



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 25, 2010 -
 May 9, 2010

Calendar

Sunday, April 25

- 9:00 Worship Service
- 10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
- 10:30 Psi Meditation & Prayer
- 11:00 Worship Service
- 12:30 Spirit in Creativity SGM
- 12:30 VIA Action Team
- 12:30 New UU Class

Monday, April 26

- ***** Zen (Call office for time)
- 9:00 Newsletter Deadline
- 9:00 Mondays at Martha's
- 12:00 Care Network Ministry
- 3:00 UU Psi Meditation

Tuesday, April 27

- 10:00 Sprouts SGM
- 12:00 Staff Lunch

Wednesday, April 28

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

Thursday, April 29

- 9:00 Newsletter Crew

Friday, April 30

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

Saturday, May 1

- 10:00 Wise Together SGM

Sunday, May 2

- 9:00 Worship Service
- 10:30 Psi Meditation & Prayer
- 11:00 Worship Service
- 12:30 Forum: Ending US Sponsored Torture
- 12:30 Boston Trip Parents Meeting

Monday, May 3

- ***** Zen (Call office for time)
- 7:30 Jesus & Paul Lecture

Tuesday, May 4

- 10:00 Seekers SGM
- 12:00 Staff Lunch
- 7:00 Planned Giving Committee

Wednesday, May 5

- 9:00 Staff Meeting
- 6:30 RE Committee Meeting
- 7:00 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, May 6

- 6:00 Practicing Your Faith SGM

Friday, May 7

- 10:30 Women's Alliance Meeting
- 6:00 6th Grade Get Together
- 6:30 AA Men's Group

Saturday, May 8

- 6:00 Second Saturday Potluck

Sunday, May 9

- 9:00 Worship Service
- 10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
- 10:30 Psi Meditation & Prayer
- 11:00 Worship Service
- 12:30 UU Burlington Animal Ministry
- 12:15 Spirit In Creativity SGM
- 6:00 YUuth Group

On My Mind

Physicists have the Big Bang theory. Hundreds of years ago, theologians developed a similar hypothesis called *creation ex nihilo*. This is the doctrine that the world sprang into being out of pure nothingness. One moment there was void and emptiness, and an instant later, quick as a divine heartbeat, a whole universe pulsed into view.

Now you see it, now you don't: That's Life. Trees that were absolutely barren a few days ago are now furred and fringed with a thousand shades of green. Everywhere, leaves seem to have materialized while I wasn't looking. An average apple tree (so I am told) has 100,000 of them. There may be a million on a single elm. One sugar maple has enough surface area on its foliage to cover over half an acre of ground (which I can well appreciate, having raked maple leaves from my front yard in the fall). Nature does nothing by half measures, but specializes in extravagance. All at once, and everywhere, creation happens.

If scientists ever want a new word to describe the initial singularity—the mysterious moment that brought it all into being—may I suggest some alternatives? How about the Big Budding? Or why not just call it Early Spring?

Gary

[This passage originally appeared in *Green Mountain Spring and Other Leaps of Faith*, published by Skinner House in 1997, and will be reprinted in the May issue of *Quest*, newsletter of the UU Church of the Larger Fellowship.]

Upcoming Sundays

Sunday, April 25, 9am & 11am

"Meditation: Waking up While Awake" Robert Senghas and David McFeeters will speak about the role of meditation in their lives. Melinda Lee, member of the Worship Committee, is coordinator of this service. Music will be provided by a quartet of viols. The musicians include Barbara Wanner and Peter Tourin, both members of our Society.

Sunday, May 2, 9am & 11am

"The Power of Many" Often those of us who are people of faith balk at any notion of aspiring to power, because we perceive power as a corrupting influence, an evil to be avoided. Let's consider a different kind of power -- power that is relational, and not unilateral, power that is the result of many people of good will coming together to create change in their community that is for the better. This is the kind of power that Vermont Interfaith Action is seeking to achieve, and the organization needs the active participation of many to be successful. Debbie Ingram, Director of Vermont Interfaith Action is our guest speaker.

Sunday, May 9, 9am & 11am

Choir Sunday

Sunday, May 9, 9am & 11am

Fred Small, Bicentennial speaker

Child Dedication

On Mother's Day, Sunday, May 9, we will celebrate birth, honor parents, and pledge our commitment to creating a world worthy of its children with a rite of Child Dedication. Families who participate receive a flower and Certificate of Dedication as we welcome and bless the youngest members of our community. If you would like to have your children included in this ceremony, or have questions about it, please speak with Gary Kowalski or Elaine Bomford. *"A baby is God's opinion that the world should go on."* (Carl Sandburg)

Message From Martha

Several weeks ago, Kathleen and I put our heads together and made a list of people who seemed to us to be *Pillars* of the Religious Education Community. You could do it too: think of those whom you see here regularly; people who give *at least* their fair share of committed time to this congregation and its children and youth; people who have done this for some years. If RE was a tree with people as its leaves, and you shook that tree really hard, these people would not shake loose.

Of course, there is no perfect completion of this list. Our intent was to make a start at identifying key people in whom a lot of RE's leadership is currently invested.

This is because the next greatest gift these dedicated folks could make, would be to mentor the newer, greener, "pillar-potentials" in our midst. Our current Pillars have learned so much by trying, doing, failing, succeeding, and undoubtedly in many cases – by nestling under the wings of their Pillar predecessors. Through the experience of all the liveliness they have given, they have surely developed as faithful members of First UU. They have grown in themselves a wealth of experience and wisdom. First UU benefits greatly by what they possess, and the reach of their gifts can be powerfully extended *if we create ways for them to share what they know.*

So I'm wondering: *How can we best facilitate the transmission of leadership from these Pillar People to the next ones?* Actively cultivating structures and opportunities for leadership sharing and development will both stem burnout and foster room for fresh energy and ideas. It's essential to the health of our RE Program, and to congregational life as a whole.

I'd love your thoughts: Should we invite some Pillars to present as part of a panel about teaching RE, maybe a few times a year? Should we try a buddy system and match newer people who may be hesitant to lead, with a Pillar Person? Is there someone whose skills and leadership you really admire, from whom we all could learn a lot?

It's like we're all ingredients in a pot of soup. Unless we stir our human ingredients deliberately and thoughtfully, those which were thrown in first will eventually get stuck and burned, and the ones which were added last will never experience the heat of their contribution and collective transformation. I'm eager to hear how you think we might give a good stir!

Martha Dallas,
Director of Religious Education

The Interim Caretaker

The search for an interim minister is well underway. Our application to the UUA is complete and we will interview candidates in late April and early May. The role of an interim is to help a congregation make changes and correct problems while preparing the way for a new minister.

"The interim is not a juggernaut who comes in and creates change wholesale," says the Rev. John Weston, the UUA's ministerial settlement director. "Neither is he or she a placeholder until the new settled minister arrives. The interim is more like a mirror, reflecting the congregation back to itself."

If you have questions or concerns about the interim minister selection process, contact a member of the interim minister task force: Daniel Wilds (chair), Adam Bortz, Rosanne Greco, Jim Lawson, Jeanne Parsley or Mary Peabody.

Legacy Society Grows Steadily!

As the initial year of the Planned Giving Committee's work draws to a close, we will shortly be announcing the names of those choosing to be founding members of the First UU Legacy Society. These are more than 40 forward-thinking people who are leaving a bequest or other type of planned gift to the First UU endowment fund. Several of these donors prefer to remain anonymous and we will respect their wishes for privacy, however we want all the Legacy Society founding members to know how much we appreciate their generosity and commitment to the future health of this congregation. If you have not yet been contacted by a member of the Planned Giving Committee and would like to learn more about the Legacy Society, please call or e-mail: Sally Conrad, Chair (phone: 658-1047 or e-mail: dconrad@uvm.edu).

April is Sexual Violence Awareness Month

Look out this month for free community events near you! There will be a **Take Back the Night** rally, march and speak-out on the 21st starting at the Bailey-Howe Library (UVM campus, Burlington) at 5:00. All women, men, teens, advocates, and students invited!

Attention Committee Chairpersons and Board Officers!

Most of the business folders in the copier room are full! Please take some time to weed them out soon.
Thank you!

Book Group

Our annual pot-luck poetry meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 11 at 6:00 p.m. at the Etherton's house in South Burlington. Bring your favorite one or two poems to share, include original poetry if you like. Please call Alison or Bud Etherton, 658-4126, to get directions and tell us what you would like to bring.

A Message From Our Youth Group Advisor

At our most recent evening Youth Group meeting, I announced that I would be stepping down as the Youth Group advisor. It was a very tough decision as I have very much enjoyed the past 3 1/2 years and am thankful for the privilege and the joy of helping to guide this group of wonderful youth. I have also greatly enjoyed working with the church staff and our assistant Youth Group advisers, Jill Allen, Lucy Bogue, Greg Swain and Bill West, and hope that they will continue. I will however continue to help out with the group when needed and am happy to help the new adviser during the transition this Fall. I'm also happy to talk about my decision and most importantly I'd be extremely happy to talk about the position if you've ever considered it. Please email me at george.rutherford@uvm.edu. My deepest thanks to the youth for their hard work, laughs and trust and my best wishes to our graduating seniors Gus Baker, Kyle Facey and Chris Kalinoski. On a more immediate topic, we are busy planning our annual Youth Service and hope that you'll join us on June 6th.

First Unitarian Universalist
Society
862-5630

Gary Kowalski, 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
Web Page: www.uusociety.org

Paul and Jesus

Many consider the apostle Paul to be the real originator of Christianity, while others consider this former Pharisee to have betrayed the simple teachings of the founder. Together, his letters make up more of the New Testament's contents than the words of Mark, Matthew, Luke, John, or any other author in the canon. Was Paul a confused epileptic, an ecstatic visionary, or a closet gnostic? The truth may be more interesting and more complex. On Monday, May 3 at 7:30 p.m., Dr. Jeff Trumbower, Dean of St. Michael's College, will be joined by Gary Kowalski and Mike Brown, the pastor of Christchurch Presbyterian Church, for a scholarly yet freewheeling investigation of history's earliest Christian witness. This event will take place at the First UU Society of Burlington

Habitat For Humanity

Workers needed for house building: vermonthabitat.org is the website for info. Every kind of helper is welcome: carpentry, food, office help. Almost fifty homes built so far!

Bill Cleary

The Glebe Land Coffeehouse Springs Ahead

A Monthly Acoustic Music Session

April 23rd, 2010 Theme: Spring Fling - Original compositions and favorites

When: April 23, 2010 and the fourth Friday of each month; Doors open at 5:30pm; Music from 6pm to 9pm

Where: Top of Church Street, Burlington, First UU Society Meeting House Parlors

Who: Musicians and friends = you, your friends, and family

What: Structured live music sharing!

How does it work? Each month we pick a topic: e.g., April: Spring Fling- originals and favorites! Musicians prepare up to three favorite songs on the topic. Contact Brian Haas (see #'s below) to get on the roster to perform.

Donations are collected for admission and for good food and drink. Donations benefit a local non-profit group.

We all have a good time together! For mic time, call: 802-658-4747 or email: bhaas@viscc.com. I'll see you at The Glebe Land!

Youth Staff Developments

A donation of funds by an anonymous donor has given First UU the opportunity to hire a part time Youth Programs Coordinator. Unfortunately, we have not yet found the match we envisioned for this position. You will read elsewhere in this newsletter of the announcement by George Rutherford that he is resigning as our lead high school Youth Advisor effective next fall. While we are sorry to learn of his decision, it affords us an opportunity to merge the duties in George's position with those outlined in the Youth Programs Coordinator position. We are therefore opening a new search immediately for someone to fill this single, expanded position. If you would like to find out more about this opportunity, or to apply, or if you know of someone whom you think might be a good fit, please contact Martha Dallas, DRE at Martha@uusociety.org or 862-5630 x 28.

Religious Education Program Survey

Please take a few minutes to complete the Religious Education Program Survey that the RE Committee is conducting this year to inform planning for next year. We are in an important stage of our development and everyone's input is crucial to our continued growth and ability to meet the varied needs of our UU Society. The survey can be found on line at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VV6637R> there will be hard copies made available in the community room over the next few weeks. Thank you for your support. Please contact John Grimm with any questions at vtgrimm@comcast.net or 863-2672.

Joint Urban Ministry Part-time Program Co-Director

Founded in 1988, JUMP, the Joint Urban Ministry Project, is an interfaith direct service ministry with more than 25 supporting congregations. JUMP is conducting a search for an anticipated opening for a part-time Program Co-Director.

The JUMP Program Co-Director is responsible for working with the JUMP staff and volunteer team in providing spiritual care, hospitality, direct assistance, advocacy and referrals for individuals and families. The Program Co-Director is also responsible for administrative duties and working with the JUMP Board. This position includes working two to three weekday mornings in direct service and a focus on grant writing and community relations. The position averages 20 to 25 hours per week.

To request an information packet, please send your name, address, phone and email to: Lynn Douglas, President; JUMP, 38 South Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401 or by email at: jumpemployment2010@gmail.com. To apply for the position, please email **and** mail your resume and a cover letter to JUMP. Applications appreciated by May 3.

JUMP, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, or disability in employment or the provision of services.

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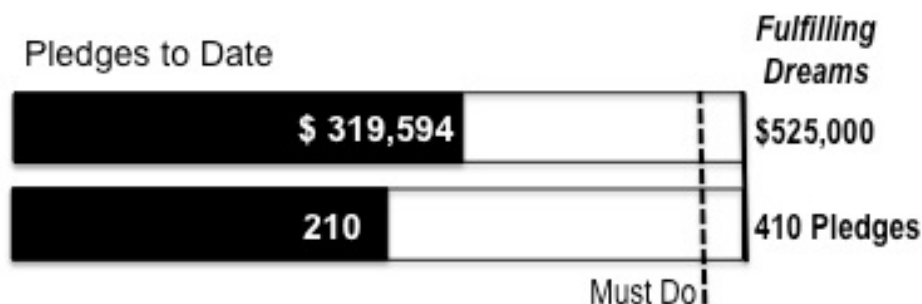
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Stewardship Campaign Update

As of this writing, we are well on our ways toward achieving this year's pledge goal of \$525,000. Our many thanks to those households who have already made their pledges. Compared to last year, an incredible 70% of you have increased your pledges with an average increase of 12%!!

But to achieve our goal and begin realizing our dreams, we need everyone to make their pledges as soon as possible! 190 households who are currently supporting our Society have not yet pledged. Without these pledges, we will be forced to make cuts in our planned budget which is due in early May.

Please email your pledge to Christina at xina@uusociety.org or call her at 862-5630 x22. Include your name and amount and if you wish to have an automatic charge or debit made to an account.



Make your pledge today! Increase it, if you can. The only thing keeping us from reaching our goal is YOU! - *Your Stewardship Committee*

Annual UU Family Camping Trip

Sign up now for a fun, easy, kid friendly camping trip! Come swimming, hiking, picnicking and more with UU families June 18-20 at Lake Elmore State Park. Registration forms are on the RE Welcome table.

Beth Griffin, beth@burlingtontelecom.net or (802) 865-1774.

UU General Assembly 2010

This year's General Assembly, gathering Unitarian Universalists from across the country, will be in Minneapolis, MN June 23-27. Several folks from FUUSB are planning to go, and you are invited to join them! You can expect to be inspired by beautiful music and rousing words, hobnob with UUs, attend workshops, browse displays, and bring back enriching ideas. You may also be interested in being an official delegate, and casting votes on behalf of our Society. For more information, please speak with Gary Kowalski or Reverend Elaine, and check the GA brochure on the Denominational Affairs bulletin board or go to www.uua.org/events/general-assembly.

Next Newsletter Deadline

Monday, May April 26, @9am covering May 9 - May 23! Please submit items directly to Kathleen, office@uusociety.org. Early articles gratefully accepted!