



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."

February 20, 2011 -
March 6, 2011

Calendar

Sunday, February 20

9:00 Worship Service
10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
10:15 Transition Time Q & A
10:30 Healing Meditation
11:00 Worship Service
12:30 Social Action Forum
12:30 Transition Time Q & A
12:45 Rachel's Work Hours
5:00 Alanon

Monday, February 21

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

Tuesday, February 22

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

Wednesday, February 23

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

Thursday, February 24

9:00 Newsletter Crew
6:00 Finding Our Truth SGM

Friday, February 25

6:30 AA Men's Group
6:30 Glebe Land Coffee House

Saturday, February 26

9:00 Wise Together SGM

Sunday, February 27

9:00 Worship Service
10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
10:15 Transition Time Q & A
10:30 Healing Meditation
11:00 Worship Service
12:30 Transition Time Q & A
12:45 Rachel's Work Hours
5:00 Alanon

Monday, February 28

***** Zen (Call office for time)
9:00 Mondays at Martha's SGM
1:15 Care Network Committee
4:00 Creative Spirit SGM

Tuesday, March 1

10:00 Seekers SGM
10:30 Library Committee
12:00 Staff Lunch

Wednesday, March 2

9:30 Staff Meeting
5:00 RE Committee
5:30 Social Action Committee
7:00 Exec. Committee of the Board
7:00 Choir Rehearsal
7:00 Exec. Committee of the Board

Thursday, March 3

Friday, March 4

10:30 Women's Alliance
5:00 UU Dungeons & Dragons
6:00 Mysteries SGM
6:30 AA Men's Group

Saturday, March 5

Sunday, March 6

9:00 Worship Service
10:00 6th Grade Soup Lunch
10:30 Healing Meditation
11:00 Worship Service
12:30 OWL Parent Session
12:45 Rachel's Work Hours
1:00 Coming of Age
5:00 Alanon

Current Notes

by Rev. Elaine Bomford

There is an inspiring photo making the rounds on the internet, entitled "Christians protecting Muslims while they pray during protests in Egypt." The picture, taken February 2, is of a large city square in Cairo filled with people, mostly men. Two young men are seen close up - they face the camera, holding hands as part of a protective human barrier formed by Egyptian Christians. Behind the line, rows of Muslims kneel in prayer. "I was there!" one internet commentator wrote: "They placed newspapers and towels on the floor so we wouldn't pray on the asphalt, I love Egyptian Christians and although I am a Muslim I would die defending any one of them."

Since that time, people have died in the protests in Egypt. People of all faiths and perspectives, here in the UU Society, in the interfaith community in Burlington and around the world, have been praying, meditating, and hoping for a peaceful breakthrough to freedom in Egypt during this volatile time. Despite violence, we continue to keep faith with Muslims, Christians and all who struggle and stand together for peaceful change.

Some say what we focus upon becomes our reality, and to a great extent, it seems true. The focus of the mainstream media news seems to be predominantly on violence. News of the many compassionate acts that take place is harder to come by. But such images and stories of courage help us develop and sustain a positive motivating focus. They empower us with renewed vision. When I bring to mind the Egyptian Christians who put themselves at risk so their Muslim brothers and sisters could pray, and when I think of Muslims who pray with peaceful hearts, even as they protest injustice, I know this is the reality I affirm.

"I would die defending any one of them," says the writer of his Egyptian Christian protectors. Jesus taught "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15.13). Most of us are faced, not with the threat of death, but with the challenge of living and acting compassionately, even when resources are few and needs are great, even though religious and social prejudice is tenacious. My images of inspiration in these times come not only from the media - they come from you, whom I see every day, striving to stay focused positively, working faithfully, standing together in Unitarian Universalist faith for tolerance, freedom and justice.

Upcoming Sundays

Sunday, February 20, 9am & 11am

"Faith of the Founding Fathers"

In both multigenerational services today we will meet Presidents Adams, Washington, Jefferson, and Madison, and some of their First Ladies. Rev. Olivia was inspired to write this play for all ages based on Rev. Gary Kowalski's book. (No RE classes today.)

Sunday, February 27, 9am & 11am

"Transcendent Understanding"

Rev. Olivia will speak this morning about Transcendentalism as part of the development of the faith we call both ours and Unitarian Universalism today. How it evolved as "theology" that speaks on to us today is her subject.

Sunday, March 6, 9am & 11am

Reverend Elaine brings us a contemporary UU vision from California and the UU Ministers Conference at Asilomar. The seminar she attended with authors John Buehrens and Rebecca Ann Parker and their book "A House for Hope: The Promise of Progressive Religion for the Twenty-first Century" provide the topic.

Meals on Wheels

Volunteers Needed

Our Society is responsible for supplying 8 drivers and 8 'runners' to deliver meals to the homebound on the first and fifth Wed, if there is a fifth, each month. We need help between 9:55 am and ~ 11:40 am. You will be paired with someone who knows the route. Please call Susan Alden to volunteer or with questions at 863 - 6585, or sbalden@burlingtontelecom.net. Our next delivery dates are March 3, 31, and April 7.

Settled Minister Search Update

Our Society has been assigned a new Ministerial Settlement Representative. Her name is Rev. Priscilla Richter, and she is the minister at the First UU Society of Schenectady, NY. Rev. Richter will be coming to visit us on February 20 and she will present forums on the search process after both services that day. Refreshments will be served and childcare will be available. Please plan to come and bring your questions.



Message from Martha



Recently, during a visit with a young friend, she was telling me that in her Tae Kwon Do classes, sometimes the teacher makes the students do ten push-ups. "You can do *ten* push-ups?" I remarked, and asked her to show me. Impressed, I confessed to her, "I can only do two or three. I once worked up to seventeen, but that was years ago. But I can still do a few." And to prove it to both of us, I got into the plank position. Geez, my butt and hips felt heavy. But with confidence, I lowered myself so my nose was inches from the ground, and then, pressing against the floor with all I had, ... I collapsed. "Wait, let me try again," I insisted, regrouping and gathering the strength and ability I was sure I possessed. With purer concentration this time, I descended toward the floor, and again, in a momentary fit of trembling strength, I dropped splat onto my chest. I couldn't believe it! I could do NO push-ups. I'd ALWAYS been able to do at least a few! How did I completely lose that strength without even knowing it?!

Simple. I hadn't practiced.

We practice all sorts of things: sports, instruments, crafts, professions.... and in a faith context, we practice ways of tuning into the life of our spirit. I think that in the term, "spiritual practice," the word, "practice" is at least as important as the word, "spiritual." For what is the meaning and purpose of the attention we give to our spiritual lives, unless this attention is something we *regularly* practice?

Practicing something suggests a few things to me, namely: we are always learners; perfection has no place here; and familiarity, regularity, and consistency with our practice are what count the most. And when we think about spiritual practices, whatever they may be, we maintain them -- just because, -- and especially so that they are strong and reliable when life gets stormy and we really need them to help us keep our center.

I was so shocked to discover my loss of upper body strength, that I have begun practicing my push-ups every day since my humiliating collapse. In a sense, a piece of my identity had faded to nothing, while I wasn't even aware. I can now do two fairly solid push-ups, and sometimes a pathetic third. My new practice is gratifying, because it's renewing congruence between my imagined self and my actual self. It reminds me daily of three things: where I am now, from whence I've come, and where I want to go. It's physical, and it's teaching me about *spirit*. So I practice.

Martha Dallas,
Director of Religious Education

Search for New Music Director

Wayne Schneider, has announced his intention to step down from his current position as Music Director at the end of June. Wayne started in this position in 2007 and has served us well not only as the Director of Music but also as Choir Director and Organist. While we are saddened to see him leave this position, Wayne has indicated that he would like to stay on as organist if that emerges as a workable solution. Search committee members are being recruited mid-February. We anticipate that the search will begin very soon and continue until a suitable candidate is identified. We will keep the congregation updated on the progress of the search. In the meantime if you know of any potential candidates that might be interested in the Music Director position, please refer them to the position announcement on the website www.uusociety.org or posted on the Society bulletin board.

Please join with the Board and the FUUSB music community in thanking Wayne for sharing his talents with us these past years. Questions and comments may be directed to Mary Peabody (mary.peabody@uvm.edu) or either of the co-Chairs of the Music Committee, Zoe Hart (zoehart@myfairpoint.net) or Mary Michalek (marymichalek@gmail.com).

Legacy Society Thrives!

Under the leadership of Martha Fitzgerald and Janice Lange, the Planned Giving Committee is thrilled to announce that the Legacy Society has passed the 60 member mark and continues to grow! Between the end of August 2010 and mid January 2011, the Legacy Society grew by 16%, welcoming nine new members for a new total of 63 enrollees! The Planned Giving Committee salutes the kind generosity of these forward-thinking members of our congregation who are ensuring the future of our liberal religion in this illiberal age. To join them by making a bequest or other type of planned gift to the First UU, contact any member of the Planned Giving Committee or Janice Lange, Chair: 878-5256; janicellange@comcast.net

Board of Trustees

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on March 15th 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 and on the bulletin board.

Meals Thanks

Meals on Wheels thanks our hardy members and friends for their outstanding efforts each month especially in winter in spite of snow, icy walks and driveways. Our delivery February 2 was cancelled due to snow.

Great gratitude to our regular volunteers, Jan Abbott, Rita and Adam Bortz, Chris Bullard, Mary Gade, Sue Golden, Barbara Heeter, Ann Livingston, Harriet Long, Jeanne Lynch, Pam MacPherson, Keith Morgan, Nick Nixon, Peg Twitchell and Betty VanBuren. Substitutes include Harris Abbott, Susan Alden, Ellen Beaudoin, Eva Diner, Linda Gross, Jean Hopkins, Connie Kite, Janice Lange, Bruce MacPherson, Shirley McLane, Sara Mikell, Bev Nichols, Anne Nixon, Margaret O'Brien, Aaron Schlossberg, Amelia Schlossberg, and the late Carmer VanBuren.

Hot Homemade Soup and Bread Luncheon

A locally made buffet line of hot soups and breads, worthy of Atlantic City, will be available "to go" after the first service, and for a sit down luncheon after the second service on Sunday, March 6th. If you really want to "hit the jackpot", purchase a copy of our soup recipe booklets. Recipe booklets include nutritional information. All proceeds for the soup lunch and the recipe booklets go toward raising the last \$600 needed to send our 6th graders to Boston in May. See you on March 6th! With questions or other ways to support this worthy cause contact Susan Rutherford at 951-2571 or susanrutherford@hotmail.com.

Interim Ministry Review

On Sunday, February 13, from 10:15am - 11:00 am and beginning again at 12:15pm, representatives of the Personnel Committee will be holding listening sessions on the opportunities for the second year of the Interim Ministry. Open to all congregants, these listening sessions are an opportunity to reflect on challenges you have experienced and what you would like the Interim Ministry leadership to focus on during the second year of our transition. The sessions will be held in the Susan B. Anthony Room (2nd floor of our building). No need to sign up. Drop in and share your thoughts. Notes will be taken and results will be compiled into a report for the Executive Committee of the Board. Strict confidentiality will be used in preparing the report. We want your thoughts not your name!

Affordable Housing

The Social Action Committee will be hosting the Champlain Housing Trust on February 20th, 12:30 pm. CHT will give a presentation on their work providing affordable housing to thousands of people in the Champlain Valley. The presentation will be in the Susan B. Anthony Room at the First UU Society.

**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

Loose Plate for Charity

On December 5 and 12 our congregation pledged to contribute 50% of our Sunday Loose Plate Collection to COTS. I am proud to report that our congregation will be sending a check to them for \$802.84. On December 19 and December 26, we pledged to contribute 50% of the loose plate collection to the Spectrum One Stop. On these two dates we collected a total of \$1020.60, and we will be sending them a check for \$510.30. On January 2 & 9 we agreed to raise money for the Greater Burlington Multi Cultural Center and we will be sending them a check for \$535.96. On January 16 and 23 we designated ½ of our cash collection to the Association of Africans Living in Vermont. We raised \$1,009.90 and will send them a check for \$504.95.

The January 30 and February 6 collections, once divided in half, will be given to the Joint Urban Ministry Project. On February 13 and 20, we will be giving half our cash collection to Women Helping Battered Women; on February 27 & March 6 we will be collecting for VT CARES. And on March 13 & 20 we will be collecting for the Center City Little League. 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.

Splinters from the Board - January 2011

The FUUSB Board of Trustees held its first meeting of the New Year on January 18, 2011 in the Parlors at 7 pm. There were six guest FUUSB members in attendance. The Consent Agenda consisting of minutes from the December Board meeting, Treasurer's Report and Staff Reports was received and approved.

The Board discussed the January 9th Congregational meeting. It was felt that the small group structure worked well. The Board reviewed and approved the planning and agenda for the next Congregational meeting on January 23rd. The full write-up of the results from the January 9th meeting was made available at the meeting on the 23rd.

It was reported that the members of the Ad Hoc Committee to explore Elaine's call to the position of Associate Minister have been identified and agreed to participate in accordance with the process recommended by Rev. Child. This committee is to complete its work in time to report results at the March Board meeting.

Linda Gross, Board President, informed the Board that Wayne Schneider, FUUSB Music Director, tendered his resignation effective at the end of the current church year. Linda Gross and Mary Peabody, Personnel Committee Board member, will meet with the Music Committee to discuss how this position might be structured and what the process will be for forming a search committee.

As part of the Interim Ministry process, the FUUSB Board will undertake an evaluation of the transition process to date along with an evaluation of Olivia Holmes, our Interim Minister. The end result of this process will be a mutual decision by Olivia and the Board on extending Olivia's contract for a second year. This is a mutual decision in that Olivia will decide whether or not she would like to extend for a second year and the Board will likewise decide whether or not it is in the best interest of the Society as a whole to extend her tenure. The Board is following the standard and accepted process recommended by the UUA. The full process was explained to the full Board at this meeting. The process calls for this decision to be made at the March Board meeting.

Following up on one of Rev. Child's recommendations adopted by the Board at its December meeting, Olivia presented a staff evaluation plan that will be used to begin a formal and regularized staff evaluation process here at FUUSB.

The Board concluded the meeting by identifying potential members for the many committees that need to be filled. This includes the Ad Hoc Committee to Explore Relations Committees, Nominating Committee, Personnel Committee, and Olivia's Transition Committee.

Splinters contd.

As always, minutes of the Board meetings may be found in the red binder in the Parlors after they have been approved at the subsequent Board meeting. Board meetings are open to all members and take place on the third Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the Parlors. *David Bardaglio, Treasurer*

A Big Thank You from the 1st Service First Graders!

Wow! Due to some very generous donations to our kids' Heifer collection, we have enough money to donate a llama, a flock of chicks, a flock of geese and a trio of rabbits! The children all voted this past Sunday on the animals they wanted to donate. Our Tapestry of Faith Wonderful Welcome lessons on giving, helping and our relationship with animals were a perfect dovetail with the Heifer collection.

- The First Grade Teaching Team

January 23, 2011 Special Meeting

This meeting was audio recorded and 2 CD sets are available to borrow from the office. Printed meeting handouts are available in the Parlors including: The Interim Process and Timing with answers to questions that were submitted to Rev. Barbara Child but not answered at the December 4, 2010 workshops; January 23 Congregational Meeting/State of the Society address; and minutes from the January 9, 2010 Congregational Meeting.

Glebe Land Coffee House for February: "Sweethearts and Broken Hearts"

Our next coffee house will occur on Friday, February 25th, 2011 in the Parlors at the First UU Society of Burlington Meeting House. The Glebe Land Coffeehouse presents a wide variety of acoustic performances by people from our larger community and is consistently enjoyable and satisfying. Our theme for February will be "Sweethearts and Broken Hearts" and performers will present a variety of love songs. If you want to reserve some microphone time yourself, contact Brian Haas at bhaas@viscc.com or at 658-4747. The proceeds from donations will benefit a local non-profit organization in our community. The January event raised about \$100.00 for the Joint Urban Ministry Project! 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!

Next NL Deadline:

Monday, February 21, 2011 covering events and activities occurring from March 6, 2011 through March 20, 2011.



First Unitarian Universalist Society
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In the Interim

An occasional column by Rev. Olivia

Dear Friends,

First of all, have you all noticed the beautiful new carpeting in the Parlors? One of the joys of my delving into Elz's enormous work on FUUSB's history was discovering how time after time the Women's Alliance has raised funds for some special need of the congregation; some special program of outreach, relief for those suffering from natural or human disasters, and the needs of the Meeting House. Well, they've done it again, donating half of the major expense of purchasing and installing this beautiful carpeting. So do stop to admire this wonderful gift.

Second, by the time you receive this issue of UU News, I will have begun recovering from rotator cuff surgery on my right shoulder. Back on July 28th I was moving furniture in preparation for the moving van to Burlington to arrive, when I tore my rotator cuff.

To all of you who have known about this, thank you for your kind words and support. Those of you who didn't know, I apologize profusely for not thinking to make a point of being sure you all knew. And thank you to everyone who has offered to help out with meals, companionship, and rides to PT or the Society. It is so extraordinary to know you are going to need a lot of help, and to find so many people wanting to help with whatever is needed. Thank you for the blessings that you are in my life.

Third, if you still have questions about the whole process of transition between ministers, what the steps are and when and how they happen, know that copies of the handout I created to answer your questions as best I could are available on the table in the Parlors where Barbara Child's report is also available and the excellent report Linda Gross gave on January 23rd as well. The minutes from the congregational meeting on January 9th are also there. As new information becomes available, it, too, should be made available there.

For the past two Sundays members of the Transition Team and of the Board and I have been offering "Transitions Q&A" sessions after each service. While not widely attended, they have been wonderful conversations in which participants shared their questions and their knowledge of FUUSB history and culture. When recovery from surgery permits, I will write up some of the questions and the answers that seem to be coming up often, and if interest continues, will continue these sessions.

In faith and gratitude,

Olivia



Buildings and Grounds Update

Here is a mid-year update as things are finally slowing down a bit!

First Night showed the largest attendance in my history here with over 3,600 people counted. This does not include the Lasagna Supper, which was also well attended. Thanks to all of our volunteers this night!

As many have already seen, a new carpet has been installed in the Parlors, replacing its predecessor of 18 years. The Women's Alliance generously donated half the amount needed. With this, we were able to afford a hospitality grade material such as is used in hotel banquet rooms. Their representative, Aileen Chutter, also helped in choosing the pattern and colors.

We have finally rented out the brick house at 34 Elmwood Avenue, which has been vacant for the last six months. Not only have we been missing monthly rental income, but we have also been paying the utilities normally covered by renters. It is being rented by a group of therapists. A considerable amount of my time and effort has gone into painting and preparing the house since the previous tenants moved out on July 1. Nick Meyer volunteered to secure a real estate agent to advertise the property. Volunteers Nick Meyer, Mark Kuprych and Andrew Swanson have helped with building a wall, securing and refinishing plaster walls and painting. Chip Patullo and crew from Sunergy and Charlie Delaney of Missisquoi Masonry lent hands as paid contractors. Myra Timmins and Beau Clark from my staff have also been of considerable help. Christina Fulton has been negotiating with the new tenants. Nick Meyer and John Hinckley helped me rewrite the lease agreement. Thank you all!

The sign on the front lawn announcing the Sunday morning services is now illuminated at night! John Lincoln volunteered his time, knowledge and skills to find and install appropriate low voltage energy saving LED lights. Charlie Delaney and helper dug the trench from the Meetinghouse and buried the wire. Also, the no longer transparent plexiglass was replaced. Grant money from the Vermont/Quebec Universalist Convention was used to pay for half of this project.

A metal framed banner holder was designed by Nick Meyer and made by Metalworks. It now holds the Celebration of our 200 Years banner on the front lawn and will be available as future banners require.

An historic marker was mounted on the southeast corner of the Meetinghouse and recognizes the building as an historic site. Mary Gade was instrumental in selecting the marker and following through with the project.

Overseen by Nick Meyer, many trees in poor condition were cut down on the front lawn and replaced with new trees. They were carefully watered by Nick and Mary Gade into the fall until they were set.

The black wrought iron fence around the perimeter of the front lawn was finally repainted. It was actually dismantled 8 or 10 years ago and sent in to be sand blasted and painted. However, the company, while in possession of the fence, went bankrupt and we had trouble getting it back. It was reinstalled unpainted. Beau Clark spent many hours digging out dirt and re-grading under the fence and then scraping and priming it with a rust converter. The grand finale of painting came from 10 UVM TREK student volunteers who spent an entire day painting every square inch of the fence by hand. They were covered with enamel black paint, but very satisfied!

The handicap ramps to both brick houses on 34 Elmwood Avenue and the Meetinghouse were replaced by contractor John McCown. He found a very good deal on Latitudes synthetic decking with traction enhancing grooves at 30% off, so we just kept on going. When the surface boards of the Meetinghouse ramp were pulled up, the boards "holding" them collapsed!

The largest major roof repair in at least 25 years was performed on the Meetinghouse. Over 400 slate shingles were replaced and copper flashing was installed on the south shallow eaves on either side of the steeple. A major leak was discovered on the northeast corner. Many existing slates were not actually large enough and so were improperly overlapped. The project went over budget at \$18,000. Also, the roof over the door going from the oval directly down to the Community Room was replaced with a high quality metal roof.

Finally, the grout between the stones of the foundation of the Clarke Street house was chipped out and replaced by contractor Charlie Delaney of Missisquoi Masonry. Your Facilities Manager, *David McFeeters*

Hosts Urgently Needed

Hello fans of music making! Burlington High School (BHS) is hosting the 2011 New England Music Festival, on March 17-19, and is urgently seeking families to host the 450 participating youth musicians. Carpools to and from BHS are a possibility! Web address to the HOUSING FORM: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NEMF>

If you are willing to host a student (or 2 or 3), here's more information about what is involved:

Hosts are responsible for providing their guest student musician(s):

- 1) Lodging on Thursday and Friday nights, March 17 & 18
- 2) Breakfast on Friday and Saturday mornings (the Festival will feed the students all other meals)
- 3) Transportation from BHS Thursday eve. at 8:30pm, to BHS Friday morning & back home Friday evening, then back to BHS on Saturday morning.

There will be a brief "Hosts Meeting" Thursday, 3/17 at 8:30 pm in the BHS cafeteria, just prior to the first pick up. There are strict rules and curfews concerning all students. Each student has a chaperone with them for the duration of the Festival, reachable at all times if there is a need. Questions? E-mail: nemf.housing@gmail.com

Thank you in advance, *Laura Massell and Nancy Knox*
