and improved *UU World* with new paper and new departments! Enjoy reading the new spring issue. Then, over a fresh bagel, plan to share your thoughts and feelings with Rev. Elaine and fellow UUs on Sunday, April 17 at 12:30 PM. The Spring 2011 issue includes an article about UU minister Rev. Ron Robinson's unconventional church in Turley, Oklahoma that concentrates on community service. In other articles, UUs share their personal immigration stories and Watertown, Mass. minister Rev. Mark Harrison explores the tension that Unitarian Universalists feel between our unique history and our aspiration to be a religion for all.

You can read about Rochester, New York UU minister Rev. Kaaren Anderson and how her personal story inspired activists to launch an abortion hotline that offers support without judgment. Check out the Families pages focusing in this issue on "Living in good faith...with technology". And don't miss the article by Kate Braestrup, UU minister and chaplain to the Maine Warden Service, suggesting that grace before meals can remind us that every meal is holy.

In the current issue of *UU World*, you can also read about the latest news from the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA), activists working for social justice, churches focusing on transgender issues, ministers speaking out on bullying of gay youth, a Michigan church using wind power, and so much more.

The Denominational Affairs committee invites you to join us in a discussion of the spring issue at 12:30 PM on Sunday, April 17. Enjoy the reading and share your ideas with others. Childcare will be provided and refreshments served. If you did not receive the latest issue, you can find it online at: www.uuworld.org. *David Conrad, Denominational Affairs*
