



January 13, 2007 -
January 26, 2008

Calendar

- Sunday, January 13**
9:00 Worship Service
9:30 Adult Programs Committee
10:00 Women’s Spirituality Group
11:00 Worship Service
12:30 Interweave Potluck Luncheon
12:30 Vermont Interfaith Action
- Monday, January 14**
***** Zen (Call office for time.)
- Tuesday, January 15**
7:00 Board Meeting
- Wednesday, January 16**
9:00 Staff Meeting
7:00 Choir Rehearsal
- Thursday, January 17**
***** Zen (Call office for time.)
9:00 Newsletter Crew
10:00 Women’s Alliance Exec. Com.
12:00 Root Yoga Community Class
6:00 Practicing Your Faith
6:30 Council Meeting
- Friday, January 18**
6:30 AA Men’s Group
- Saturday, January 19**
5:00 BUUC Ritual
- Sunday, January 20**
9:00 Worship Service
9:15 Care Network Ministry
10:00 Women’s Spirituality Group
11:00 Worship Service
12:30 Social Action Forum
- Monday, January 21**
Office Closed
***** Zen (Call office for time.)
4:00 First Night Lasagna Dinner
- Tuesday, January 22**
10:00 Wisdom Wanderers
10:00 Small Group Ministry
- Wednesday, January 23**
9:00 Staff Meeting
7:00 Choir Rehearsal
- Thursday, January 24**
***** Zen (Call office for time.)
12:00 Root Yoga Community Class
6:00 Mysticism Sm. Group Ministry
- Friday, January 25**
6:30 AA Men’s Group
- Saturday, January 26**
9:00 RE Stewardship Fair

Office Closed for Training

Please note that the Society Offices will be closed on Monday, January 28th and Tuesday, January 29th from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. Staff members will be participating in CPR training at these times. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

On My Mind

Some remember James Barrett. He was killed by a shotgun blast from an anti-abortion fanatic in July of 1994 while serving as a protective escort to clients at the Pensacola Ladies Center, a Florida family planning facility. He believed that by helping keep abortion safe and legal, he was guarding individual liberty—just as he had guarded it as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force. He was a member of the Pensacola UU Fellowship.

I remembered James Barrett when I read that fake bullets had been found outside the Planned Parenthood clinic in Burlington. Protestors there, apparently organized by the Catholic Diocese and Vermont Right to Life, have become increasingly confrontational, writing down the license numbers of women using their health services. Never mind that most of these women are coming in for PAP smears or pre-natal care. They are being threatened by intimidating tactics.

How should our congregation respond? Like most Americans, Unitarian Universalists have differing views on abortion. Without any moral or medical consensus on the issue of when a developing fetus acquires the status of personhood, most regard the question of whether to prevent or end a pregnancy as a supremely personal decision. Thirty-five years ago, the Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade* laid down legal guidelines for when women might exercise their discretion in carrying a child to term. But today the Court’s decision—like the women at the Burlington clinic—is under attack.

Recognizing the stakes, our Board has decided to display a banner on the front of our building this January, marking the 35th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, expressing our support for women’s reproductive freedom. I personally am proud of our Board, and of our congregation, which actually helped to start our local Planned Parenthood back in the early 1960’s. Our minister emeritus Gaston Carrier was a founding member.

Some have forgotten that fact. But the older generation recalls when not only abortion but birth control was illegal in some states.

James Barrett remembered. After winning a Bronze Star in World War II and serving in Korea and Vietnam, he was stationed as a military attache to the U.S. embassy in Saudi Arabia (where abortion is still illegal even in the case of rape). He retired to Florida to continue fighting the good fight.

That’s why we’ll fly our banner. So the extremists don’t win.

Gary

Upcoming Sundays

January Worship Theme:

God

Unitarian Universalists hold many beliefs about God, but cannot ignore the perennial question of how we name and experience the creative mystery at the heart of the cosmos. As Martin Buber writes, *“Some would deny any legitimate use of the word God because it has been misused so much. Certainly it is the most burdened of all human words. Precisely for that reason, it is the most imperishable and unavoidable.”* Are there healthy and unhealthy images of God? Is belief in a deity compatible with science? What difference does connecting to a higher power make in our daily lives and attitudes toward the world?

Sunday, January 13, 9am & 11am

“The Heart Has Its Reasons” Blaise Pascal, a brilliant intellectual and scientist was part of the dawning Age of Reason. A genius in the field of Mathematics he laid the foundations for calculus. In an Age of Reason he argued for the limitations of reason, writing in his *Pensees*: “The heart has its reasons of which reason knows nothing.” This morning Roddy wonders whether Pascal’s life and famous “Wager” for faith hold any relevance for the skepticism of our own time. The choir will sing at the 11am service.

Sunday, January 20, 11:00 am

“Radical Reconciliation” Much religion in our time is characterized by judgment; evil-doers must be punished. But hope for the future lies with those from Martin Luther King Jr. To Desmond Tutu who have counseled forgiveness, even in the face of personal assault and de-humanizing violence. On this King commemorative, Gary explores the ramifications of forgiveness in our own lives and in the wider world. Our Children’s Choir will sing. *A special collection to support the Journey Toward Wholeness program will be taken this morning.*

Sunday, January 27, 9 & 11am (Lay Service)

Religious Education News

I spent a few days over Christmas in my hometown of Concord, MA. I stay with my parents, who live in a condo downtown.

This last visit, I set out for a walk along an abandoned railroad bed, which crosses a road about a half-mile from the center of town. As far as I can remember, I had never been down it, in my 18 years of living in Concord. A couple hundred yards in, I came to a trail branching off to my right and a granite marker that noted this route as having been traveled by the Minutemen during the battle of Lexington and Concord. Who would have guessed! I took the new path, which led behind the backyards of houses by which I'd driven, walked, and biked countless times. Yet here I was, alone in the woods, in wholly unfamiliar territory, not knowing where, or if this trail would let me out somewhere I recognized.

Turns out, the trail brought me to the back corner of Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, so I went to visit the graves of Louisa May Alcott, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and William Ellery Channing. And then, instead of going home the way I knew, I went back in the woods to get lost a little more.

I have experienced similar awe and discovery when canoeing through Concord. Seeing the way the familiar landmarks are connected by trails of river water gives me a wondrously fresh perspective on a place I know so well!

I got to thinking about all the pathways that link together the places we know: the roads, of course, and sidewalks; the rivers, the footpaths, and trails... and the even less obvious trails made by animals large and small as they skirt our fences to get to food and then get home.

I think there's an analogy to be drawn between the pathways in a landscape and the paths and patterns of our thoughts or behaviors. We efficiently, conveniently, and habitually travel familiar, well-worn paths. But because *all of existence* is intricately connected in a myriad of ways, we know there are *other* paths, other ways of being, thinking, and acting which are just beyond our familiar reach. These will reveal connections that never even occurred to us. These can offer us a perspective on our lives and our beliefs that might really shake us and wake us!

The entrances to new connections are all around! If we slow down enough, we will notice them, and if we dare to take an adventure, they will receive us. May we all recognize where and how we need to take a fresh, new turn in our lives. And may we be graced and encouraged to do so!

Martha

Gulf Coast Volunteer Program

The Anti-Racism Action Committee is forming a group to participate in the UUA-UUSC's Gulf Coast Volunteer program. This program connects volunteers with the needs of communities in the hurricane-affected areas. Volunteers engage in a variety of projects with community partners. All level of skills are welcomed. The program also includes training and dialogue about the race, class, and power issues that have led to inequalities in the region's rebuilding and recovery process. Volunteers must be at least 16 years of age. Our group is tentatively scheduled for the week of April 5 -12, 2008. Volunteers are responsible for their own transportation, lodging and food costs. Lodging can be arranged for \$5.00 per night at the First Church of New Orleans; a kitchen is available for making meals. Please contact Susan Schoenfeld at 863-6299 or central4@burlingtontelecom.net for more information.

Book Discussion Group

Please join us for any or all of our discussions. On Tuesday, February 12 we will discuss The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and The Will of the People by *Jonathan Schell*. Schell wants us begin thinking about how we can use democracy - the actions of people, rather than governments - to bring about a peaceful world" Howard Zinn in the Boston Globe. On Tuesday, March 11 we will discuss A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier by *Ishmael Beah*. "-- his honesty is exacting, and a testament of children to outlive their suffering if given a chance" -- The New Yorker. All meetings will be at 7:00 p.m. at the first UU Society. Please call Bud or Alison Etherton at 658-4126 with questions.

2nd Saturday Potluck

Enjoy good food, wine, conversation, new friends, or singing old songs? Want to have a 'cheap date' with free childcare? Please join us in the UU parlor for the 2nd Saturday Potluck on Saturday, January 12th at 6pm. Call Claire Graham-Smith at 660-8903 to make reservations. Please let us know whether you are bringing an appetizer, salad, main course, or dessert and how many adults are in your party. Bring your own dishes and silverware or use ours. If you need childcare call early so we can make arrangements. Hope to see you there.

Wondering about Your Carbon Footprint?

Vermont Earth Institute's Kristin DeVoe-Talluto will introduce a new study / discussion course, "*Global Warming: Changing CO2urse*" at the Social Action Forum, January 20, beginning at 12:30. This course offers its participants a chance to (1) learn more about the history, science and politics of the climate crisis, (2) explore personal values and habits pertinent to this issue, and (3) consider actions they might take to help curb greenhouse gas emissions. Those who elect to sign up for the course will be meeting weekly both to discuss the articles reprinted in the course-book, and to consider their personal lifestyle choices in the light of what they are learning about climate change. If you are concerned about Global Warming, but not yet sure what to do about it, this course is for you. The only cost is \$18 for the course book.

Kristin DeVoe-Talluto is the regional coordinator for the Vermont Earth Institute. Dedicated to building strong and vital communities, she inspires and supports individuals looking to live more sustainably and facilitates workshops designed to assist businesses to reduce their carbon footprint. A former non-profit consultant, Kristin is also passionate about local food systems, youth leadership, and the intersection of spirituality, wealth and philanthropy.

"Global Warming: Changing CO2urse" is the most recent of seven courses offered by VEI since 2000. Members of our congregation took the course on Globalization last year; we found it both informative and a good basis for discussions. Refreshments will be served.

Membership

If you would like to become a member of this Society, you may speak to either Gary Kowalski, Roddy O'Neil Cleary or Martha Dallas. Please call the office at 862-5630 to make arrangements.

Viva La VIA!

Vermont Interfaith action (VIA) welcomes everyone and wants your good energy! Come to the next UU Vermont Interfaith Action Local Organizing Committee (LOC) meeting, Sunday, January 13, 12:30 to 1:30pm to celebrate and make plans for the new year! Refreshments! We'll ask all our congregation to come to the Affordable Housing Action at St. Paul's Cathedral on Sunday, February 10, 3pm. Our focus of concern will be the Westlake Development on Battery and Cherry Streets in Burlington. For more info call Pat Allen 864-9799 or Sally Conrad 658-1047.

**First Unitarian Universalist
Society**
862-5630

Gary Kowalski, Minister

*Roddy O'Neil Cleary,
Affiliate Minister*

*Jerrold Packard,
Board President*

*Martha Dallas, Director
of Religious Education*

*David McFeeters,
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Planned Parenthood Forum

What services does Planned Parenthood provide? What challenges does the organization face, locally and nationally, in the face of opposition to birth control and women's right to choose? On Sunday, January 20 at 12:30 Elizabeth Cukor and clinic practitioners will describe the work of PPNE and answer questions. If you have used family planning services from Planned Parenthood and want to "tie a pink ribbon" to show your support, please visit www.plannedparenthood/ppne/vermont. Hundreds of ribbons will decorate our UU lawn later this month, along with a banner recognizing our Society's historic role in helping to found our local Planned Parenthood chapter.

ARC Gallery

This is not a typo...simply the humor of the late Caroline Mac Donald who preceeded me as curator of our upstairs gallery. Artists in our community are welcome to hang their work. Please contact Mary Ellen Manock for help and encouragement in this regard, memanock@mac.com. We have a new show by Carol ES MacDonald, local artist, teacher, member of the choir and creator of the banners depicting religions of the world in the Sanctuary. Please take a walk upstairs to our Gallery to view her latest artworks.

Guest at Your Table and the UUSC

Your active support of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) and Guest at Your Table program this past holiday season has been much appreciated. If you have not yet had a chance to return your Guest at Your Table box, please bring it with you to either service next Sunday.

Before you hand in your box, it would help if you write a check made out to "UUSC" for the amount of money inside. Please fill out the membership panel on the box to join the UUSC (students/youth membership \$10, seniors \$20, general \$40, dual \$75). It would be great to increase UUSC membership from our First UU Society of Burlington, and that's where you come in!

If you would like to send a tax deductible contribution directly to the UUSC, please send a check to: UUSC, PO Box 845259, Boston, MA 02284-5259. Write "First UU Burlington" on the memo line. All individual or family memberships and contributions over \$100 will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock, NY.

With your help, our congregation can increase its support of the UUSC's goal of envisioning "a world free from oppression and injustice, where all can realize their full human rights." Thank you for your help. *Dave Conrad, Denominational Affairs*

Newsletter News

Next deadline: Monday, January 14, 2008 @9am covering January 27 - February 9, 2008. You can view the newsletter and this year's schedule on our website: www.uusociety.org.

Women's Alliance

Women's Alliance announces the resumption of its first Friday lunchtime programs for 2008. On January 4, the featured speaker will be our very own Board President and best selling author - Jerrold Packard. Jerry has written on a variety of subjects - the Japanese monarchy, Queen Victoria and her last days, the Jim Crow movement in America and more.

The business meeting begins at 10:30am and the lecture at 11:30. There are so many varied subjects covered in Jerry's books - the questions and responses should be flying! Bring a sandwich. Dessert and beverages will be served.

Mark the date: the February 1st meeting includes lunch and local author Annie Downey. If you work anywhere downtown, consider joining us for some outstanding soup and lots of laughs. Annie's book, Hot and Bothered, is full of the vagaries of love, life and parenting.

A Tree to be Proud of ... if Not for You

In the month of December the youth group erected an ever green holiday tree in the sanctuary adorned with photographs of our congregation's shining stars ... our children. Other decorations were designed to be the "Giving" part of the tree. The giving ornaments designated gifts that one could take and donate to one or more of the following non-profit organizations: COTS, Humane Society, our UU Socially Responsible Santa and Spectrum. The youth planned this program start to finish. They took the pictures of our RE children, chose and worked with the gift recipients, decorated the tree, collected and distributed the gifts, and lastly took the tree down and tallied up the donations. Thanks to you ... The Humane Society received 21 lbs of cat food, 21.5 lbs of dog food, 166.5 lbs of kitty litter; Spectrum received 1 - \$25 Borders gift card; COTS received 113 diapers, 10 toothbrushes, 1 pack of baby wipes, 1 pack of tooth floss, 2 winter hats, 1 pair of mittens, 7 pairs of winter gloves, 1 winter scarf, 3 bath towels, 6 pairs of socks; Socially Responsible Santa received \$207.99 in cash. If not for your generous donations, our project would not have been a success. Thanks for your support.

A special thanks to Bridget and Nick Myer for the donation of the tree, and to Martha Dallas, Kathleen Ingram, David McFeeters and Christina Fulton for their help with the project. If you see a youth or other member please tell them how you feel about the project. I know I'm proud of them for their hard work. I hope you are too.

*George Rutherford,
Youth Group Advisor*

Calling All Angels of the Earth

The World Unity Choir led by songwriter, recording artist, music teacher; Dawna Hammers is still seeking singers for the next wave of rehearsals and recording sessions! This is an international, intergenerational choir which is making a cd to sell at the United Nations to raise awareness for their work as well as money for innocent victims of war! We will rehearse Sunday afternoons from 3-4:30 and you can also practice with a rehearsal CD at home. You must be able to sing on pitch. We will record in late February or early March. For more info or to sign up, please call Dawna; 985-2074 or email; dawnah@earthlink.net.

First Unitarian Universalist Society
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Meet Gaye Symington, Support our UU Neighbors

As speaker of the Vermont House, she's the Mount Mansfield UU Fellowship's most famous member. And Gaye will be honored at a wine and cheese reception on Saturday, January 12, at 7:30 p.m. in our parlors. The soiree has a purpose, to help the Unitarian Universalists in Jericho raise funds for their new religious home, a barn they purchased in October which is now being outfitted for their growing congregation. A suggested donation of \$25 is requested to support this exciting project. Gaye will speak about how her own spiritual journey has intertwined with her life of public service in the political arena before taking questions and comments. Checks can be made out directly to the Mount Mansfield UU Fellowship. Please come participate in the growth of liberal religion in Chittenden County!

Hear the Roar! Feel the Mist! See the Mighty Falls! **July 20-23, 2008**

Come experience the wonder of Niagara Falls including some great educational opportunities while being taken care of like royalty. The UU Church of Niagara is conducting a four day UU Niagara Experience which is a lifetime opportunity to encounter the Falls up close from every perspective, even safely riding beneath a tethered balloon. Spend four days with us exploring the rich historical and natural wonders around the Falls. For information visit our web site: <http://www.uunex.net/> or email: uunex@yahoo.com or telephone: (716) 745-7149 or

(716) 791-4453

Loose Plate for Charity

On December 2nd & December 9th our congregation pledged to contribute 50% of our Sunday Loose Plate Collection to Women Helping Battered Women. I am proud to report that our congregation will be sending a check to Women Helping Battered Women for \$682.27. On January 13th & January 20th we will be collecting for Burlington High School Emergency Needs Fund; and on January 27th and February 3rd, one half of our collection will go to the Imani Health Institute. Please come prepared to give generously!

Our special Christmas Eve Offering received a total of \$6,754, which will be divided among JUMP (Joint Urban Ministry Project), VIA (Vermont Interfaith Action), our Partner church in Transylvania and the Church Family Fund. Thank you to all who contributed!

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.

"War, I once felt, horrible as it is, might be preferable to surrender to a totalitarian system. But more and more I have come to the conclusion that the potential destructiveness of modern weapons of war totally rules out the possibility of war ever serving again as a negative good. If we assume that mankind has a right to survive then we must find an alternative to war and destruction. In a day when sputniks dash through outer space and guided ballistic missiles are carving highways of death through the stratosphere, nobody can win a war. The choice today is no longer between violence and nonviolence. It is either nonviolence or nonexistence." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. - Spring 1960
