



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."

May 1, 2011 -
May 15, 2011

Calendar

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 "Eearth" Book Discussion

Monday, May 2

- **** Zen (Call office for time.)
- 9:00 Newsletter Deadline

Tuesday, May 3

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

Wednesday, May 4

- 9:30 Staff Meeting
- 5:30 Social Action Committee
- 6:30 Religious Ed. Committee
- 7:00 Exec. Committee of the Board
- 7:00 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, May 5

- 9:00 Newsletter Crew
- 3:45 Creative Spirit SGM

Friday, May 6

- 10:30 Women's Alliance
- 6:00 Mysteries SGM
- 6:30 AA Men's Group
- 7:30 Joe Pepper & Melissa Perley Piano & Cello UU Fundraising Concert

Saturday, May 7

- 9:00 Wise Together SGM

Sunday, May 8

- 9:00 Worship Service
- 10:30 Healing Meditation
- 11:00 Worship Service
- 12:30 UU Burlington Animal Ministry
- 5:00 Alanon
- 6:00 Youth Group

Monday, May 9

- **** Zen (Call office for time)
- 9:00 Mondays at Martha's SGM

Tuesday, May 10

- 9:00 Joyful Parenting SGM
- 10:00 Sprouts SGM
- 12:00 Staff Lunch
- 5:30 Property Committee
- 7:00 Book Discussion Group (off-site Potluck)

Wednesday, May 11

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

Thursday, May 12

- 10:00 SGM Steering Committee
- 6:00 Finding Our Truth SGM

Friday, May 13

- 5:00 UU Dungeons & Dragons
- 6:30 AA Men's Group

Saturday, May 14

- 6:00 Second Saturday Potluck

Sunday, May 15

- 9:00 Worship Service
- 10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
- 10:30 Healing Meditation
- 11:00 Worship Service
- 12:30 Social Action Forum
- 5:00 Alanon
- 5:30 New Member Potluck

Minister's Musings

Dear Friends,

Today, after worship I went for a walk in the woods; for the first time this year without a jacket. I saw daffodils and crocus buds bending in the breeze. Worship; someone asked me the other day why we have an "Order of Worship," rather than, for example, an "Order of Service." The question was, don't you have to worship something or someone to gather for worship?

It's a great question, and one answer is, being a UU answer, yes and no. Wikipedia claims the word comes from the Old English, *worthscipe*, or worthiness. When we gather for worship, then, we gather to search, together, to find that which is of worth, that which will inspire us to be and become our best selves.

I'm reminded of the description of God gave of Godself when conversing with Moses from within in the burning bush. God had instructed Moses to lead the people out of Egypt. Moses didn't really want the job, and kept coming up with excuses. Finally he said, "they will not follow me, whom shall I say sent me?" God replied, "Tell them that I Am sent you." In the Aramaic language of the day, that would be both the present and future tense, or "I Am That I Am Becoming." Krista Tippett said it well on her radio show this morning, when she described God's words from the burning bush as "I am the principle of becoming."

It is as wide as all life, as deep as all experience, as inclusive as every breath of air, ripple of wave, bending of bough. Call it God, divinity, ground of being, mysterium tremens. Whatever you call it, Rev. Max Coots describes it well in these words about Easter:

We need a celebration that speaks the spring-inspired word about life and death,
about us as we live and die,
through all the cycling seasons, days,
and years.

We need the sense of deity to crack our own hard
brown December husks
and push life out of the inner tombs and
outer pain.
Unless we move the seasons of the self,
and
Spring can come for us, the Winter will
go on and on.

And Easter will remain a myth, and life
will never
Come again, despite the fact of Spring.

In faith in the principle of becoming,

Olivia

Upcoming Sundays

Sunday, May 1, 9am & 11am

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

Sunday, May 8, 9am & 11am

"**Choir Sunday**" The annual Mother's Day presentation highlights the musical talents of members of our congregation. The Adult Choir, soloists, and Children's Choir will be featured, plus we will expect congregants to bring their singing voices to the celebration!

Sunday, May 15, 11am

"**Blessing of the Animals**"

Reverend Elaine and the UU Animal Ministry invite you to bring your beloved (and reasonably mannerly) companion animals, or pictures of your animals, to the annual Blessing of the Animals Service for all ages

Joe Pepper and Melissa Perley Recital

On Friday, May 6, at 7:30 PM, our own Joe Pepper will appear here with cellist Melissa Perley and guest violinist Jane Harness in a recital featuring works of Elgar, Beethoven, Chopin, and others, plus the premier of two works from the film genre by Paul Perley. Melissa is the principal cellist of the Montpelier Chamber Orchestra and strong advocate of the Green Mountain Youth Symphony. She and her husband Paul Perley, a cello builder, live in Berlin, Vermont. Those of you who heard Melissa perform last Sunday at 9 AM know you are in for a treat.

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Message from Martha



In my conversations with other Unitarian Universalists about where and how we experience a sense of transcendence, frequently and commonly we speak of *nature*. For many of us, as we form and re-form our relationship with the meaning of It All, we seek grounding in the ultimate mystery of earth's wildness, beauty, creative forms, and wonder.

Recently, I attended a screening of the new film, "Mother Nature's Child: Growing Outdoors in the Media Age." I was pleased and not surprised to see several members of our congregation there too.

During the post-screening dialogue, I was struck by a comment made by the director, Camilla Rockwell of Burlington, that a group of one hundred geniuses all said that they recalled a transcendent experience from their own childhood. I'm probably not remembering this correctly, but what I *am* remembering speaks to an intuition I just can't shake that for me is at the core of this film; namely, that free, creative, imaginative **play** is essential to the vitality of our growth and development. And I believe this is as true for adults as it is for children.

Rockwell's film rolled out one delicious reminder after another of all the ways in which the natural world engages us as a *teacher*. Its hidden mysteries pull at our curious instincts, drawing us closer to engage with all our senses. It offers opportunities for healthy risk-taking, which in turn leads to confidence-building. When an experiential connection is made with a place and all the life that inhabits it, empathy and compassion are cultivated. Stewardship for land and life becomes rooted firmly in the heart.

And, as I believe we all would attest, our spiritual life nestles so naturally in the wild world! Here we can revel in the awesome essentials and smile and shake our heads in wordless wonder and amazement at the living of which we're a part.

Do the children and youth you know get (or take) as much free, outdoor playtime as you did? I hope so, but I fear not. For the sake of the future vitality of this planet, and of their spiritual lives, let's be sure that Mother Nature has generous time to play with our children and youth as they grow. And for goodness' sake, let's give *ourselves* more unstructured, screen-free time outdoors. It will feel good and right because that's exactly what it is.

Martha Dallas,
Director of Religious Education



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.

Book Discussion Group

You're invited to bring a potluck contribution and a couple of poems you'd like to share with the group on Tuesday, May 10 at 6:00 p.m. at the home of Bud and Alison Etherton. You'll need to call 658-4126 to register and to let us know what you'd like to bring, and for directions, if needed.

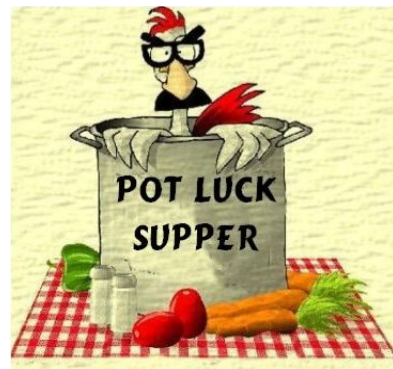


Board of Trustees

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 17th 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

2nd Saturday Potluck

The last 2nd Saturday Potluck Supper for this year is on May 14. Come at 6:00 for conversation, singing, friendship, and a good dinner. Please call Adam Bortz at 864-3516 to let us know you are coming and whether you are bringing an appetizer, main dish, salad, or dessert. Also include how many people and if you need childcare (it's free, but we need a few days notice). We ask for a \$2 per person donation to cover the costs of wine, cider, soft drinks, and supplies. I hope to see you there.



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, May 2, 2011 covering events and activities from May 15, 2011 through June 5, 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



Interim Minister Search

By now you have heard that Olivia is leaving when her contract with us ends the 31st of July. As we begin to wish her farewell, we embark once again upon the process of hiring an interim minister for a two year period. For 25 years now, Unitarian Universalist congregations, many mainline Protestant denominations, and synagogues of all traditions have depended on interim ministry to deal with the phenomenon of transition. With the difficulties that have transpired over this past year it would not be fair or reasonable to place our congregation in the hands of a settled minister. We clearly could use some breathing room during which we can review our goals, assess our programs, mend our wounds, and prepare for a new era of growth and spiritual renewal.

An Interim Minister Search Committee has been formed to begin the search for a new interim minister. We have submitted an application as of April 15th. By April 25th or soon thereafter, we will receive a list of candidates interested in our society, and over the period from April 25 to May 5 we will conduct interviews, speak with references, seek criminal background checks, negotiate a contract with the selected candidate, and receive board approval. May 6th is the official date for informing the candidate s/he has been selected. Hopefully, Sunday May 8th you will hear about your new interim, and we can begin to plan for an open and enthusiastic welcome for that minister.

If you desire more information, please contact Cheryl Haller, chair of the Interim Minister Search Committee (chh02@comcast.net) or committee members Elizabeth Clayton (eaclaytonvt@gmail.com), Kris Kany (kriskany@yahoo.com), John Lincoln (J546265n@gmail.com), Bill Suiter (wosuiter@comcast.net), and Daniel Wilds (dc.wilds@mac.com).

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



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.

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.





First Unitarian Universalist Society
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Stewardship Sunday a Success!

A grateful and heartfelt "Thank You" for the tremendous response to our special Stewardship Sunday service. We collected over \$200,000 in pledges in just one day and almost \$300,000 during the first week of our campaign. We are still short of our goal of \$505,000 so please return your pledges promptly.

Our campaign closes on April 29th - if you haven't already done so, you may make your pledge by returning your pledge card to the church office or by going to our online pledge form on our website at: <http://www.uusociety.org/PledgeCard>

With much gratitude,
Your Stewardship Committee

