



January 31, 2010 -  
February 14, 2010

**Calendar**

**Sunday, January 31**

- 9:30 Care Network Ministry
- 10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
- 11:00 Worship Service
- 12:30 New UU Class
- 12:30 Reducing & Eliminating Nuclear Weapons
- 7:30 Talk: Iranian & American

**Monday, February 1**

- \*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)
- 9:00 Newsletter Deadline
- 10:00 Mondays at Martha's SGM

**Tuesday, January 19**

- 10:00 Seekers Small Group Ministry
- 12:00 Staff lunch

**Wednesday, January 20**

- 9:00 Staff Meeting
- 7:00 Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, January 21**

- 9:00 Newsletter Crew
- 5:20 UUBF Zen Meditation

**Friday, January 22**

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

**Saturday, January 23**

- 10:00 Wise Together SGM

**Sunday, January 24**

- 9:00 Worship Service
- 10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
- 11:00 Worship Service
- 7:00 Talk: It's All Greek to Me

**Monday, January 25**

- \*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)
- 7:00 Council Meeting

**Tuesday, January 26**

- 10:00 Wisdom Sprouts SGM
- 12:00 Staff Lunch
- 7:00 Executive Board Meeting

**Wednesday, January 27**

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

**Thursday, January 28**

- 5:20 UUBF Zen Meditation

**Friday, January 29**

- 5:00 200th Anniversary Celebration
- 6:30 AA Men's Group

**Saturday, January 30**

**Sunday, January 31**

- 9:00 Worship Service
- 10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
- 11:00 Worship Service
- 3:00 Family Talent Cabaret

**Current Notes**

It's 2010 and tax time is rolling around. U.S. taxpayers will be looking for year-end statements in the mail, tallying totals, putting papers together and, some of us, heading to the tax preparer's place.

My tax preparer brings order to my convoluted financial world. She has a lovely office with windows looking out to the backyard and woods beyond - which is good, because I sometimes need to look out into those woods and take a wry, deep, calming breath during our meetings.

I wouldn't mind paying taxes if I could choose what to pay for. I have often thought it could be a good idea to give taxpayers a multiple choice option on our tax forms, e.g., "Put an X next to the items you would like to fund with your taxes; please indicate percentage." According to the War Resistor's League, 54% of federal tax dollars go to the military; our country's military budget is equal to the next 15 countries' military spending combined. This does not reflect my values.

I admire those with the courage to withhold their taxes, even to suffering arrest, in support of peaceful values. I don't have their courage; I pay to fund things I don't necessarily believe in. This is a quandary.

I wonder, if U.S. taxpayers had a choice as simple and direct as check marks next to potential recipient programs on our tax forms, what might those categories be? Education, transportation, clean energy, national parks, the arts, a Department of Peace, libraries - so many possibilities. Some Americans would propose categories I personally do not support, and vice versa. We would need ground rules regarding longevity of support and the number of possible categories in a given year. Still, if the people had a straightforward choice, I have a glimmer of confidence that the majority of taxpayers would choose to fund life-enhancing programs. I'll say a prayer for that as I heave a deep sigh, sign forms, write checks, and gaze into my tax preparer's woods again in 2010.

Blessings,

**Elaine**

**Upcoming Sundays**

**January Worship Theme:  
Time**

Time is a companion, a swift river, a creeping increment of measure, sometimes a seeming enemy, sometimes a source of healing: whatever our relation to time, time marches on with or without our awareness. Or does it? What of those moments when the light and sensation of eternity - timelessness - floods our being? *"Time is an illusion. Lunchtime doubly so."* - Douglas Adams

**Sunday, January 17, 9am & 11 am**

**"Re-Segregating America?"** With the election of America's first African American President, many believe "the Dream" of full equality has been realized. Yet harsh disparities separating whites and blacks persist in education, criminal justice, health care, and income. This morning, in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday, Gary reflects on our commitment to creating a more equitable future for all citizens. A special collection will benefit our Anti-Racism Action Committee's school grant program, providing funding for classroom projects in Chittenden and Franklin Counties that enhance multicultural understanding, with 1/3 of the funds raised supporting denominational anti-racism initiatives in the UUA. Please make checks payable to the First UU Society, marked "ARAC."

**Sunday, January 24, 9am & 11am**

**"Musing upon Time"** Exploration of the theme of Time, guided by essayist, playwright and social activist J. B. Priestley, and others. Reverend Elaine offers the reflection and the Women's Trio sings.

**Sunday, January 31, 9am & 11am**

**"A Faith for Our Time"** Two hundred years ago, on the 29th of January in 1810, a dedicated company of religious liberals signed the Articles of Association forming the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington. Kicking off the celebration of our Bicentennial, Gary puts the event within its New England context, where a spiritual and intellectual renaissance was underway that would mark a decisive break with pre-modern ways of thinking. Our Senior Choir will sing.

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**“Message From Martha” will return next month.**

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## Beginning Our Third Century!

January 2010 heralds the 200th birthday of the First UU of Burlington and the beginning of our third century. Joining the First UU Legacy Society is a way to ensure our meetinghouse and congregation persist long after our own individual lives are finished. We are grateful to past generations who have created and sustained our liberal community. Now it's our opportunity to pick up the torch. Planned Giving Committee members will continue to make initial visits to prospective Legacy Society members through January. If you would like to be contacted, please call or e-mail Sally Conrad (658-1047 or [dconrad@uvm.edu](mailto:dconrad@uvm.edu)).

## Family Cabaret/Talent Show!

The Religious Education Committee brings to you the first of a series of intergenerational social connection opportunities! Our winter event is a “Family Cabaret/Talent Show” scheduled for Sunday, January 31, from 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Let's share a potluck of finger food snacks while enjoying the secret talents of our members! Solo acts, children's acts, adult's (not adult!) acts, family acts...all are encouraged! Think silly & serious, music, poetry, humor, dance, drama, and all other hard to describe talents! Please sign up your acts on the bulletin boards. Five minute maximum for each act. All ideas and forms of talent welcome!

## Loose Plate for Charity

On November 22, and November 29, 2009, our congregation pledged to contribute 50% of our Sunday Loose Plate Collection to JUMP (Joint Urban Ministry Project). I am proud to report that our congregation has sent a check to JUMP for \$598.25.

On December 6, and December 13, 2009 we pledged to contribute 50% of the loose plate collection to Kids on the Block Vermont. On these two dates we collected a total of \$1,133.73, and have sent them a check for \$566.86.

On January 17, and January 24, 2010, our collection will go to RU12? Community Center. On January 31, 2010 and February 7, 2010 we will be collecting for Spectrum One Stop. Please come prepared to be generous!

Our Loose Plate for charity program benefits non-profit agencies that are located in or serve residents of the Old North End of Burlington. If you would like to nominate an agency to receive our collection, please contact Christina Fulton at [xina@uusociety.org](mailto:xina@uusociety.org) or 862-5630 ext. 22.

## Many Thanks...

To all who helped make the Holiday Bazaar a success once again. The money raised will benefit the church (including our 200th celebration) as well as several community agencies. If you have suggestions for ways we might improve the Bazaar, please let us know. Our regular meeting time is at ten thirty the first Friday of the month. Watch the newsletter for more specific information. *The Women's Alliance*

## Book Group

You are invited to join us on Tuesday, February 9, at 7pm at the UU as we discuss Collapse, by Jared Diamond. Diamond examines why ancient societies, including the Anasazi of the American Southwest, and modern ones such as Rowanda, fall apart. He argues that an eco-meltdown is often the main catalyst when coupled with society's response to, or disregard of, the coming disaster. Diamond cites decline in living standards and depletion of natural resources as causes of economic catastrophe, which, when paired with environmental disasters may lead to potential devastation. *Gerry Quinlan*

## Council Meeting

Council members mark your calendar. Our next meeting is on January 25, 2010 at 7 PM at the First UU. Each Committee Chair, or a substitute, is responsible to attend. Agenda items can be sent to me.

*Adam Bortz, Council Chair*

## Super Successful Santa

In spite of the economy, the Socially Responsible Santa program this year was extremely successful and we were able to provide cash gifts to 32 families. Most of the recipients were single parents, some going back to school, others working two jobs and still struggling to make ends meet. There were also several refugee families who are coping with many struggles. I have heard from my community elves that people cried with joy when they opened their cards. Many, many thanks for your splendid generosity!

*Head Elf, Maggi Hayes*

## Donations of Cat & Dog Food

Are you aware that low-income folks in our area have no source for emergency food for their beloved pets? The FUUSB Animal Ministry team has undertaken an ongoing collection of dog and cat food to be distributed through the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf. Your donation of a carrying-size bag of kibble or cans of food could make it possible for a dog or cat to stay with their family instead of going into a shelter. Please consider contributing regularly. Place dog and cat food in or beside the purple bin located at the bottom of the main stairway to RE. Ruff, Meow, and Thank you!

## Animal Ministry

Here's what the Sands family does to care for animals near and far, as told by Jonathan Sands: "We used to be a foster home for the Burlington Humane Society. We would take care of a litter of kittens until they were ready to be adopted....Gwendolyn has been to the Humane Society summer camp twice....She had a birthday party where she asked friends to bring gifts for the Humane Society. Two summers ago, she and a friend decided to raise money for the Humane Society by making and selling dog treats. They donated their proceeds to the national Humane Society, specifically to stop puppy mills, which they educated people about....For a year now, we have been taking care of our neighbors' dog while they are in Nicaragua." If you are moved to share what YOU do for animals and ways others may help, please contact the Animal Ministry team via Rosanne Greco, [rosanne499@aol.com](mailto:rosanne499@aol.com) or Reverend Elaine.

## The Lasagna Dinner That Wasn't

Unfortunately, we were not able to offer our First Night Lasagna Dinner this year, since we did not have enough workers to do all the jobs. We did hear from lots of First Nighters who were very disappointed (we have a great reputation for really good food) and just want everyone to know that we will be back next year so mark your calendars now! *Maggi Hayes*

## Calling All Travelers

The Library Committee is having an RE Activity Sunday on February 21st. We want to highlight 4 countries with posters, food, objects, etc. The activity will include a story, song or game. If you would like to 'host' a country or help out in one of the countries, please contact Laura Nelson, [hestia9699@comcast.net](mailto:hestia9699@comcast.net) or 899-5830.

## Iranian and American

Please join our Anti-Racism Action Committee on Sunday evening, January 17th, as they host a conversation featuring our own UU members Ali Jafari and Chris Khamnei, who will be discussing their experiences as Iranians living in the United States---correcting misperceptions of the Muslim world, enhancing our appreciation of the complexity of inter-religious understanding, and going beneath the headlines into the realities of Iranian culture and society. Refreshments will be available, 7:30-9:00 p.m. in the Parlors. *Gary Kowalski*

## Next Newsletter Deadline

The next deadline is Monday, January 18, 2010 @9am covering events from January 31- February 14, 2010.

**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](mailto:wayne.schneider@uvm.edu)*

*Christina Fulton,  
Society Administrator*

*Kathleen Kemp,  
Administrative Assistant*

*Email: [office@uusociety.org](mailto:office@uusociety.org)  
Web Page: [www.uusociety.org](http://www.uusociety.org)*

## It's All Greek To Me

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about the Roots of Western Philosophy: It's been said that all Western philosophy consists of a series of footnotes to Plato and Aristotle. Professor Mark Usher, chair of the Classics Department at the University of Vermont, brings Socrates, Diogenes and other ancient thinkers to life, explaining their ideas and exploring their personality quirks in a delightful, easily accessible dialogue with Gary Kowalski, Sunday, January 24, 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the Parlors. Copies of Mark's wonderful children's books will be available for purchase.

## Couples Workshop

Gary Kowalski offers his annual pre-Valentine playshop for partners in committed relationships on Saturday, February 13th, from 9 am - 1:30 p.m. Participants will experience fun, non-threatening communication exercises designed to express affection and appreciation, develop mutual priorities, and set reciprocally satisfying goals. Whether you have been married for twenty five years or just started living together last summer, you and your relationship will benefit! A donation of \$20 per couple is requested to cover expenses of opening the meetinghouse; waivers are available for low income households. Please plan to bring a brown bag lunch. Registration will be limited to ten couples; please sign up on the bulletin board, or call Gary, to reserve your spot.

## Invitation to Membership

Are you searching for a spiritual home? Resolved in the New Year to deepen and find more discipline on your own religious path? How about starting the New Year with a more meaningful connection to our congregation? Please make an appointment with Gary Kowalski, Elaine Bomford or Martha Dallas to discuss pathways to membership in our Society. We welcome individuals of all beliefs and backgrounds, age sixteen or older, who can support our principles and mission: "to inspire spiritual growth, care for each other and our community, seek truth and act for justice."

## Reducing and Abolishing Nuclear Weapons

The Social Action and Denominational Affairs committees invite you to a forum on "Limiting, Reducing and the Imperative to Abolish Nuclear Weapons" on Sunday, January 17 at 12:30 PM in the Meeting House.

First UU member, Rosanne Greco, will draw on her extensive experience serving as a United States delegate on nuclear arms treaty negotiations as she focuses on limiting and reducing nuclear weapons. Peace activist Joseph Gainza, former leader of the American Friends Service Committee in Vermont and now an organizer with the new peace group, Vermont Action for Peace, will focus on the imperative of abolishing nuclear weapons.

This topic is especially timely in light of President Obama's call "for a world free of nuclear weapons." Voters in March Town Meetings all over Vermont will be asked to consider an article calling on the President to use the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference at the United Nations as an opportunity to begin negotiations for a mutually verifiable universal treaty for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

The US and Russia have almost concluded a treaty which reduces further the number of nuclear weapons in their arsenals. In February the Obama Administration will release its Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), essentially its plans for the US nuclear stockpile and policies for their possible use. Some experts have said the NPR does not mention abolition, only non-proliferation.

Will the president step back from his stated commitment to abolish all nuclear weapons? Can Vermont voters help strengthen the president's hand?

By supporting nuclear abolition in Town Meeting votes, can Vermonters make a national and even international impact on the worldwide movement toward nuclear disarmament? Come to the forum on January 17 to find out from two knowledgeable individuals.

Please put January 17 at 12:30 PM on your calendar, and join us for a lively discussion with Rosanne Greco and Joseph Gainza. Refreshments will be served and childcare available.

*David Conrad, Denominational Affairs*

## Spiritual Healing Circle Forming

Participate in a Healing Circle that uses the principles of: Johrei, Kabala, Tantra, Taoism, Qi Gong, Reiki, and Wicca. There will be lectures, discussions, and practical applications. Healing is for body, mind and spirit for ourselves, our loved ones and our community. All are welcome. Prior knowledge of the subjects is not a requirement. Call Assunta 802-399-2327 or e-mail her at [vascadegamma@yahoo.com](mailto:vascadegamma@yahoo.com) to reply. Blessed Be! Namaste! *Suzan St. John*

## Guest at Your Table and UUSC

In recent weeks, our Guest at Your Table boxes and *Stories of Hope* have taught us about real people engaged in the struggle for justice in the United States and around the world. It has also taught us about our power to change the world when we support our Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the many amazing people they partner with.

Before bringing back your Guest at Your Table box, be sure to complete the form on the box. And please convert your cash and coins to a check made out to "UUSC".

Contributions to Guest at Your Table--or checks sent directly to UUSC--make a tremendous difference. Here are a few examples:

- Your gift of \$30 pays for part of a multilingual brochure for Boston residents about the Color of Water campaign, which aims to adopt a human right to water in Boston, Mass.
- Your gift of \$40 buys materials for a woman in Northern Uganda to make her own groundnut sheller. A groundnut sheller helps to reduce women's workload and generate needed income for families, as residents return home after more than 20 years of war.
- Your gift of \$40 allows our partner Asia Pacific Research Network to publish a manual for lobbying and grassroots campaigning for efficient public water service. It also contributes to the campaign for water as a human right by holding governments accountable for providing water to the majority poor.
- Your gift of \$65 pays for a small business loan for a displaced woman in Kenya. Kakamega Grassroots Initiative organizes women displaced by the 2008 electoral violence into groups of 20 and provides them with training and small business loans. There is a very high rate of repayment and the first group of recipients is now on their second loan.

On behalf of UUSC, we thank and commend every person who has chosen to share his or her blessings through Guest at Your Table and UUSC.

*If you missed bringing back your Guest at Your Table box on January 3 or January 10, you can pass it to Dave Conrad, our UUSC local representative, as soon as you can. Thank you.*

*David Conrad, Denominational Affairs*

**First Unitarian Universalist Society**  
**152 Pearl Street**  
**Burlington, Vermont 05401**  
**(802)862-5630**  
**[www.uusociety.org](http://www.uusociety.org)**

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## **December Splinters from the Board**

*“Splinters” is a summary of the monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees. If you would like more detailed information from the meetings, minutes are published and can be found in a binder in the parlor.*

At the December meeting, the board continued work on refining key goals for the Society for the next 3 – 5 years. The work completed by the goals committee last year is being reviewed, aligned with our new mission statement and will be refined into final form.

Jonathan Sands gave an update on the Planned Giving Campaign. He reported that 29 members have attended recent workshops and there are now 34 members in the Legacy Society.

Bill West, treasurer, reported that our financial situation remains in a favorable position against budget. He reminded the board that, despite the hopeful signs, our budget included large cuts in several areas.

The recent Dining for Dollars and Service Auction was a huge success – raising over \$9,000 for the Society and was \$6,500 over budget. The board expressed its thanks and congratulations to the Fundraising Committee for its hard work on this effort.

Gary and Bill reported on a meeting with Spectrum Youth and Family Services whose representatives have a positive outlook on a possible partnership to establish a transitional housing facility in one of our rental properties.

Bill announced that he will be stepping down from the board in January to become co-chair of the Stewardship Committee. The board moved and passed the nomination of David Bardaglio to become treasurer effective January, 2010.

*Submitted by Bill West, Treasurer*

*The Board of Trustees meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 PM. Society members are welcome to attend.*

## **Property Corner**

David McFeeters, our Society Facilities Manager, and members of the Property Committee have been busy keeping our historical Meetinghouse maintained and repaired. Here are some of the projects we have recently completed, starting with this past summer:

1. The Meetinghouse front steps have been completely replaced and new railings have been installed.
2. The new outside doors have been painted, as has the upstairs gallery wall. Also, patches were painted in the vestibule.
3. The old arched windows in the front of the Meetinghouse were completely repaired. Basement windows have been replaced and rebuilt. New glass was installed in the way-side-pulpit.
4. A large dead maple tree in the Memorial Garden was taken down and is currently being transformed into a table for the Meetinghouse. The south west corner tree was also removed.
5. All trees and shrubs on the property have been trimmed. Some tree roots were aerated and tended. A landscaping plan is being developed and new plantings will follow.
6. Patching work has been done on the steeple copper fatigue to keep it watertight.
7. Leaves were raked and delivered to the Intervale Compost Center.

In the Spring, more repair work will be done on the steeple; a metal roof will be installed on the small basement entrance; a major slate roof repair is planned, and repairs will be continued on the front sidewalk. An electrical line will be run out to the Sunday way-side-pulpit, so it will be illuminated at night. Remodeling of the downstairs kitchen cabinets will begin in January, to be followed by a new gas range. The white countertop will be replaced in the upstairs kitchen along with some other improvements. We are hoping to install state-of-the-art thermostat controls throughout the Meetinghouse, so that we can program room heat to come on and off based on event schedules. Only three out of sixteen thermostats presently have programming features. New thermostat controls will allow us to save energy while providing timed, specific heating, as currently there is often either unnecessary heat or rooms are cold at the start of meetings.

*Tom Patterson, Property Committee Member*

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