



January 27, 2008 -
February 9, 2008

Calendar

- Sunday, January 27**
9:00 Worship Service
9:00 Membership Committee
10:00 Women’s Spirituality Group
11:00 Worship Service
12:30 Forum: Understanding Fundamentalism
12:30 Care Network Training
- Monday, January 28**
***** Zen (Call office for time.)
9:00 Staff CPR/First Aid Training
9:30 Joyful Parenting SGM
7:00 Board Meeting
- Tuesday, January 29**
9:00 Staff CPR/First Aid Training
- Wednesday, January 30**
9:00 Staff Meeting
7:00 Choir Rehearsal
- Thursday, January 31**
***** Zen (Call office for time.)
9:00 Newsletter Crew
12:00 Root Yoga Community Class
6:00 Practicing Your Faith
- Friday, February 1**
10:30 Women’s Alliance Meeting
6:30 AA Men’s Group
- Saturday, February 2**
- Sunday, February 3**
9:00 Worship Service
9:00 Social Action Committee
11:00 Worship Service
12:30 Care Network Training
- Monday, February 4**
***** Zen (Call office for time.)
6:00 Anti-Racism Action Com.
7:00 BUUC Business Meeting
- Tuesday, February 5**
10:00 Wisdom Wanderers
6:00 Ministerial Search Com.
7:00 Executive Board Meeting
- Wednesday, February 6**
9:00 Staff Meeting
6:30 RE Committee Meeting
7:00 Choir Rehearsal
- Thursday, February 7**
***** Zen (Call office for time.)
12:00 Root Yoga Community Class
- Friday, February 8**
6:30 AA Men’s Group
- Saturday, February 9**
6:00 Second Saturday Potluck

Office Closed for Training

Please note that the Society Offices will be closed on Monday, January 28th and Tuesday, January 29th from 8:30a.m. until 1p.m. Staff members will be participating in CPR training at these times. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

In My Heart

The election year has hardly begun and you wonder how the candidates can hold up until November. As critical as I feel about the whole drawn out process, still I have to admire the energy, drive, and commitment of political candidates. Is it all about power? Or if it’s your candidate you’d like to think it’s about a call to serve that gives momentum and meaning to life.

Even though there was no one running for office this past weekend in our church, I found myself inspired by persons who enrich the community by their own sense of calling. On Saturday evening we had a fundraising event to support the Mt. Mansfield UU Fellowship. The fellowship has bought a barn which they plan to renovate into a sanctuary and meeting house. One of their original founding members is Gaye Symington, the speaker of the house in the Vermont legislature. Gaye shared with us that evening something of her own spiritual journey. How as a young mother she was looking for a way to introduce holiness and reverence into her children’s lives. Then when she found herself serving as a representative in the house, she felt compelled to live out her values in the political arena.

The next morning at the service we heard from Stephen Kiernan about how life changing the premature death of his closest friend, Herb Lockwood had been, about how it brought home for him a sense of his own mortality. Shortly before Herb’s mother died just a year or so ago Stephen visited her. The woman had beside her the one book that had sustained her in her own dying process, Last Rights: Rescuing the End of Life From the Medical System, by Stephen. He felt as if he had in a way come full circle in his own calling. His friend’s death had changed his own life and now he was able to support Herb’s mother at the end of her life.

After the service I attended the Vermont Interfaith Action local organizing committee meeting. Those present learned of the ten or more meetings in City Hall that it had taken to ultimately close the inclusionary zoning ordinance’s infamous loophole. Dedicated VIA members had worked tirelessly, attending and testifying at meetings. They felt called in their commitment to affordable housing to expose the loophole that had allowed builders in Burlington, to pay a minimal penalty fee rather than include a required number of affordable units in housing developments that catered only to the privileged.

All these spirit-filled events that took place in less than 24 hours bristled with meaning and required every bit as much energy and commitment as any political campaign could muster. None of them were covered by the media. Then the work of the spirit doesn’t always make headlines.

Roddy

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 27, 9am & 11am “Understanding Fundamentalism”

Unitarian Universalists seek to affirm a free and responsible search for truth and meaning – but do we embrace fundamentalism as a legitimate outcome of spiritual growth? Lizzy Ghedi-Ehrlich studied the Christian Right at Berkeley to understand its role in politics in American society. Now at Harvard Divinity, her study of fundamentalism has led her to a deeper understanding of the roots of her own faith. This Worship Committee service will be followed by a workshop led by Ghedi-Ehrlich on fundamentalism. The choir will sing at the 11am service.

February’s Theme: Relationships

Sunday, February 3, 9am & 11:00 am “Religion as Child’s Play”

Wisdom suggests that children have a less mediated relationship with the divine; certainly the youngest ones are discovering and wondering every day. This morning, Martha Dallas will reflect on what we can learn from children and youth about life, our beliefs, our rituals, and the meaning of community.

Sunday, February 10, 9 & 11am “Unrequited Love”

The choir will sing at the 11am service.

Minister’s Mini-Leave

Gary will be providing services for the UU Fellowship on St. John from January 24, through February 12, an opportunity for reading, relaxation and renewal. He returns to the pulpit on Sunday, February 17.

Religious Education News

It may be that 20th Century mass culture "invented" the teenager: that person who is no longer a child (most of the time!) and certainly not yet a full-fledged adult.

The metamorphosis from child to adult in America is so complex! Various entities lay claim on rites of passage and "teen-esque" identities. The *legal system* needs 16, 18, and 21-year-olds to give meaning to its laws on driving, voting, war-fighting, and alcohol consumption. The *advertisers* need at least "tweens" (kids aged 9-12 or so), regular teens, twenty-somethings, and Gen Y-ers (Gen X-ers are now too old to count) to be distinct consumer groups, to help boost profit margins. As each teenager ages, his/her *family* establishes its own gradually shifting rules, responsibilities, limitations, and privileges. Finally, and importantly, *Unitarian Universalism* offers Coming of Age.

We recently launched this year's Coming of Age Program. Five youth have chosen to participate.

They are ready to give serious consideration to religious notions, and in particular to our UU faith. Meeting regularly with an adult mentor for the next few months, each youth will begin to develop a *Credo*, or statement of personal belief. Most importantly, they'll be asking, "Who am I? Where do I fit in? Am I a UU?" At the end of the program, on April 13th, at the Youth Sunday worship service, they will share their *Credos* with the congregation. What better time in life than as a teenager to grapple with Awesome Questions? They've got the electric fire, the chutzpah, the levity, and the compassion to Go For It. And I find they throw off infectious sparks, so it's a privilege to be facilitating this process!

To conclude our kickoff event, I asked everyone - youth and mentors - to share their hopes and wishes for the program. Responses included: "Inspiration," "Insight," "Clarity & Discovery," "Freedom of Thought," "Metamorphosis (sometimes)," "Guidance and Reference," and "To Blossom." *Wow*.

If I knew a word that meant "Welcome," "Farewell," "Kudos," and "Namaste" all at once, I'd offer that word to these kids now. In that spirit, please join with me!

Martha

E-mail

Please update your email address with us! We've recently had "permanent fatal errors" with Adelpia.net emails in particular and others too. If you're part of the RE community and haven't received the weekly enews recently, please send your current email address to Kathleen at: office@uusociety.org. This will help ensure everyone's in the loop. Thank you!

Loose Plate for Charity

On December 16th (the snowy Sunday) and 23rd, our congregation pledged to contribute 50% of our Sunday Loose Plate Collection to the Boys & Girls Club. I am proud to report that our congregation will be sending a check to the Boys & Girls Club for \$378.12. On December 30th and January 6th we pledged to contribute 50% of our Sunday Loose Plate Collection to the Greater Burlington Multicultural Center. We will be sending them a check for \$570.40. We can all be proud of the difference we're making in our community.

On January 13th & 20th, we will be collecting for the BHS Emergency Needs Fund and on February 10th & 17th we will be collecting for the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf. 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.

Green Sanctuary

If you would like to participate in our effort to become a certified Green Sanctuary congregation, please give me a call or send an e-mail to david@uusociety.org. To learn more about the Green Sanctuary certification program, go to www.uuministryforearth.org.

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 7pm 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, February 9, at 6pm. Call Janice Lange at 878-5256 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. If you bring your own dishes, we can save on the use of paper plates. If you need childcare, call early so we can make arrangements. Hope to see you there.

The Inner Workings

Over the next month you will be asked to make a pledge of financial support to our Society. Sometimes this can be a confusing time to both long time members and newcomers. I thought I would assemble a list of frequently asked questions as they relate to making a pledge.

1. What year am I pledging for and when should I begin making payments on this pledge? *The Society's fiscal year runs from July 1st through June 30th. Therefore, you are making a pledge for the year that begins on July 1, 2008, and you do not need to begin making payments on this pledge until then.*

2. What if I would like to make my pledge early? *You may begin making payments on your pledge at any time. Please make sure to note in the memo line of your check the fiscal year that you would like your payment to be credited to. If there is no year marked, we will assume your payment is for the current fiscal year.*

3. Can I make my pledge payments with my credit card or automatic withdraws from my bank account? *Yes. There will be a spot on the pledge card to complete if you would like to pay with a credit card. Please note that even if you've paid your pledge with a credit card in the past, you will still need to complete all the information requested on the pledge card again. We do not carry over credit card information from one year to the next. There is also a place on the pledge card to indicate that you would like to have your payments automatically deducted from your bank account. If I see this spot marked on your pledge card, I will send you the paperwork that needs to be completed. Paying with a credit card or auto-withdraws is easier for you and ensures a steady monthly income for the Society.*

4. I would like to pay my pledge with stock; how do I do this? *Contact Christina for an information sheet that lists instructions for contributing stock to the Society.*

If you have any other questions regarding your pledge card or payments, please contact Christina at 862-5630 ext. 22 or xina@uusociety.org.

Newsletter News

Next deadline: Monday, January 28, 2008 @9am covering February 10 - February 23, 2008. You can view the newsletter and this year's schedule on our website: www.uusociety.org.

**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,
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*

Understanding Fundamentalism

A workshop on this topic is scheduled for Sunday, January 27, at 12:30 after the second service. Millions of people from across the spectrum of faiths take part in fundamentalist practices. Understanding the context and meaning of these practices can only lead to a greater ability to locate ourselves within this complex, multi-faith world and take part in meaningful dialogue with those whose beliefs differ radically from our own. Lizzy Ghedi-Ehrlich will explore the history and development of fundamentalism in America, and help us take a look at our own feelings surrounding the culture clash with fundamentalism. A video segment from Christiane Amanpour's CNN series "God's Warriors" will be shown before the discussion. *Lizzy Ghedi-Ehrlich is a graduate student at Harvard Divinity School where she studies American religion and politics. She is seeking ordination in the Unitarian Universalist church.*

Thank You

A huge thank you to all of the wonderful people who volunteered their time and expertise to make the Bazaar Greens table a success this year! Special thanks to the returning "veterans" who ensured a smooth, enjoyable process, and to the "newbies" who brought their energy and time. Thank you so much!

Viva La VIA!

We're excited to announce a victory for Vermont Interfaith Action (VIA)! On January 7, the Burlington City Council passed the Zoning Rewrite that revises much of the complex Burlington Zoning Ordinance.

Embedded in that Rewrite is the revised Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance which essentially closes the loophole that has allowed developers to avoid building required affordable housing units as part of mixed housing developments. Under the new Ordinance, developers who do not build those affordable units, effectively must pay \$150,000 per un-built unit to Burlington's Housing Trust Fund.

Our First UU congregation took the lead in working on this VIA issue. Many, many UUs and friends attended and/or testified at a total of 13 City Council and Zoning Rewrite meetings. We worked with five City Councilors, the Burlington CEDO Office, and the Burlington Planning Department for 18 months. During that time and again the evening of the final vote, City Councilors commented that the power of the 2000 people VIA represents is a formidable force.

On Sunday, February 10, from 3 PM to 4 PM, at St. Paul's Cathedral on Cherry Street, VIA needs you to make that power visible by your presence in support of our work on affordable housing. The loss of 12 affordable units in the Westlake Development near the Cathedral and built under the old loophole is an example of what we hope can be prevented by the new Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance. To that end, VIA will be asking the City of Burlington to recommit its support to affordable housing at this public meeting. Further, we will ask representatives of the City to work with us in partnership to make the development process more transparent and accountable to the public at large. Your physical presence on February 10 will demonstrate the power of personal witness. Please plan to attend. For more information, call Pat Allen 864-9799 or Sally Conrad 658-1047.

Women in Transition

The 6 hour workshop will be led by Life and Career coach Marty Garrett. This interactive workshop will help you to find the courage, vision, and spirit to face the external changes in your life by making internal shifts. You will explore the three phases of transition: letting go, exploring the emptiness, and creating new possibilities. The event is planned for Saturday, February 9, 10 – 4. Bring \$10 to cover the cost of materials and a sandwich. We will supply nibbles and drinks. Sponsored by Adult Programs.

Nominating Committee

Your Nominating Committee is hard at work to fill next year's leadership positions. The resulting slate will be presented at our annual meeting in June. It has been observed that most successful leaders come from within the various existing committees that are responsible for the week-to-week operation of our Society's programs. Here is where we need your help. If social action, anti-racism, finance, religious education, membership, or any of the other operating committees interest you, please let us know, and we will help you connect with that group. And, if you would like to recommend someone, let us know that, too, and we will contact them. Please speak to one of us, or e-mail nominate@uusociety.org. Thank you for your help in keeping our Society strong. *Melissa Akey, Woody Fulton, Bill Klock, Dorothy Seale-Brown, Pat Allen, Bill Suiter*

UU-UNO

Dear Members and Friends of the UU-UNO, The Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office is proud to invite you to attend our Annual Intergenerational Spring Seminar, entitled "Picking Up the Pieces: Building a Culture of Peace." This thought-provoking three-day seminar, taking place at United Nations Headquarters and its neighborhood in New York City from April 3-5, will address international efforts to achieve sustainable peace and discuss the importance of peace in the Unitarian Universalist faith.

At the 2008 Intergenerational Spring Seminar you will:

- * Meet inspiring individuals from the UN, NGO, and UU community who are doing important work to make the world's most vulnerable populations more secure.
- * Examine case studies of peacebuilding efforts in places such as Burundi, Kosovo, Sudan, and Sierra Leone.
- * Explore with each other the role that peace plays in your own faith.
- * Develop an action plan for continuing the work of building a culture of peace.
- * Share an enjoyable and energetic experience with UU friends in one of the world's most exciting cities.

Application and registration materials are available for download on our website at www.uu-uno.org. There are separate forms for youth, adults, and youth advisors, so please be careful to fill out the correct forms. Youth and youth advisors must complete and submit their registration & application package as early as possible. Please note the deadline for application is February 15, 2008. Register now while there are still spaces!

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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Now Let Us Sing!

The 2008-2009 UU Stewardship Campaign kicks off on Saturday, February 16 at 7:30 p.m. with a free concert featuring UU musician and songwriter Jim Scott. As a former member of the Paul Winter Consort, Jim is a co-creator of the beautiful *Missa Gaia* or Earth Mass; as a leader in the Seventh Principle Project, he helped develop the Green Sanctuary curriculum to foster more eco-conscious churches. Over the course of his career, he has inspired and entertained audiences of all ages in hundreds of UU congregations. Childcare for infants and toddlers will be provided. Please plan to bring the whole family for an evening that will make you want to clap your hands and shout for this liberal faith of ours!

Our Stewardship Goal is to raise \$412,000 in pledges, a twelve percent increase over the current year. This will enable us to hire a full time Assistant Minister (Roddy, who is retiring, is only three-quarter time), add a much needed youth advisor and lead preschool teachers to our staff, redesign our website, and train new facilitators to expand our Small Group Ministry program. Your participation is vital. Please do your Fair Share.

You can make your pledge at the Jim Scott Musicale on February 16, or on any Sunday morning through our concluding Celebration on March 16. Thank you! *The Stewardship Committee, John Byer and Debby Bergh, Co-Chairs*

Volunteers Needed

Looking for a meaningful volunteer opportunity in the new year? Become an Everybody Wins mentor at Edmunds Elementary School. Everybody Wins is a program which pairs adult volunteers with an individual student for an hour of reading and conversation once a week during the student's lunch period. There is a waiting list of students who are looking forward to reading with a caring adult. Volunteers are needed on Fridays starting in January. For more information, please contact Everybody Wins school coordinator, Valerie Hamlin, at 316-6187 or vhamlin@bsdvt.org. FUUS member, Ellen Wollensack, is a volunteer in the program and would welcome your questions, as well.

First Unitarian Universalist Society **Summary of Cash Activity** **December 1, 2007 - December 31, 2007**

Cash Balance as of 12/01/07		\$37,388.32
Income	\$56,256.74	
Pledge Payments	\$57,048.92	
Transfers	\$ 7,299.14	
Total Additions		\$120,604.80
Expenses	\$ 1,116.47	
Invoices & Payroll	\$66,348.97	
Total Subtractions		\$67,465.44
Cash Balance as of 12/31/07		\$90,527.68
