



May 6, 2007 -
May 19, 2007

Calendar

Sunday, May 6

8:45 Membership Committee
9:00 Social Action Ministry
10:00 Worship Service
11:30 Forum on Peacemaking
12:15 COTS Walk Lunch
12:30 Care Network Training
7:00 UU Views of God

Monday, May 7

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

Tuesday, May 8

10:00 Small Group Ministry
5:30 Property Committee
6:00 Quilt Group
7:00 Book Discussion Group
7:00 Film “The Ground Truth”

Wednesday, May 9

9:00 Staff Meeting
6:00 ARAC: Immigration Study Circle Discussion
6:30 Practicing Your Faith
6:15 Music Committee
7:30 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, May 10

***** Zen (Call office for time)
9:00 Newsletter Crew
10:00 SGM Steering Committee
6:30 Advanced Directives Workshop

Friday, May 11

6:30 AA Men’s Group

Saturday, May 12

6:00 Second Saturday Supper
6:00 YUUT Overnight

Sunday, May 13

8:45 Family Sing
9:00 Worship Service
9:00 Adult Programs Committee
10:00 Women’s Spirituality Group
10:30 Children’s Choir Rehearsal
11:00 RE Worship
11:15 Worship Service
12:30 Interweave Potluck

Monday, May 14

***** Zen (Call office for time)
6:00 Yoga

Tuesday, May 15

10:00 Wisdom Wanderers
7:00 Executive Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 16

9:00 Staff Meeting
5:15 Mysticism Sm. Group Ministry
7:30 ARAC: Immigration Study Circle Discussion
7:30 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, May 17

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

Friday, May 18

6:30 AA Men’s Group

Saturday, May 19

3:00 YUUT Worship Rehearsal
5:00 Burlington UU Circle

Hearty Harvest Chili to feed six, all vegan with sweet potato and butternut squash and secret spices for that south-of-the-Canadian-border flavor. Bid at the UU Silent Auction

On My Mind

Few sites are more inspiring than the Grand Canyon. I’ve visited twice with my family. The vistas are breathtaking and the terrain is littered with fossils, reminding even the casual visitor of earth’s long history, plainly demarcated in the varied strata of rock, ochre, pink, and grey, as one descends through layers of geological time.

According to the National Park website, the Grand Canyon “is immense, averaging 4,000 feet deep for its entire 277 miles. It is 6,000 feet deep at its deepest point and 15 miles at its widest.” What the park’s homepage doesn’t tell you is how old the canyon is.

Did you know that the National Park bookstore has been hawking a volume titled *Grand Canyon: A Different View*, claiming the gorge was cut by Noah’s flood? That bronze plaques with psalm verses are being erected at scenic overlooks?

The American Geological Institute has demanded the park disseminate information based on peer-reviewed research, not theology. So far the Park Service has not responded, but is looking into alternative theories of how the canyon was carved. As to the canyon’s age, the official response remains “no comment.”

Personally, I resent my tax dollars being used to put Bible verses in the parks. Knowing the Vishnu schist at the bottom is two billion years old, not six thousand as claimed by Christian fundamentalists, only increases my awe for the antiquity of creation.

Science need not be the enemy of faith. And government should get out of the business of preaching. Neither the facts of geology nor the squabbles of scriptural literalists should be allowed to diminish the epic of the landscape itself, a narrative in stone older than any written revelation. The Paiutes called it Kaibab, or “Mountain Lying Down,” a vast range of peaks inverted down into the plateau rather than rising up. A million years from now, it will still be there: a place to marvel, to wonder, and to feel our own depths resonate within the depths of time.

Gary

Child Dedication

Infants and young children new to our Society are invited with their families to be part of a welcoming celebration on Mother’s Day May 13, 2007. Contact Roddy O’Neil Cleary at roddy@uusociety.org or 862-5630 ext. 25 for more information.

Upcoming Sundays

May Worship Theme: Birth

Whether we’re being born or giving birth, it’s a struggle filled with agony and ecstasy. Each day that we reverence life, our own and others, we are born anew, our relationships generate energy, and we strengthen the fabric of community. As in natural childbirth, so too in living creatively, the more we pay attention to our breathing, the more able we are to deal with the stress of bringing forth new life. What are you bringing to birth in your life? Does faith play a role in coping with stress?

Sunday, May 6, 10.00am

“The Lion and the Lamb?” The ideal of animals living in harmony with each other (and with people) has ancient religious roots. Is it just a myth or a dream to which we can actually aspire? Gary and Martha share their reflections at this special “Blessing of the Animals” celebration. Companion animals are encouraged to attend and should be house-trained as well as under the care of their two-legged providers at all times (leashed or crated). There will be no Religious Education classes this morning as we convene for this multi-species, multi-generational event.

Sunday, May 13, 9 & 11:15am

“Mothers of God” Our UU tradition is sometimes described by Gary as “the democratic method applied to religion.” In this Mother’s Day sermon, Roddy explores how the democratic method can be applied to mysticism, encouraged by the work of the 13th century mystic Meister Eckhart and the Pulitzer Prize author Aalice Walker. Whether you are male or female this topic might well assuage your “womb envy.”

Sunday, May 20, 9 & 11:15am

“Smells Like Teen Spirit” Music expresses the energy and aspirations of youth across the generations. Join our Young UU Thinkers at **9:00am** for this worship rave. **“Choir Sunday”** The **11:15** service, an annual event, will consist of musical offerings from our UU choir directed by Jack Austin.

Catamount Health Initiative: Vermont’s Health Care Bill

The Adult Education and Programs Committee is pleased to sponsor the Champlain Advocacy Team and AARP Health Care talk on Sunday, May 20, at 12:30 at the UU meetinghouse. Mary Carol Massonneau and Roger Bourassa will review the health initiative, who it is for, how it will be funded and what will be the expected health care outcomes in Vermont. Light refreshments will be provided. For more information, call Alida Lund at 985-8517.

Religious Education News

Recently, I've been aware of how strongly Religious Education is interconnected with other parts of First UU. Sometimes this interconnectedness feels less like a web and more like ripples spreading on the surface of a pond when a pebble is thrown in. One part of the Society starts the ripple (tosses the pebble), and another is bobbed up and down, like a piece of driftwood. Or, sometimes it's like the development of the chick inside its egg. "Which comes first?", we ask. But what's the use of that question when we know that the chick and its egg shell develop interdependently? There's no chick without its shell, and no shell without its chick.

Likewise, the development and growth of this UU community is a process of interdependent decisions, leaps of faith, and changes. Excitement and involvement in one part of our community sends out ripples of energy and enthusiasm throughout. As your DRE, I am excited about our plans for RE and for worship next year! There will be more change and more hard work, but this is because the RE Committee has worked hard to learn from this year's efforts and build on the program's momentum. We have seen increased classroom attendance and unprecedented financial support from RE families. The Committee and I believe strongly in offering quality UU education for every child, while building room for new participants, young and old. The pebble we are tossing offers ripples of new possibility for families, for RE, for worshipping together, and ultimately for the whole Society!

During the month of May, I will be mailing out information about next year's program, and the RE Committee and I will be asking for children and adults to commit to participate! We'll be distributing registration forms for children and youth, and posting sign-up sheets to recruit teachers, RE Angels, and other RE stewards. RE Committee members will be present during coffee hour, inviting and encouraging you to register your children and sign up to join a team of committed UUs! Each one of you who promises to throw your heart into this community of seekers and learners says to everyone else: "Yes! These are my people. These are my values. What we are teaching here matters a lot. I will be part of the liveliness of this community because I need it. We need it. The world needs it." And when you say *that*, when you show everyone else that *this is who you are*, it is *infectious*. We get bobbed by the ripple *you* started and can't help but throw our own stone in!

So show your faith in possibility -- toss a pebble! Be the vision. Walk the talk. Stand up and be counted. For *you*, and *we*, and *us* are ultimately all *one and the same*. Together, we are the chick *and* the egg; and together we will hatch next year's UU RE!

Martha

Great Stuff!

Tons of treasures are up for bid at the UU Silent Auction May 6-20. *An unopened, two volume, hard-cover, boxed, Gary Larson's The Complete Far Side*. A gift certificate to Lyric Theatre for 2 tickets to the upcoming West Side Story or Beauty and the Beast. *An antique, leather upholstered fainting couch just like Freud used*. Like new 1993 Nordic Track Pro with a heart rate monitor. *Lakeside Lunch & Scenic Boat Tour of Beautiful Lake Champlain*. One hour group seminar with a child psychiatrist at Fletcher Allen focusing on parenting techniques for younger children and adolescents. *Original oil painting of your favorite place...be at the family home, an area camp, a favorite destination, even a local business*. Never-been-used Laser level kit for hanging pictures, wallpaper or anything level. *A spring motorboat or lawn mower tune-up/recommission/repair*, plus dozens more dinners, outings and must-have bargains. Bids close in the Parlors on Sunday, May 20 at 12:30pm.

Coming of Age

Coming of Age will be offered next year! Coming of Age is a program designed to recognize and celebrate the passage from youth to adulthood. In our Society, it is offered to youth in 9th – 12th grade as an optional supplement to participation in the YUUTs, our Youth Group. Youth develop a connection with an adult mentor, and together, they explore life's biggest questions. The program culminates with each youth writing a personal Credo, or statement of personal belief. Youth who complete the program become eligible to sign our membership book. Please speak to Martha Dallas, DRE, if you, or your youth would like to know more!

Ahoy Maties! Revel in a day sail aboard the Osprey 33 in Shelburne Bay. Bid at the UU Silent Auction.

UU Library Closed Until the Fall

The last day to check out books was April 29. All books need to be returned by Sunday, June 3, 2007. I have enjoyed serving you as UU Librarian and wish to thank all those who, in so many ways, have supported our library within the past year. I hope you all have a great summer and I look forward to seeing you all in the fall!
Rebecca Anderson, Librarian

UU Views of God

How do Unitarian Universalists conceive of ultimate reality? As goddess, emptiness, creative process, inter-relational liveliness, personal deity? Bob Senghas (Starr King School for Ministry), Roddy 'O Neil Cleary (Fordham University), Martha Dallas (Union Theological Seminary), Mellen Kennedy (Meadville Lombard Theological School) and Gary Kowalski (Harvard Divinity School) join in a clergy conversation on Sunday, May 6 at 7 p.m. All are invited to listen and share in the discussion.

Grab a Rainbow Bear, Pride Bear, Vermonter Bear or one of hundreds of others to choose from the Vermont Teddy Bear catalogue. Bid at the UU Silent Auction

Book Discussion

Group

Please join us on Tuesday, May 15 at 6:00 pm, when we'll discuss Garrison Keillor's **Good Poems** (available in paperback) and enjoy a potluck dinner at Bud and Alison Etherton's. If you've heard his Writer's Almanac on Public Radio, you're familiar with his interesting choice of poems. No need to read the whole book. We'll share our favorites with each other, after dinner. Please call 658-4126 to let us know what you'd like to bring to the dinner. **Please note the change in date, time, and place.**

Hire A Youth

Do you need help with yard work, babysitting, odd jobs, household chores, pet care? Our UU youth group is eager for summer time employment. Please call any of the following Burlington high schoolers: Jason Gerrard (860-7271), Amelia Schlossberg (862-2069), Sarah Gleich (658-8662), Holly Hill (658-5116), Holly Jones (862-6824).

Nutritional Consultation with Dr. Carol Gardner, M.D. to get healthy, feel great.
Bid at the UU Silent Auction

VIA Virtual Tag Sale

Turn your spring cleaning into valuable items for re-sale to benefit Vermont Interfaith Action's campaign for affordable housing and healthcare. Drop off any donation worth \$75 or more at Global Garage Sale in Winooski, 94 West Canal Street and the eBay guys will take care of the rest, giving you a receipt for tax purposes and handling the online auction, with proceeds going to VIA. Antiques, Vehicles, Boats, Collectibles, Cameras, Computers, Sporting Goods, Musical Instruments, Real Estate, Coins and Watches are all hot sellers. Questions? Call Global Garage Sale at 655-4443 or Peggy Poppe at 865-0357.

Boston Trip Fundraiser

On Sunday, May 6, the UU 6th grade class will be selling homemade cat and dog treats after the Blessing of the Animals service. Please stop by and pick up a tasty treat for your pet.

New Members

Kelly McCutcheon Adams was born in NH and raised UCC and *Paul Adams* was born in VT and raised Methodist and Anglican. Kelly is a social worker and Paul is a teacher. They have a 4-month old daughter, Tess. They moved here from Boston four years ago and started attending FUUSB.

Connie Hitt is a native of Connecticut who graduated from Mt. Holyoke and relocated to Vermont in 2005 to be near children and grandchildren. She found UU through a friend and is already on a Committee. She plays tennis and bridge and enjoys hiking and walking.

Michael and Maura Versluys grew up and attended colleges in the upstate New York area. They moved to Vermont in 2005. They joined our congregation in order to provide a religious education for their beautiful baby daughter. Maura works at Vermont Housing Finance Agency and Michael is employed at Green Mountain Coffee Roasters.

**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,
Property Manager*

*Jack V. Austin,
Choir Director/Organist*
jack@uusociety.org

*Christina Fulton,
Society Administrator*

*Kathleen Ingram,
Secretary & Newsletter Editor*

Email: office@uusociety.org
Web Page: www.uusociety.org

March Splinters from the Board

At the March meeting, Martha Fitzgerald and Woody Fulton of the Nominating Committee reported several vacancies remaining on the slate of board and committee nominations for next year. The committee will make presentations soliciting nominations at services following the canvass close....The board discussed moving the start of policy governance from January 2008 to July 2008 to coincide with the beginning of the fiscal year... A group has been meeting to discuss long term staffing questions... The canvass is short of its goal... The board postponed a decision on any future rent forgiveness for Vermont Interfaith Action (VIA) until after the May board meeting, when the final results of the canvass should be known... The board is contemplating hold a travel raffle... Topics to discuss with Stefan Jonasson were suggested... Our congregation has committed to participate in the Sacred Spaces program... Finally, board members offered thoughts on their personal visions for our Society. *Sarah Weber, Personnel Committee Chair*

Advance Notice to Members and Friends of the First UU Society

Half a duplex home on a quiet residential cul-de-sac (abutting conservation land) in Colchester is expected be ready for rent as early as May. This split-level ranch house on Belwood Avenue is the former residence of late UU Society member, Pam Kay. Inquiries may be made at the office of Aaron Goldberg, PLC, 233 Pearl St. Burlington, 651-9000.

Energy Survey: a complete commercial building energy analysis including infrared imaging, blower door testing, air and thermal boundary leakage inspection, insulation quality report, and boiler/furnace/hot water efficiency rating. Bid at the UU Silent Auction

Second Saturday Potluck

Last chance for this year to enjoy good food, wine, conversation, new friends, or singing old songs with us. Please join us in the UU parlor for the 2nd Saturday Potluck on Saturday, May 12, at 6pm. Small Group Ministry members will be the hosts. Call Pat Allen at 864-9799 or Barb Heeter at 864-4622 or bbheeter@aol.com. Please let us know if you need child care, whether you are bringing an appetizer, salad, main course, or dessert and how many people in your party. Bring your own dishes or use ours. Hope to see you there.

The Big Payoff!

A huge "Thank You" to each and every one of you that have been paying on your pledge this year! As the fiscal year draws to a close, we rely on those pledges being paid in full to meet our budget obligations. At this point, 36% of you have paid your pledge in full; that leaves a lot of unpaid pledges. Please do your best to get your entire pledge paid by June. If you would like to pay the remainder of your pledge with a credit card or appreciated stock, please contact Christina at 862-5630 ext. 22 or xina@uusociety.org.

Loose Plate for Charity

On March 18th and 25th, our congregation pledged to contribute 50% of our Sunday Loose Plate Collection to Spectrum One Stop. I am proud to report that our congregation will be sending a check to Spectrum One Stop for \$581.52. On April 1st and 8th, our congregation pledged to contribute 50% of our Sunday Loose Plate Collection to Sara Holbrook Community Center, we will be sending them a check for \$790.00! On April 30th and May 6th, we will be collecting for the Burlington Recreation & Nutrition Summer Program and on May 13th one half of the Loose Plate Collection will be going to the First UU Society Choir Sheet Music Fund. Please come 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.

GAYLA

GAYLA is an annual retreat for gay men at the UU retreat center at Ferry Beach, Maine. Last summer 4 of us from Vermont attended the retreat and had a terrific week. About 70 or 80 men from all over the country attended. We strongly urge others to join us this summer at GAYLA XXIX, July 14-20, 2007. More information can be found on two web sites: the GAYLA website is www.gayla.org and the Ferry Beach website is www.ferrybeach.org.

The Truth About Iraq

The Denominational Affairs committee, as part of our congregation's ongoing exploration of the UUA Study/Action issue of "Peacemaking," warmly invites you to a free viewing of a compelling film called "The Ground Truth" on Tuesday, May 8 at 7pm in the Parlors, followed by discussion.

As the DVD says: "Patricia Foulkrod's powerful documentary spotlights American soldiers sharing their experiences on the battlefield in Iraq and back home as they try to reassemble their lives. With aching honesty, these men and women discuss the anguish of war, the difficulties of readjusting to life after their tours of duty, post-traumatic stress disorder and the often callous treatment returning troops receive from the military and the Veterans Administration." This film, appropriate for teens and adults, runs 1hr. 18 minutes and was made in 2006. According to the web site, it is one of only 15 films on the Oscar "short-list" for the 2007 Academy Awards nominations. To learn more, go to: www.thegroundtruth.net.

Critic Kenneth Turan of the Los Angeles Times observes: "This thoughtful, sensitive film, is perhaps the most emotionally wrenching of all the Iraq documentaries..." Claudia Puig of USA Today writes: "This is undeniably one of the year's most compelling films...Unflinching, disturbing, and fascinating." Filmmaker Patricia Foulkrod said about the film: "I produced and directed "The Ground Truth" so we could start talking about what really happens in war...I wanted to share with all Americans the profound wisdom these young men and women have to impart."

If you want to learn the truth about the Iraq war, you will want to attend a viewing of "The Ground Truth" on Tuesday, May 8, at 7pm sharp.

Advanced Directives for Healthcare

The Adult Programs Committee is pleased to sponsor Dorothy Seale-Brown as she provides information about advanced directives for healthcare. This event was rescheduled from April 12. The new date is Thursday, May 10, from 6:30-8 pm at the UU meetinghouse.

Is War Inevitable?

Will war always be part of the human condition? Can there ever be a "just war"? Can war be abolished? Come to a panel discussion on Sunday, May 6 at 11:30 AM (after the single 10 AM service that particular Sunday) to hear what Quakers and Mennonites have to say about these and other questions. Quakers Paul Hood and Marcia Mason and Mennonites Rosalind and Carl Andreas will share their perspectives on war and peace as we Unitarian Universalists continue to grapple with the challenge of "Peacemaking." Please join us on May 6, at 11:30am. *Dave Conrad, Denominational Affairs*

Young Adults

If you're 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-uuan> on the web for more information.

First Unitarian Universalist Society

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Religious Education Teaching Teams are forming!

Do you enjoy children? Would you be interested in the opportunity to spend time with some dynamic UU kids? Would you like to help bridge the gap between the wider congregation and RE? **Join an RE teaching team for next year!** The RE Committee is seeking interested teachers for all age groups, preschool through high school, and we would especially love to welcome folks from outside the RE/family community! Does making a big commitment scare you? Don't worry, volunteer teachers can offer as much or as little time as works for them. Some RE volunteers prefer to help for a number of weeks in a row for part of a year; others prefer a once or twice/month approach. Does the prospect of having to prepare a lesson intimidate you? Don't worry; teaching teams can use assistant teachers/helpers who work with children in the classes but are not responsible for the lesson plan. Would you like to help RE but aren't sure where you would fit in? Don't worry; we can help find the age group, curricula and time frame that best matches RE's **and** your needs. Join a teaching team during the month of May by singing up on the community room bulletin board, talking to an RE Committee member in the parlor after church, or contacting Martha Dallas at the church or Pam Laser, at 863-3846 or plaser@hartlaser.net. And thank you!
Respectfully submitted by Pam Laser, Religious Education Chairperson

*Planning a reception? Anniversary dinner? Party of the century? Pianist Tom Cleary and keyboard/vocalist Amber Delaurentis offer their **lush jazz/blues arrangements** for a special event of your choice. Bid at the UU Silent Auction*

Nominating Committee Seeks Your Input

The Nominating Committee is charged to bring a slate of candidates for the various elected offices specified in our By-Laws to the June annual meeting. We also feel the necessity of supporting efforts of individual committees to locate and involve new persons who will add fresh ideas and energy to the operating committees. All committees are welcoming of new members, and the purpose of this article is to encourage everyone who may wish to become more involved in the governance of the Society to contact us so that we can help you locate a committee, be it Religious Education, Social Action, Music, or any one of many other groups, to which you will enjoy contributing your talents.

It is easy to do: the fastest method is to send an e-mail to nominate@uusociety.org. We will contact you about how to become involved. Alternately, you may contact one of us directly. Please give serious consideration to your unique ability to make a difference. Thanks! *The Nominating Committee: Martha Fitzgerald, Chair; Dorothy Seale-Brown; Steve Boyan, Melissa Akey; Bill Klock; Woody Fulton*

Forget About Your Pledge Card, But Not Your Pledge!

What an amazing Canvass this has been. We began with a wonderful guest, Bill Schulz, who not only spoke from our pulpit on Sunday morning but also spoke at our kick-off event on Saturday evening. A great group of members provided a chocolate lovers dream of a reception following Bill's talk. We had brave members of this congregation who stood up on Sunday mornings and gave their heartfelt testimonial about why they choose to pledge their hard earned money to support the work of our Society. We had committed committee members who assisted with everything from signing letters to designing our pledge cards. So much hard work goes into making our Canvass a success each year. This year we asked you to dig deep and increase your support 25% to make sure that the Faith You Choose is here to support you. Well we're happy to say that many of you answered our call and increased your pledges significantly. Our Canvass is up 11% over last year, which is wonderful and amazing and something we should be proud of.

So, with all of that good news, why are we still hearing about the Canvass nearly two months after Celebration Sunday? It's because although our total Canvass dollars has increased, the number of people pledging has decreased. We have nearly 100 people who pledged last year who have not yet pledged this year. We know that life is busy, and that a pledge card is a tiny detail that can often get moved to the bottom of the "To Do" pile. But without an accurate estimate of income for the upcoming year, we will be unable to plan for our future. So, if you are one of those people who has moved your pledge card to the bottom of the pile, here is my advice. Forget about that pledge card, it is only a formality. But don't forget about pledging. Please call 862-5630 ext. 22 or email xina@uusociety.org Christina with your pledge. She will be happy to complete that pledge card for you.