



March 23, 2008 -
April 5, 2008

Calendar

Sunday, March 23

9:00 Worship Service
10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
11:00 Worship Service

Monday, March 24

***** Zen (Call office for time.)
9:30 Joyful Parenting SGM

Tuesday, March 25

10:00 Small Group Ministry

Wednesday, March 26

9:00 Staff Meeting
7:00 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, March 27

***** Zen (Call office for time)
9:00 Newsletter Crew
12:00 Root Yoga Community Class
6:00 Mysticism Sm. Group Ministry

Friday, March 28

6:30 AA Men's Group

Saturday, March 29

4:00 RE Pizza and Game Night

Sunday, March 30

9:00 Worship Service
10:00 Women's Spirituality
11:00 Worship Service
12:15 6th Grade Fundraiser
12:30 VIA Local Org. Com. Meeting

Monday, March 31

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

Tuesday, April 1

10:00 Wisdom Wanderers
7:00 Executive Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 2

9:00 Staff Meeting
5:00 Gary's Committee on Ministry
6:30 RE Committee Meeting
7:00 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, April 3

***** Zen (Call office for time)
6:00 Practicing Your Faith SGM

Friday, April 4

10:30 Women's Alliance Meeting
6:30 AA Men's Group

Saturday, April 5

10:00 Women In Transition
6:00 YUUT Sleepover

VIA's LOC to Hold Meeting

The Local Organizing Committee for VIA is holding a meeting on Sunday, March 30 @ 12:30pm at the First UU Society. Planners are hopeful that you can attend. As usual, bagels and beverages will be served. Questions: call Pat Allen at 864-9799 or Nick Nixon at 859-9221.

In My Heart

Gary often attributes a saying of Pope John XXIII to me: "It takes many to be intelligent." I can't claim credit for the wisdom of these words, but I do subscribe to their truth in multiple ways. For example, it takes many to put together a meaningful worship service.

This is what happened the last Sunday in February. I was scheduled to preside. Then my husband Bill went into the hospital with pneumonia the preceding Monday. In the midst of my trying to pull the sermon together for the service, our administrator, Christina Fulton, arrived at the door of the Intensive Care Unit. She said, with a voice of authority, that I was not to worry. The Sunday service was covered. Even as I protested, I began to realize that something very special was happening.

Christina; David McFeeters, our facilities manager; and Martha Dallas, our Religious Education director, were already at work creating a service worthy of any community of faith. Come Sunday, as I sat with my son Tom, it seemed almost by design that I should be in the pew and the staff should be in the pulpit ministering to us all.

The selection of readings was inspired. From Bill's *Lively Garden Prayer Book* Christina read "Dogwood's Winter Dilemma," subtitled "We may never know what is most beautiful about ourselves," and an excerpt from Ira Byock's *The Four Things That Matter Most*. Both Martha and David's homilies received rave reviews. The different messages are still with me. When David spoke about the need for forgiveness in any relationship because of the inevitable conflict between two different people, heads nodded and hearts resonated. Then Martha shared her disarming theology about the word "God," old and worn from all the batting around it has received. "It's like an old wooden spoon," she said, "made by hand to serve a basic need to feed people. It's been used hard and daily." It works for her, plain and simple. It's part of what keeps her alive.

So often I've thought of how blest I am to be working with the rare individuals who make up our staff. Their beauty was especially evident in the worship service they prepared in my stead. I could not have been more grateful for their inspiration and loving support.

Roddy

Upcoming Sundays

March Worship Theme:

Religious Community

What communities have informed and sustained you on your spiritual quest? What are the marks of healthy and unhealthy communities? How does our individualistic tradition balance the need for independence and human connection? And what are our dreams and aspirations for our religious home?

Sunday, March 23, 9 & 11am

"The Green Blade Riseth" The weather may still say winter, but the equinox occurs and Easter arrives this week, invoking a celebration of spring and rebirth. There will be no Sunday School classes this morning. Instead, we have planned two identically inspiring intergenerational gatherings: music, poetry and ritual that will warm the spirit, whatever the thermometer may say.

Sunday, March 30, 9am & 11am

"Too Much To Bear" Headlines in the morning paper read "Cost of Iraq War Soars." In 2008, the 6th year of the war, the cost will be approximately \$12 billion a month. Sounds ominous in light of M. L. King's prophetic words: "A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death." Time is running out. This morning, designated as Justice Sunday, Roddy will wrestle with this issue in the light of faith.

April Worship Theme: Change

The British Unitarian and naturalist Charles Darwin wrote, *"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."* Change means disruption: when a relationship ends, when we consider a new job, or try to kick old habits. Sometimes change is the enemy, sometimes our best friend. What clues tell us when to hold onto and preserve our present situation and when to embrace transformation for the sake of a new, larger sense of self?

Sunday, April 6, 9am & 11:00 am

"Turning Points and Tipping Points" Change is the law of life (and death). But at moments, the steady beat of change takes on accelerated pace, like water that gradually heats or cools until undergoing a phase shift, becoming vapor or ice. Do institutions, cultures, societies have tipping points? Gary shares his reflections on this Membership Sunday; if you are interested in joining our congregation, please make an appointment to speak with Gary, Roddy or Martha, who will be happy to answer questions and welcome you to the Society.

Religious Education News

A couple weeks ago, Lucy and I took a vacation which included some downhill skiing. Since I had only skied downhill twice in my life, we took a beginner lesson and kept to the trails that read "easiest way down." On my first run down, my heart was pounding and my legs were trembling (this was *nothing* like the practice hill!). This trail had steep sections, and a few icy patches, not to mention other skiers whizzing by. Yikes!

As I recovered from that first run on my ride up the chairlift, I watched *tiny* kids dancing over moguls and zinging down black diamond trails. Moving with effortless grace, to them, skiing had become instinctive. While I had to deliberately direct mental instructions to my feet, my knees, my hips, and my center of gravity, these kiddos were riding with pure pleasure and automatic confidence: their brains, bodies, the snow, the slope, the air and the sky... all melding into one full, thrilling experience of downhill skiing.

How lucky these kids were to learn to ski at such a young age! Now it was truly *inside* them. They had it *down*. It was like a language that for them had become essential: one they'll never forget. These lucky kids were part of skiing families that had taught them well and brought them to the slopes again and again.

Being a UU is like being a skier. If you love it, you gotta learn it and practice it. You gotta come to church and surround yourself with UUs regularly. If you learn it as a child, the risks aren't so risky, and with regular practice, you gain a graceful fluency. With commitment and practice, UU values such as justice, compassion, inherent worthiness, freedom, democracy, respect, and peace become truly embodied. They become "no-brainers," *literally*.

Our UU kids, like the young skiers I watched, are *so lucky!* They get to start learning this faith when they're young... when their minds and spirits are open, supple, and daring! It's harder for those who come into UUism as adults. It can be scary and risky to try out a new kind of freedom of belief... a more comprehensive expression of love. Having real (and sometimes embarrassing!) "wipe outs" is all part of the learning.

But we've got each other for support and reassurance. Every week, we gather here to practice Unitarian Universalism. Most importantly, we've got UU kids to inspire us... the kids, who like those itty-bitty, graceful speed-demons I saw on the slopes, have simply "got it." In our love for this faith of ours, may we nurture them well and frequently, by giving our children every possible opportunity to practice!

Martha

Adult Programs

The Adult Programs committee needs new members or we may go out of business. About 10 years ago we saw a need and began to fill it. We invited people to come to us with programs that they would like to present and they did. We have sponsored presentations on such diverse topics as gardening, healthcare information, historical postcards, history of Rembrandt, and the upcoming Women in Transition. The book group and 2nd Saturday pot lucks have come from our committee and we have spun off the Fun, Frolic and Fellowship committee.

At this time we have a dilemma – other committees have filled some of the void and our dedicated members want to retire. We are seeking new members at this time. If you are interested please contact Jill Allen at 660-9316 or allenjillm@yahoo.com.

Book Discussion Group

Please join us for any or all of our discussions. On Tuesday, April 8 we will discuss Disgrace by J.M. Coetzee ("—Disgrace is not a hard or obscure book—it is, among other things, compulsively readable—but what it may well be is an authentically spiritual document, a lament for the soul of a disgraced century."—The New Yorker). We will meet at 7pm at the First UU Society. Please call Bud or Alison Etherton at 658-4126 with questions.

7th Annual UU Family Camping Trip

Summer will be here soon! Save the date for our UU family camping trip to Lake Elmore State Park . June 20, 21 & 22. This is an easy, informal, fun weekend with lots of opportunities for swimming, hiking, playing, and roasting marshmallows while building old and new friendships within our society. Sign up information is available on the RE welcome table downstairs. For more information contact Beth Griffin (802)865-1774 or Email beth@burlingtontelecom.net . This kid friendly weekend is a great kick off for our summer break. Please join us!

Easter Flowers

If you wish to remember someone on Easter Sunday by contributing to the Easter Flower Fund, please bring or send a check made out to The Women's Alliance to the U U Society office. Please include the name(s) of the person(s) you wish to remember and your name(s). Gifts to the Memorial Garden are appreciated, as well. The plants, used at the Easter Service, will be distributed to our homebound by members of the Care Network Ministry.

Please Turn In Your Pledge Now

By the time you receive this newsletter, our Stewardship Campaign (that began in mid-February) will have reached it's formal end. You have received letters, phone calls, and appeals from the pulpit. Many have responded generously, and we thank you for your support! But as of this writing, we are still about \$150,000 short of our financial goal of the \$412,000 needed to pay our staff, maintain our building, and educate our children. This Society depends on each and every member and friend to pledge—promptly and proportionately to their income. If you value this faith community, the people it serves and the ideals it represents, please do not delay. Turn in your pledge to the UU Office. Whether large or small, or your contribution is vitally needed!

The Stewardship Committee

New Social Band Concert Schedule

Social Band, Burlington's lively band of singers, presents "While I Labor: Songs of Work." In addition to traditional work songs from around the world, pieces include premieres of new works with classical, folk and rap influences by Vermont composers David Gunn, Colin McCaffrey, Jeremiah McLane, Thomas L. Read, and Pete Sutherland.

Saturday, March 29, 7:30pm at the Richmond Public Library;

Sunday, March 30, 4:00pm at the Unitarian Church in Montpelier;

Saturday, April 5, 7:30pm at the Unitarian Universalist Society in Burlington;

Sunday, April 6, singing workshop 3-5pm, concert 6:30pm at the East Craftsbury Presbyterian Church (sponsored by Sterling College, 802-586-7711 x166, www.sterlingcollege.edu/folkart.html)

Newsletter News

Next deadline: Monday, March 24, 2008 @9am covering April 6 - April 19, 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,
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*Christina Fulton,
Society Administrator*

*Kathleen Ingram,
Administrative Assistant*

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Web Page: www.uusociety.org*

Meals On Wheels Volunteers Needed

Our Society volunteers are responsible for supplying 8 drivers and 8 'runners' to deliver meals to the homebound on the first and fifth Wednesday, if there is a fifth, each month. We need help between 9:55 am and ~ 11:40 am. You will be paired with someone who knows the route. Please call Susan Alden to volunteer or with ?? at 863 – 6585, or susanalden1@verizon.net. Our next delivery dates are April 2, and 30, May 7, June 4, July 2, and 30 etc.

Meals "Thanks"

Meals on Wheels thanks our hardy members and friends for their outstanding efforts each month and especially on January 2 and 30, in spite of snow, sleet, icy walks and driveways. Our February and March deliveries were cancelled due to ice and snow.

Great gratitude to Jan Abbott, Rita and Adam Bortz, Ann T Brown, Chris Bullard, Eva Diner, Mary Gade, Sue Golden, Barbara Heeter, Deb Lane, Ann Livingston, Harriet Long, Keith Morgan, Nick Nixon, and Betty VanBuren. Substitutes include Harris Abbott, Ellen Beaudoin, Jane Campbell, Mike Donato, Linda Gross, Connie Kite, Janice Lange, Lynne Matthews, Shirley McLane, Sara Mikell, Anne Nixon, and Edith Sanderson.

Spring House Tour

The board is planning a house tour as a fundraiser. If you could offer your house for the tour or know any other interesting UUs houses that would participate, please Call Deborah DeLadurantaye at 999-3464 or e-mail to Arahanna@gmail.com.

ARC Gallery

Our new exhibit is: *Glimpses of Viet Nam*, a photographic journey by Tom and Becky Peterson. You will have until mid April to view this delightful and colorful visit to Viet Nam. Becky and Tom were there last summer for a family wedding. Enjoy.

Short Films Fest Planned

CineSlam, Vermont's GLBT Liberation Short Films Fest sponsored by The Kopkind Colony is a one day VIDEOVAPALOOZA-of-a-festival featuring a day full of fun, short films, music and barbecue and takes place Saturday June 14th at Tree Frog Farm Guilford, Vermont. (www.cineslam.com for more information)

Two Service Feedback Forums

This year has seen changes in our Two Service format: the children are present at both services, we have a new Music Director, the hour of worship has shifted slightly, the pulpit has moved—and more. What's working well? What would like you to see more (or less) of? At the behest of our Board, Linda Gross and Doug Facey will facilitate two forums to field your comments and suggestions on Sunday, April 6, right after each service. Childcare will be provided, so parents can participate. Let the Board know your thoughts!

Loose Plate for Charity

On February 24th and March 2nd, our congregation pledged to contribute 50% of our Sunday Loose Plate Collection to Outright Vermont. I am proud to report that our congregation will be sending a check to them for \$545.61. We can all be proud of the difference we're making in our community.

On April 6th and April 13th we will be collecting for Center City Little League. 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.

Women in Transition

A 6 hour workshop led by Life and Career coach Marty Garrett, Saturday, April 5, 10am – 4pm. 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. To sign up for this workshop, please call Marty at 865-3213. If you had signed up for this workshop in Feb., Marty should be calling you individually. Please bring a sandwich and \$10 to cover the cost of materials. The Adult Programs Committee is sponsoring this event and will supply nibbles and drinks.

Fresh Air Fund Hosts Needed

Are you looking for a way to turn your faith into action? Share up to two weeks of your summer with a child, and reap the rich rewards of adventure and newfound friendship. As a host family with The Fresh Air Fund, you will help a child experience the freedom of playing outdoors and the simple pleasures of life in your community.

By hosting a Fresh Air Fund child, you are answering a call made back in 1877 when Reverend Willard Parsons asked the families of his congregation to give children living in New York City tenements a brief respite. This tradition of caring continues today through The Fresh Air Fund's Friendly Town Program.

Every summer, thousands of children visit volunteer host families in rural and suburban communities. Fresh Air children on first-time visits are six to 12 years old. (Hosts may request the age and gender of their Fresh Air Fund visitor). Many families enjoy their young guest so much that they invite their Fresh Air child to return, year after year. There are no financial requirements for hosting a child, just a warm heart and home.

The gifts of hosting are mutual. "My host family taught me to be patient, accept other people, and try new things, even when I was afraid of them," said one Fresh Air child. "Our Fresh Air child makes our family appreciate running barefoot through the grass and looking at the stars, things we take for granted," a Fresh Air host explained.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer host family, please contact your local Fresh Air Fund Representative, Karen Allen at lawnmower72393@yahoo.com or by phone at (802)863-8424 (w), (802) 372-5324 (h) or The Fresh Air Fund at 1-800-367-0003. You can also visit the Web site at www.freshair.org.

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 Parlors for the 2nd Saturday Potluck on Saturday, April 12 at 6pm. Call Richard Kemp at 862-4418 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.

First Unitarian Universalist Society
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

UU 4th and 5th Graders Would Like to Lend a Helping Hand

The 4th and 5th grade students would like to lend their "helping hands" as part of our Stewardship/Community Service theme. We have a regular crew of about ten 9-11 year old children and two to three adults who are eager to make our theme come alive. We meet from 11:20 to 12:15 and would be happy to offer our services during that time. Here are some ideas of what we could do to help, but we also welcome your suggestions: run small errands, shop at City Market, prepare a small meal, clear a driveway, walk a dog, create and send greeting cards.

Please contact Martina Lemm at 878-0715 or m2lemm@verizon.net. You can also get in touch with us before service on Sundays, usually between 10:30 and 11:00.

JUMP Assisted 3000+ Local Households in 2007... Now JUMP Needs Our Help!

JUMP, the Joint Urban Ministry Project, needs your help to respond with care, compassion and practical, direct assistance to the more than 3,300 families and individuals we hope to assist during 2008. The people who came to JUMP for help in 2007 included:

1. A woman in cancer treatment seeking help to fill her gas tank for her next hospital appointment; she also needed toiletries, laundry soap and a bag of groceries to help care for her young children.
2. A single man, age 65, just home from rehabilitation following major surgery, facing the expenses of an unexpected move asked for help with utilities as he started back to his full time work schedule.
3. Our new refugee outreach collaboration with the Association of Africans Living in Vermont provided much needed assistance to more than 100 families living in poverty. At JUMP, our new neighbors found interpreters, significant help, books for their children and a warm welcome.

Each weekday morning at JUMP, twenty-six area congregations collaborate to offer a place of real help and hope for children and adults in our community. In 2007, we assisted 3300 families and individuals in crisis, a 3% increase over 2006 – a more than 25% increase since 2005.

Today, we hope that you can help by providing much needed financial support for the outreach ministry of JUMP. JUMP is participating in the Feinstein Foundation challenge, which is offering one million dollars in matching funds to be shared among anti-hunger agencies nationwide. All donations received by JUMP from March 1 to April 30, 2008, will receive a modest portion of the million dollar Feinstein Challenge Grant. ***In addition, \$3500 in donations will be matched, dollar for dollar, by an anonymous group of local donors who are interested in increasing giving to JUMP.***

Approximately 10.4% of Vermonters live at or below the poverty line. In the Burlington area, that number climbs to 20.0% of the population including 19% of those under the age of 18 and 10% of those 65 and older. JUMP is dedicated to helping fill this gap for our neighbors. We offer pastoral care, hospitality, referral and direct services including bus passes and vouchers for: food, laundry, gasoline, prescriptions and emergency utility grants that prevented more than 180 utility shut-offs in 2007. We also provide valuable donated items including food, eggs, toiletries, laundry detergent, household cleaning supplies, vouchers for clothing at two church thrift shops, baby formula and diapers.

With needs growing, we need your donation to respond fully. The more you give, the more matching money JUMP will receive from the Feinstein Foundation and from our local donors. We hope to raise \$15,000. All donations received by April 30, 2008 will count toward our challenge grant. Please use the form enclosed and send your donation to: JUMP, 38 S. Winooski Ave., Burlington, VT 05401, or contribute directly through your congregation, marking your donation for JUMP and this special challenge. All donations are tax deductible. Your generous gift will be greatly appreciated! Thank you. *Bronwyn Rider and Elizabeth Dreibelbis, On Behalf of the JUMP Board of Directors*