



The First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington, Vermont  
*“An Intentionally Diverse Community”*

March 25, 2007 -  
 April 7, 2007

**Calendar**

**Sunday, March 25**

- 8:45 Family Sing
- 9:00 Worship Service
- 10:00 Women’s Spirituality Group
- 10:30 Children’s Choir Rehearsal
- 11:00 RE Worship
- 11:15 Worship Service
- 12:15 Opportunities Credit Union
- 12:30 Welcoming Cong. Committee
- 12:30 Denominational Affairs Com.
- 3:00 Organ Recital
- 7:00 “The Letter” Video

**Monday, March 26**

- \*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)
- 9:30 Joyful Parenting SGM
- 6:00 Yoga

**Tuesday, March 27**

- 10:00 Small Group Ministry
- 4:45 Anti-Racism Action Meeting
- 5:30 Administrator Relations Com.
- 6:00 Religious Education Com.

**Wednesday, March 28**

- 9:00 Staff Meeting
- 6:30 Practicing Your Faith
- 7:30 Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, March 29**

- \*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)
- 5:30 Feminist Theologies SGM
- 7:15 Feminist Theologies SGM

**Friday, March 30**

- 10:00 Women’s Exec. Committee
- 6:30 AA Men’s Group

**Saturday, March 31**

**Sunday, April 1**

- 8:45 Family Sing
- 9:00 Worship Service
- 9:00 Social Action Committee
- 9:30 Membership Committee
- 10:30 Children’s Choir Rehearsal
- 11:00 RE Worship
- 11:15 Worship Service
- 12:15 Art Reception
- 12:30 Social Action Forum
- 5:00 Family Potluck & Game Night
- 7:00 “The Gospel of Judas” Talk

**Monday, April 2**

- \*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)
- 12:00 Monday Lunch Bunch
- 5:30 Seder
- 6:00 Yoga

**Tuesday, April 3**

- 10:00 Wisdom Wanderers
- 7:00 Executive Board Meeting

**Wednesday, April 4**

- 9:00 Staff Meeting
- 5:15 RU12? Board Meeting
- 5:30 Mysticism SGM
- 7:30 Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, April 5**

- \*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)
- 6:30 Feminist Theologies SGM

**Friday, April 6**

- 10:30 Women’s Alliance Meeting
- 6:30 AA Men’s Group
- 7:00 BUUC Business Meeting

**In My Heart**

Roddy allowed me to write her column, thinking I might convey a varied perspective on UU ministry, a change of pace. **Bill Cleary**

True: we are all in ministry, serving each other. I'll try to serve you here with some ideas from an ex-priest's experience. You'll see it's old fashioned, but it stretches back at least to Emerson, then to Jesus and beyond, and it has come to mean a lot to me.

In my heart I still believe there is a "life after death." Imagine. Said Emerson on this subject: "The blazing evidence of immortality is our dissatisfaction with any other solution." It's something to think about. If it's true, we have a just world, otherwise not.

Of course, no UU has to believe in it and most don't. I've gone back and forth. My ex-priest brother says it's okay with him if it happens, but it's not necessary. It seems too good to be true to many people, I suppose, but then I think about the scientist who discovered electromagnetic induction who said (and they quote him over the door at the University of California): "nothing is too wonderful to be true."

When I was a wide-eyed, piano-practicing Catholic boy, I learned in school all about martyrs. It was a rather unhealthy piece of history to study. Muslim suicide bombers are taught all about this also and it produces in them a horrific loss of reverence for life. My brother and I (and my sister Catherine as well) all took vows of celibacy, in effect giving up our life, just like suicide bombers. But real life juices flowed on: after 22 years of celibacy, I married a nun (Roddy), Tom then married a former nun, and my nun sister married a priest. (We're hoping for an award from the Vatican someday: "Apostate Family of the Century" perhaps.)

On the down side, people who fix their gaze too much on "life after death," are known to neglect care for the real world around us, for politics, and for the revelation in joy, imagination and community. I try to avoid that. It requires a balance. Balanced folk love this life passionately, I believe, and when they pray (speak into the silence), give thanks, admire what is wonderful, and never ask favors. It is hard not to ask "God" for favors, but the prophets I follow say that an infinitely generous divinity has already done for us all it can. That makes sense.

In the end, I hang on to the scientific notion that energy and matter are never destroyed utterly but are always transformed. Human personality and moral endurance and achievement are the accumulation of a lifetime, and, wonderful but not impossible, can perhaps be transformed into what Jesus called Eternal Life. That is my hope. It lights my path a bit. It's in my heart.

**Upcoming Sundays**

**April Worship Theme:** Passion

A word that means both suffering and love, the source of life's deepest disappointments and greatest satisfactions. What does it mean to live with passion? How is passion related to empathy and self-transcendence? *"Somewhere deep in the woods ,in the reckless seizure of spring ... I also know that other song, the sweet passion of one-ness."* Mary Oliver

**Sunday, March 25, 9 & 11:15am**  
**"The Faith That Chooses Us"** Choice is an important value to religious liberals. But while Unitarian Universalism is a faith we choose, it is also a life-changing power that can seize and command our assent. Gary speaks and the choir sings for this Celebration Sunday marking the formal conclusion of our annual fund raising canvass. If you have not yet completed and returned a pledge card for 2007-2008, please do so by this Sunday.

**Sunday, April 1, 9 & 11:15am**  
**"A Passionate Life"** Who wants a life without passion, without feeling, emotion, desire? Then again, who wants suffering, the root meaning of "passion" in Latin and Greek? What do the lives of others have to teach us about the two sides of this human experience, starting with the life of Jesus and extending to the lives of people in our own congregation? This Passion Sunday, Roddy will reflect on the paradox of passion.

**Sunday, April 8, 9:00**  
**Intergenerational Service**  
**Sunday, April 8, 11:15am**  
**Easter Sermon**

**Martha Rocks**

At its February meeting, the Board of Trustees voted to remove the "Interim" from Martha Dallas' job title. Martha was originally hired on a two-year contract, with an intention to pursue a search for new leadership at the expiration of her tenure in June, 2008. The Board's decision means that there will be no search and that Martha will enjoy an ongoing, year-to-year contract similar to other First UU Society employees starting July 1, 2007. We look forward to a great future with Martha on our staff. This decision received unanimous endorsement from our Society's Religious Education Committee and from our Executive Team before being voted on by the Board. I am happy to be working with such a smart, gifted and dedicated colleague, and hope you will all join me in welcoming Martha to her new status: Director of Religious Education. Gary

## Religious Education News

Has anyone else happily noticed the cascade of fun, all-ages events in our UU midst?! In the last month or two a whole bunch of wishes, talk, and "we should..." has materialized into some exciting, fun activities!

Back in January, there was a UU Movie Night at the Euro Café; and in February, a Skating party at Cairns Arena. Coming up soon, on March 17th, is Jeopardy Night, featuring Jeff Trumbower as host; April offers a Fellowship, Fun and Food night and then in June there's the 6th annual Lake Elmore Family Camping Trip! And this list doesn't even include the Talent Show I've offered to help plan with members of the Fun Committee (stay tuned!).

Organization of events like these is such a natural, good, and healthy thing for a religious community to do! I'm so glad to see plain old FUN blooming in our midst!

When I was in Thailand, I was initially struck and somewhat befuddled by behavior I observed in the Buddhist temples. I noticed among the Thais a casual ease with mixing apparently contradictory manners: reverence was coupled with frivolity; respect and nonchalance danced together easily. For example, when entering a temple, you first remove your shoes. This ritual, practiced in many religions, reminds the worshipper that he or she is entering a sacred space and shows respect for that space. When you sit or kneel before the Buddha inside, you must always keep your feet facing away from him, to show respect, for the feet are considered low and dirty in Thai Buddhism. After reverently acknowledging Buddha, it's totally fine to get up, chat out loud, wander around inside, take all the photos you want – even photos of yourself posing in front of Buddha... while others are sitting or kneeling and quietly praying!

In one temple, where we joined some young Buddhist students for a sunrise meditation, there were two scruffy dogs who trotted in. Glad to see foreign guests, and curious to make our acquaintance, all they wanted to do was play! While we tried to feign reverent contemplation, they barked and jumped all over us, and it was all I could do to keep my giggles from bursting forth!

It's such a gift to be part of a faith that knows the wisdom in making room for fun and *ir*-reverence. We know that a balanced approach to life includes both the serious and the silly. We hunger for intellectual challenge, coupled with a fierce tug on our heart-strings. That's serious stuff. But we come together also to laugh, to make friends, and build a network of trusty support for weathering the ups and downs of our lives. Joining one another for fun and frivolity reminds us that our identity as UUs is not just something we claim for an hour on Sunday mornings; it can, and it *should* find a comfortable place at the very core of our being.

**Martha**

## Peacemaking

Should the Unitarian Universalist Association and member congregations like ours reject the use of any and all forms of violence and war? Should we in effect become a "peace denomination?" Should we adopt a specific and detailed "just war" policy to guide our witness, advocacy, and social justice efforts? If you would like to address these and other central questions regarding war, violence and nonviolence, please join us for a forum on Sunday, March 25th at 12:30pm. Together we will explore the UUA Congregational Study/Action Issue of "Peacemaking." Refreshments will be served to further stimulate our discussion. Sponsored by Denominational Affairs.

## Advice for a Picnic

"You've got to settle on a church and throw your life into it, and build it up. Who would want to go to a picnic all the time and eat out of other's people's baskets? It's our obligation as members of one church to give ourselves to it. The church is the only hope of peace and goodwill to people that exists among us. It is the last hope of the earth, and yours is a high and holy opportunity to support it with undeviating loyalty." *Poet Carl Sandburg* (who rang bell for Universalist church in Galesburg, Illinois)

## Summer Services Volunteers Needed

Summer Services Committee is looking for some additional members to help plan and/or coordinate the summer services. It's not a hard job and it's over in the summer... a very short period of commitment. Call David Conrad, Bridget Meyer, Susan Raimy or Roddy O'Neil Cleary to volunteer.

## Young Adults

If you are between the ages of 18 and 35 and want to meet other young adults in our congregation, please visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/burlington-uuyan> for more information.

## David Neiweem to Present Organ Recital

The third in our series of monthly organ recitals celebrating the dedication of our new Colby organ will take place on Sunday afternoon, March 25, 2007, at 3:00 pm. David Neiweem, former choir director of this Society and currently Professor of Music at UVM, and Music Director of First Congregational Church (among many other duties) maintains an active performing, conducting and teaching career. He recently opened the 2007 organ recital series at the Benedictine Abbey of Melk, Austria. He will perform works of Reger, Franck, de Cabezón, de Grigny and Buxtehude.

You are invited to enjoy this special performance of a well loved friend of the First UU Society of Burlington. Admission is free, but a donation is encouraged to be forwarded to the American Guild of Organists to support aspiring young organists through their Pipe Organ Encounters program.

## Loose Plate for Charity

On February 18th and 25th, our congregation pledged to contribute 50% of our Sunday Loose Plate Collection to Vermont Refugee Resettlement. I am proud to report that our congregation will be sending a check to Vermont Refugee Resettlement for \$551.27. On March 4th and 11th we collected for the Boys and Girls Club of Burlington and on March 18th and March 25th we will be collecting for Spectrum One Stop.

Please be prepared to give generously! Loose Plate for Charity collections go to non-profit agencies that serve residents of the Old North End. If you would like to nominate an agency, please contact Christina at 862-5630 ext. 22 or email at [xina@uusociety.org](mailto:xina@uusociety.org).

## Book Discussion Group

You are invited to join us at any or all of the meetings of the Book Discussion Group. We will be discussing the following books: **March 13. The World is Flat** by *Thomas L. Friedman*. "In his latest book, *The World is Flat*, Friedman describes the unplanned cascade of technological and social shifts that effectively leveled the economic world,....." ---MIT World.

**April 10. Year of Magical Thinking** by *Joan Didion*. "An exact, candid, and penetrating account of personal terror and bereavement . . . sometimes quite funny because it dares to tell the truth." --Robert Pinsky, *The New York Times Book Review*

We meet at 7:00 pm at the UU church. Please call Bud or Alison Etherton at 658-4126 for more details.

## New UU Class

If you are thinking of becoming a member of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington or would simply like to learn more about all things UU, you are invited to attend the next New UU class on Saturday, April 21, from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM in the Parlors. You'll have the opportunity to meet other people on the same journey and also hear from our ministers about UU history and other specifics about this Society. Child care will be available if requested in advance. Please sign up on the bulletin board or call Ginger Hobbs 865-9682.

## Experience "The Letter"

What happens when hundreds of Somali immigrants seek refuge from their war torn country in the safety of an old New England mill town? Lessons about latent racism hidden in Vermont's immigration debate emerge in Ziad Hamzeh's award-winning documentary, scheduled to be shown on Sunday, March 25 at 7:00 p.m. Gary Kowalski will facilitate the discussion of what the *New York Post* calls "a documentary thrill-ride... THE LETTER moves as breathlessly as a Hollywood thriller — only it's much more frightening, because it's true."

**First Unitarian Universalist  
Society**  
862-5630

*Gary Kowalski, Minister*

*Roddy O'Neil Cleary,  
Affiliate Minister*

*Brian Haas,  
Board President*

*Martha Dallas, Interim  
R.. E. Director*

*David McFeeters,  
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## Interweave Special Event

Please note that the April GLBTIQQA Interweave potluck will move to the third Sunday, April 15, due to Easter Sunday the week before.

At this April Interweave, there will be a creative activity after the potluck for those who wish to participate. We will be creating face masks (like one might wear to a masquerade ball) which will be used for decorating the sanctuary for the 20th Anniversary Coming Out Service in October, 2007.

The masks that we make at this event can represent who we are today or who we have been in the past, who we have hid, or who we pretend to be. Materials will be provided. (You can also bring your own materials – for example, a magazine photo or item you want to put on the mask.) Please come to this creative, welcoming event!

## Opportunities Credit Union

Formerly the Vermont Development Credit Union, Opportunities is the only financial institution located in Burlington's old North End, and the only bank whose mission is to serve low income residents not eligible for loans from more conventional lending institutions. Kiernan Flynn will share success stories of how your investments can keep money flowing in the local economy, helping those who need it most, Sunday, March 25, at 12:30 p.m.

## ARAC Meeting Rescheduled

The Anti-Racism Action Committee will meet Tuesday, March 27, at 4:45pm at the First UU Society. The agenda includes work on our school grant program, planning for upcoming activities including a week of service, and sponsoring a workshop on racism. All are welcome. For more information please contact Susan Schoenfeld, 863-6299.

## Burlington UU Business Directory

Wouldn't it be great to do more of our business with fellow UUs? I want to update our UU Society's business directory. If you would like to have your business included in the new publication, please pickup a form from the bulletin board in the hallway and return it to the folder provided. Call me with questions, suggestions: Julie McKane, 658-3258. Alternatively, you can email me and request a form, [juliemckane1@yahoo.com](mailto:juliemckane1@yahoo.com).

## The Gospel of Judas

Taking the form of dialogues between Jesus and the disciple who betrayed him, this recently reconstructed gospel from the second century sheds light on competing understandings of Christ within the early Christian movement. Join Professor Jeff Trumbower, Dean of St. Michael's College and Rev. Gary Kowalski for a look at why this ancient text has ignited such heated controversy, Sunday, April 1 at 7 p.m. Free and open to the public.

## General Assembly in Portland

Registration is now open for the UUA national gathering in Oregon, June 20-24. Dozens of workshops, worship services, dances and lectures edify and entertain over 4,000 UU's from every region of the country. Attendees from Burlington may be designated as delegates by our Board upon request. For full details regarding travel, lodging and program visit [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org).

## An Evening of Fellowship, Fun and Food

Join us on Sunday, April 1st from 5-7pm. UUs of all ages are welcome to bring a few games or a deck of cards and a dish to share. You might find a surrogate grandson or niece or kids might meet a game-playing buddy. The games and the food will both be potluck, the fun and fellowship will be guaranteed! Any questions? Call Meg Dunham at 655-7360.

## Easter Flowers

If you wish to remember someone on Easter Sunday by contributing to the Easter Flower Fund, please make checks out to "The Women's Alliance", marked "Easter Flowers" and send them to the UU Society office or mail to Ann Livingston, 300 Lake St, Burlington, VT, 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 Easter Service, will be distributed to our homebound by members of the Care Network Ministry.

## What Do You Have to Do to Join This Congregation, Anyway?!

Are you confused about what you have to do to join our congregation? Do you think that if you fill out a green pew card and are receiving a newsletter you are a member?

The long answer is that you are not a member until you have formally signed our Membership Book. This book is available for signing at the piano in the Parlors on Membership Sunday which is the first Sunday of every month. We encourage prospective members to speak with either Roddy or Gary prior to signing the book, and if you find yourself moved to sign the book right after talking with them, they will certainly make it available at that time.

Being a member brings rights and responsibilities. You will have the right to vote at annual meetings and have a say in what goes on at First UU. It also allows you to serve as a committee chair or on the Board of Trustees. As a member you are encouraged to volunteer/serve the congregation in some way, take part in activities you find enjoyable, and pledge your fair share in financial support to the Society.

## "Counter-Intuitive Wisdom for Large Congregations"

UUA Large Church Consultant Rev. Stefan Jonasson has visited the biggest, fastest-growing congregations in the country, from Mormons to Methodists, to distill the secrets of success for UU's who want to expand their faith into the wider world. Known for his quick wit and savvy insights into emerging trends of the twenty-first century, Stefan visits Burlington on Saturday evening, April 14th, to share his discoveries. Childcare will be provided from 7:30-9:00 p.m. to enable as many as possible to attend. All leaders and wannabe-leaders are especially encouraged at this free event. A Second Saturday Social Supper will precede Rev. Jonasson's talk, from 6:00-7:30 p.m. To reserve a place at the potluck, please contact Mark and Shanna Moyer at 316-4775.

**First Unitarian Universalist Society**  
**152 Pearl Street**  
**Burlington, Vermont 05401**  
**(802)862-5630**  
**www.uusociety.org**

**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**

## **A Free Church?**

*"A free church does not define government policy, nor have governments define church policy or theology, nor seeks or receives government endorsement or funding for its general mission. This is historically what the Christian church was before Emperor Constantine, and did not appear again until the Protestant Reformation, and only within some particular radical movements ..."* From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Unitarian Universalists belong to the "free church" tradition. We emerged from the radical Reformation, insisting on the liberty of individuals to associate in congregations voluntarily supported, without government funding or oversight. But "free" churches are not free. Freedom to think and worship according to the guidance of one's own conscience are precious rights. Your pledge of support to the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington keeps alive a centuries old heritage of dissent and spiritual independence. Please do your Fair Share to sustain our chosen faith.

## **"Who Was Susan B. Anthony Anyway?" Celebrating Women's History Month**

Come join us for a potluck and group viewing of the amazing PBS documentary "Not For Ourselves Alone" which tells the fascinating story of the lifelong friendship between Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. They created a powerful team bringing together complementary gifts that produced a synergy which was the foundation for the women's emancipation movement. They were lifelong crusaders together for justice, including work on abolition, women's suffrage and women's rights. An almost forgotten but gigantic story that will move and inspire You. Anthony was a Unitarian (which is why a room in the Meeting House is named after her).

**Thursday, March 29th**  
**5:30 to 9pm at the First UU Society**  
**Arrive anytime from 5pm on to set up for the potluck.**

All are welcome. Please drop by for all or any part of the evening (the dvd is 3 hours long so we'll take a break midway). Catch any part of the evening that You can and enjoy a chance to connect with other women and supporters. This event is hosted by the Exploring Feminist Theologies Small Group Ministry Group. For more info, contact M'ellen Kennedy at [mellenken@aol.com](mailto:mellenken@aol.com) or 453-5469.

## **Summary of Cash Activity**

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