



September 7, 2008 -
September 20, 2008

Calendar

Sunday, September 7

8:30 RE Orientation
11:00 Worship Service
12:00 Committee Sunday &
Welcome Back Picnic

Monday, September 8

***** Zen (Call office for time)
9:00 Newsletter deadline
5:30 All Committee Potluck & Mtg.

Tuesday, September 9

6:30 RE Orientation

Wednesday, September 10

9:00 Staff Meeting
7:30 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, September 11

***** Zen (Call office for time)
10:00 SGM Steering Committee

Friday, September 12

6:30 AA Men's Group

Saturday, September 13

Sunday, September 14

9:00 Worship Service
11:00 Worship Service
12:15 OWL Parent Orientation
12:30 Beacon Book Talk: Fred Lane

Monday, September 15

***** Zen (Call office for time)

Tuesday, September 16

7:00 Board of Trustees Meeting

Wednesday, September 17

9:00 Staff Meeting
6:00 OWL Parent Orientation
7:30 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, September 18

***** Zen (Call office for time)

Friday, September 19

6:30 AA Men's Group

Saturday, September 20

Member Parking

Passes

Member parking passes will be available beginning Sunday, September 14. Passes allow members to park in the Meetinghouse oval for up to three hours at anytime during the week. Passes cost \$30 for one or \$50 for two. Please contact David McFeeters for more information: 862-5630 ext. 23.

Bumper Sticker Theology

Gary's benediction, *“Be Guided By Your Faith, Not Your Fear,”* is now available again in bumper sticker form, with a picture of the meetinghouse, from the book cart in the Parlors. The Book Cart is open for business every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month. Help spread the word!

On My Mind

Legend says that Rabbi Hillel, a contemporary of Jesus, was challenged to define the essence of Judaism while standing on one foot. “What is hurtful to you, do not do unto others,” he supposedly said. “That is the Law and the Prophets. All the rest is commentary.”

How would you define the core of Unitarian Universalism in a single sentence—or while standing on one foot? *“Nurture the Spirit, Help Heal Our World.”* That's a summation that UUA President Bill Sinkford calls our “saving message.” I've sometimes said that our liberal faith is nothing more or less than the democratic method applied to religion. Our central tenets are individual freedom of belief, spiritual equality, and shared decision-making rather than a single metaphysical mindset.

Surely it's handy to have an “elevator speech” prepared. When a stranger asks, “Unitarian Universalism—what's that?” you need a quick response to deliver between the first and fourth floor. Unitarians proclaim human oneness, you might say. Hindus, Jews, Christians, Moslems are all expressions of the same infinite creativity. Universalists hold that compassion is the strongest force on earth—that's what it means to say that God is love.

But perhaps what's unique about our faith is that it can't be reduced to a slogan, a mantra, a formula. What defines Unitarian Universalists is that we believe in moral complexity. It's not a world with easy answers. Sometimes two people can disagree without either being all right or all wrong. The truth is often nuanced or paradoxical. We have a bit in common with old Lao-Tze, who said that “the Tao that can be spoken is not the true Tao,” and also with Buddha, who transmitted the entire dharma to a disciple by simply holding aloft a flower and remaining silent. Discursive logic falls short of describing the depths of being.

Yet we can experience those depths from time to time, which is why we come together in worship. I invite you to be an active participant in our diverse and many-sided community—part of the answer to the question of who we are. As with so much in our congregation, standing on one foot is optional.

Gary

Upcoming Sundays

September Worship Theme:

Education

How do we educate the heart as well as the intellect? Where do we look for wisdom as well as information? What lessons has life been teaching you, and which have been hardest to learn? *“The secret of education lies in respecting the student.”* Ralph Waldo Emerson

Sunday, September 7, 11:00 am “Last Lectures, New Beginnings”

Our entire congregation, children and adults, will gather for a single celebration at eleven o' clock as we launch a new year. The choir will sing as Gary reflects on the power of dreams and imagination, with a potluck in the garden to follow. Remember to bring a small container of water from your summer travels for our annual “Water Communion.”

Sunday, September 14, 9 am & 11 am “Spiritual Intelligence”

Psychologist Howard Gardner popularized the well-accepted concept of multiple intelligences. Many people who are smart in school aren't so smart when it comes to matters of faith. What does it mean to be spiritually intelligent? Join Gary in thinking about religious I.Q. Joe Pepper is featured at the early service, and the choir sings at eleven.

Sunday, September 21, 9 am & 11 am “Equinox Lessons”

Nature is a much-beloved teacher in Unitarian Universalist faith. Nature is also “feared,” or experienced with awe and wonder. Our assistant minister Rev. Elaine Bomford writes, “the Autumn Equinox provides opportunity to appreciate, celebrate and reflect upon ways in which nature educates and sustains us in our living.”

Welcome Back Picnic

It will be great to see everyone again on September 7th at our annual Welcome Back Picnic to be held in the Memorial Garden right after the 11:00 service (weather permitting). Bring your favorite finger food to serve yourselves and about eight other people. Beverages will be provided. Another wonderful church year awaits us all!

**Religious Education
News**

As a child, my family summered on Martha's Vineyard. We were real beachgoers and Dad taught me to body surf at an early age. I learned how to position myself precisely so that, watching the wave over my right shoulder, hands neat and flat with arms stretched out towards the beach, I could launch my body with the cresting wave and ride it, face down and rigid as a board, until my nose scraped sand and I had to come up for air. What a thrill to leap into a wave's crescendo and ride its energy all the way to the shore!

And then, sitting on my towel to dry off and warm up, I'd look out and watch each wave rolling in. I'd imagine they'd come all the way from across the Atlantic... only to dramatically crest and then crash into a confusion of roiling, foaming, sandy bubbles. What an unfair existence! ...to come all that way for your moment of drama and then you're done.

As an adult, I can accept a wave's demise. I understand that each wave is meaningless when considered alone; waves are connected, through time and space, to all other waves and more. They move, they come, they go. Cresting, crashing, and ebbing are as much a part of their essence as is the journey over the ocean to the shore.

The movement of Unitarian Universalism is like the movement of waves, and coming to the UU and participating in worship, religious education, and all our other activities is a lot like body surfing. The sweet mystery about the UU wave is that each and every one of us can feel the thrill of the ride; yet at the same time each of us is part of the wave itself: part of the water, part of the wind and tide that pulls those waves into being, and part of the shore that tugs on the wave's toes, pulling it into a reaching crest that catches and tumbles over itself in a glorious, soothing crash, followed by a gentle retreat from the shore.

As we roll around to summer's end and feel hints of early fall in the air, waves of Unitarian Universalism have been moving on and on, ever pulsing in insistence. When we come together on Sunday, September 7th at 11:00 for our Intergenerational Ingathering Worship, we will catch another great and wondrous wave of this faith. May we leap in, ride all the way to the shore, and then keep coming back for more!

Welcome back, everyone!

Martha

Education Events

RE Orientations

If your children will be participating in RE, and/or if you are signed up to be an RE Steward, please come to one of the following orientations:

SUNDAY, SEPT 7TH, 8:30 -10:30 AM (prior to our 11 AM Intergenerational Ingathering Worship service). Bagels, fruit, and coffee provided.

TUESDAY, SEPT 9TH, 6:30-8:30 PM (evening option). Light refreshments provided.

Both orientations will take place in the Sophia Fahs Community Room downstairs, with childcare and supervised activities for older children provided.

OWL Parent Orientations

OWL is a comprehensive sexuality education program, which we offer to students in seventh and eighth grades. Parents who wish for their children to take OWL *must* attend an OWL parent orientation in order for their child to participate. We're offering two orientations for parents this year; please attend one or the other. The first will be from 12:30-2:30 Sunday, Sept. 14th; the second will be from 6- 8 PM on Wednesday, Sept. 17th. Both will include refreshments and will take place in the OWL classroom off the Community Room. Questions? Contact Martha Dallas at 862-5630 x 28 or Martha@uusociety.org.

Religious Education classes begin September 14th!

New Orleans Fundraiser Project Successful

During the June '08 Burlington Jazz festival, Gary Kowalski took the lead to organize a vegetarian jambalaya dinner to raise money for our New Orleans volunteer project. The dinner was held on the front lawn of our meeting house. Over \$1000 was raised! Many people worked to provide help serve, including Bill Suiter, Alan Hunt, Suzie Taylor, Jacki Brewster, Bridget and Nick Meyer, Ken and Cherifa Swearingen, Dick Yeaw, Linda Cooper and Monica Sargent. Look for the Anti-Racism Action Committee table in the Parlors on September 7th to find out more about this project.

*Susan Schoenfeld, Co-chair,
Anti-Racism Action Committee*

First Choir Rehearsal

Have you noticed how much fun members of the choir have on those Sundays that we sing? Ever think that you might enjoy singing as a member of the choir? Now is an excellent time to get in at the beginning of the fall, for our first rehearsal. Join us on Wednesday, September 3, at 7pm in the parlors. Singers of all ranges welcomed. Your interest and enthusiasm are the most important qualifications. Wayne will do the rest!

*Woody Fulton
Chair, Music Committee*

Peace and Justice Center to Honor Roddy

The Peace and Justice Center will proudly present long time PJC member and social justice activist Roddy O'Neil Cleary with The Ed Everts Peace and Social Justice Award for her life long commitment to activism and volunteerism at their annual Rock The Boat event on Sept. 19 from 6:30-9:30 at the ECHO Center. Hors d'oeuvres will be served, Amber deLaurentas and Tom Cleary will provide music and both live and silent auctions will be featured. Tickets are \$25 and are available at the Peace and Justice Store on Church St. All proceeds will benefit the social justice work of the Peace and Justice Center.

*Bridget Meyer
Council Co-Chair*

Newsletter News

The next deadline is Monday, September 8, @9am. That issue will cover events from September 21-October 4, 2007. You can view this year's newsletter schedule on our website: www.uusociety.org.

Committee Sunday

Our hard working FUUSB Committees will be recruiting during the Welcome Back Picnic on September 7. Have you wondered what the Property Committee does? How about Social Action? Take a moment to talk with these folks and consider joining them in their work.

American Humanist Association

Several of us are forming a Vermont Chartered Chapter of the American Humanist Association. If interested, contact Adam Bortz at: adambortz@aol.com.

**First Unitarian Universalist
Society**
862-5630

Gary Kowalski, Minister

*Elaine Bomford,
Assistant Minister*

*Jerrold Packard,
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 Ingram,
Administrative Assistant*

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

2008 Ware Lecture

Each year, the UUA presents a keynote speaker at General Assembly. Past Ware Lecturers have included figures like Mary Oliver, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Kurt Vonnegut. This June's presenter was one of the most dynamic ever, Van Jones, Director of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights in Oakland, whose "Books Not Bars" program is credited with reducing youth incarceration in California by 30%. Come hear Jones' vision for a multi-racial, sustainable future on Sunday, September 21, at 12:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Anti-Racism Action Committee. Gary

Membership Committee Needs Members

You are invited to join the Membership Committee. We're looking for a few who are "people" people. Contact the Chair, Adam Bortz, at 864-3516.

The Court and the Cross

Gary hosts Beacon Press author Fred Lane on Sunday September 14th at 12:30 to discuss his new book *The Court and the Cross*, which addresses one of the most critical issues in this election year: the religious right's successful long-term effort to reshape the Supreme Court and the entire federal judiciary. According to Susan Jacoby, author of *The Age of America's Unreason*, "With wit, legal erudition and political acumen, Lane explains exactly why the power to appoint federal judges with lifetime tenure may be a president's most significant legacy and why liberals have been asleep at the switch while conservatives have had their way with the courts. This timely and disturbing book offers a much-needed wake-up call to all who cherish our Constitution and understand that the separation of church and state was America's founding gift to its own citizens and the world." Fred will sell and sign copies of his book.

Lessons from the End of Life

What can those at the journey's end teach us about living with grace and gratitude? Three documentary films help us explore together: *Fierce Grace* with Ram Dass, *Lessons for Living* with Morrie Schwartz and Ted Koppel, and *The Man Who Learned To Fall* with Phillip Simmons. Each film is 60-90 minutes long, followed by discussion, starting Sunday, September 28 from 7-9 p.m. Gary Kowalski facilitates the dialogue.

Build with Habitat!

UU workers are welcome in Milton where houses are going up for deserving buyers in need. All ages welcome – for pounding nails to creating snacks. Lots of other church and non-church folk are helping. Call 872-8726 for info, or look at www.greenmountainhfh.org. UU member Bill Cleary is your link: 862-4659.

You Are What You Eat?

In keeping with the UUA's decision to make "Ethical Eating" our denomination's main study issue for the next four years, Gary will present a lunchtime discussion series based on the Vermont Earth Institute's "Menu for the Future." Topics include industrial agriculture, organic and localvore diets, slow eating, the economics of food production, and more. Bring a brown bag to chew and chat from Noon – 1:00 p.m. each Thursday, starting October 2. Participants should plan to purchase a study guide for \$20 from the UU Office and read *Session One: What's Eating America?* prior to the first meeting.

Sing for Peace

On September 27th at 7:00 pm, Governor Madeleine Kunin will welcome you to the First UU Society in Burlington and introduce an historic concert: seven Vermont choruses, one hundred and forty strong, will *Sing for Peace*. Come join Bella Voce, Sounding Joy, Syrinx, Pumpkin Hill Singers, Maple Jam, Social Band and Counterpoint. Hear each of these outstanding choruses sing pieces from its own repertoire. You will feel the power of song when you add your voice to ours and we all sing *We Shall Overcome*. The sound will echo down Church Street and out across the waters of Lake Champlain.

At the close of this free concert, when our voices join together and the quiet and prayerful strength of *Dona Nobis Pacem* spreads over the city, gather with us in the community room for fresh apple cider and delicious desserts -- made for you from the favorite recipes of our singers.

Leonard Bernstein once said: Our response to violence will be to make music more intensely, more beautifully and more devotedly than ever before.

So we shall.

*Amity Baker
Director, Social Band*

Help Our Light Shine!

Each Thursday at 1:29pm on North Country Public Radio (WXLU FM 88.1 in Burlington) our congregation sponsors *Speaking of Faith*, preceded by messages like these:

This program brought to you by the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington...

...a welcoming place for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community!

...educating spiritually aware children in a morally complex world!

...a voice for tolerance and religious freedom in downtown Burlington!

Please help us keep our presence in the public media. If you already support public radio, consider channeling your dollars through our UU office to purchase underwriting time. \$650 keeps us on the air for one year. See Christina Fulton, Society Administrator, for details. Donations Needed Now!

First Unitarian Universalist Society

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Because you care about where we are headed...

What: Mapping the road to our future! This will be a goal-setting retreat for First UU Society of Burlington to plan the next five years!!

When: Saturday, October 11th : whole day event (times to be announced later)

Where: Charlotte Senior Center, Charlotte, VT

Who: We will have Robin Scheu, a professional facilitator from our UU District, to assist us.

What else: Food, fun, community building activities, some hard work, and some serious celebration!

Mark your calendars and be sure to save the day!!

Questions? Contact Brian Haas (658-4747), Dave McFeeters (863-5630 x23), Linda Gross (872-9167), Sharon Leach (879-9981), or George Rutherford (951-2571). *Brian Haas, Goals Committee member*

2007/2008 Loose Plate for Charity!

A huge thank you to everyone who put cash into the collection plate last year. Look at the difference we're making in our Old North End community!

Vermont Center for Independent Living	\$540.45
Healthy City Gleaning Project	\$503.51
Women Helping Battered Women	\$908.27
SafeSpace	\$226.00
RU12? Community Center	\$459.26
JUMP	\$821.72
Kids-A-Part	\$580.76
Mercy Connections	\$277.74
Neighborkeepers	\$277.74
Boys & Girls Club	\$378.12
Greater Burlington Multicultural Center	\$570.40
BHS Emergency Needs Fund	\$527.70
Imani Health Institute	\$531.61
Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf	\$584.53
Outright Vermont	\$545.61
Vermont Refugee Resettlement	\$604.19
Spectrum One Stop	\$879.52
Center City Little League	\$658.96
Rec. & Nutrition Summer Program	\$455.13
Association of Africans Living in Vermont	\$326.20
Sara Holbrook Community Center	\$509.23
Total Giving	\$11,166.65

Christina Fulton, Society Administrator
