



The First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington, Vermont  
*“An Intentionally Diverse Community”*

April 8, 2007 -  
 April 21, 2007

**Calendar**

**Sunday, April 8**

- 8:45 Family Sing
- 9:00 Worship Service
- 9:00 Adult Programs Committee
- 10:00 Women’s Spirituality Group
- 10:30 Children’s Choir Rehearsal
- 11:00 RE Worship
- 11:15 Worship Service

**Monday, April 9**

- \*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)
- 9:30 Joyful Parenting SGM
- 6:00 Yoga

**Tuesday, April 10**

- 10:00 Small Group Ministry
- 5:30 Property Committee
- 7:00 Book Discussion Group

**Wednesday, April 11**

- 9:00 Staff Meeting
- 4:30 Roddy’s Com. on Ministry
- 6:15 Music Committee Meeting
- 6:30 Practicing Your Faith
- 7:30 Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, April 12**

- \*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)
- 9:00 Newsletter Crew
- 10:00 SGM Steering Committee
- 6:30 Adv. Directives for Healthcare

**Friday, April 13**

- 6:30 AA Men’s Group
- 7:00 Blackwater Author Talk

**Saturday, April 14**

- 8:00 Stefan Jonassen’s Visit
- 6:00 Second Saturday Supper

**Sunday, April 15**

- 8:45 Family Sing
- 9:00 Worship Service
- 9:15 Lay Ministry Committee
- 10:00 Women’s Spirituality Group
- 10:30 Children’s Choir Rehearsal
- 11:00 RE Worship
- 12:15 Nominating Committee
- 12:30 Social Action Forum
- 12:30 Anti-Racism Action Com.
- 12:30 LGBTQQI Potluck and Event

**Monday, April 16**

- \*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)
- 6:00 Yoga

**Tuesday, April 17**

- 10:00 Wisdom Wanderers
- 6:00 RE Committee Meeting
- 7:00 Board Meeting

**Wednesday, April 18**

- 9:00 Staff Meeting
- 5:30 Mysticism SGM
- 7:30 Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, April 19**

- \*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)
- 1:00 Fun & Fellowship Committee
- 6:30 Feminist Theologies SGM

**Friday, April 20**

- 6:30 AA Men’s Group

**Saturday, April 21**

- 9:00 New UU Program
- 5:00 Burlington UU Circle

**On My Mind**

The papers are full of novel ideas for combating global warming. My favorite is shooting gazillions of umbrellas into space that would unfurl in low earth orbit. The problem is that every umbrella I’ve ever owned has tended to fall apart pretty fast. Either the bumble won’t shoot, or the nylon rips off, so you’ve got a worthless rag whipping around the metal stays of your parasol. My guess is that inter-planetary parasols won’t function any better than the Sears’ brand. Just another example of inappropriate technology.

What ever happened to clotheslines? Dori and I still have one, and it was a pleasure last week to put a full load of laundry outside to dry. Aside from a feisty red squirrel who occasionally nibbles holes in my drawers to gather cotton for his nest, there’s little that can go wrong. Because the line is strung between two pine trees, we’re providing habitat for birds. And with the wind working like a blower, the shirts almost never need ironing. Fortunately there are no beach umbrellas in space yet. My undies would never get dry.

My kids think I’m a crank, walking around turning off lights and turning down the thermostat. I think I’m just practicing those old-fashioned Yankee virtues of frugality and thrift.

Simplify, simplify! That was Thoreau’s maxim. But wasn’t he a pinko? Americans are almost never satisfied with an easy solution when a harder, more expensive one will do. NASA designed a zero-gravity pen for astronauts aboard the international space station. The Russians used a pencil. Now there’s talk of nuclear power making a come back. Never mind the radioactive waste. How else will we generate the kilowatts to run our toothbrushes?

Some scientists want to salt the oceans with boatloads of iron filings to suck up greenhouse gases. Others think we can bury CO2 underground, like an Exxon geologist who says, “We have the technology. All we have to do now is scale it up to a billion-ton global business.” Personally, I’m not sure the planet can stand another billion-ton global business. I think the Earth could use more clothespins.

**Gary**

**Upcoming Sundays**

**April Worship Theme:** Passion

A word that means both suffering and love, the source of life’s deepest disappointments and greatest satisfactions. What does it mean to live with passion? How is passion related to empathy and self-transcendence? *“Somewhere deep in the woods ,in the reckless seizure of spring ... I also know that other song, the sweet passion of one-ness.”* Mary Oliver

**Sunday, April 8, 9 & 11:15am**

**“Easter Sunday”** We are planning two services. At **9:00**, Martha and Gary present a family-friendly celebration of the season with reflections on “How Flowers Changed the World.” Dawna Hammers and the Children’s Choir will sing. At **11:15**, Gary reflects on Martin Luther King, the Lincoln Memorial and Marian Anderson’s famous Easter concert of 1939, pondering the passion theme of redemptive suffering, with Jack Austin and the adult choir. Nursery care is available at both services, but there will be no religious education classes.

**Sunday, April 15, 9 & 11:15am**

**“This Quickened Sense of Life”** Passion is not a word commonly associated with Unitarian Universalism. Indeed, a suspicion of the passions has been characteristic of our “reasonable religion,” even though our history is filled with the stories of many who, motivated by great passions, went on to accomplish great ends. Could it be that our sublimated passions are what keep us from being a more vital and vigorous faith today? “Great passion may give us this quickened sense of life,” wrote Walter Pater, “ecstasy and sorrow of love, the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested or otherwise, which comes naturally to many of us.” Rev. Stefan Jonasson, Director for Large Congregations with the UUA

**Sunday, April 22, 9 & 11:15am**

**“What Each Vermonter Can Do About Global Warming”** Wes Sanders will lead the 9:00 service. House Speaker Gaye Symington will speak at the 11:15 service with a talk-back to follow at 12:30.

**News from Habitat**

Call 872-8726 if you want to connect to people building homes for deserving people. Pounding nails to making snacks: we need you. One house is almost finished on Crowley St. A new one is starting on La Fountain. “Women Build” has fun plans too. Call and help us. (This note from Bill Cleary, music and contact guy: [bill@clearyworks.com](mailto:bill@clearyworks.com))

# Religious Education News

In a recent conversation with one of our preschool teachers, we discussed her decision to replace an Easter-related lesson about Jesus with one that emphasized the seasonal return of spring. She pointed out that this was the first time all year that the children would hear about Jesus. The prospect of introducing him to four-year-olds, in forty-five minutes with a story about his crucifixion seemed nuts.

Rather than attempt to pick a path through the dense, thorny thicket of Christian Easter, for many it's easier to reach beyond Jesus to touchstones of meaning revived by Neopagans in the celebration of Ostara, or "Egg Day" at the vernal equinox. Similarly, many UU's smile in satisfaction to learn that the holiday of Easter derives its name from the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring, "Eostre."

While I support this teacher's decision, I would also suggest that Easter presents an opportunity for UU's to engage in perhaps the trickiest, stickiest story of our heritage. We have a responsibility to teach our children *UU beliefs about Jesus* because the wider culture is washing them in "lessons" about Easter over which we have little control. There are undoubtedly millions of American kids who believe that the "miracle" of Easter is that a giant bunny sneaks into your back yard (or your house), and hops around laying eggs of chocolate for you to find and gobble up. And surely, our children's Christian friends will impart bits and pieces of their understanding of the story of Jesus' trial, crucifixion, death, entombment, and miraculous ascension and return to earth. Few UU's, however, will swallow this story whole.

What *do* UU's believe about Jesus? A whole bunch of different things! Most importantly, though, what do YOU believe about Jesus? What do you know about the story of his death and resurrection? What, if anything, do you accept as fact about that story? More importantly, what meaning, if any, do you find in it? Honesty with ourselves about our thoughts and feelings around the Christian Easter story is the foundation for thoughtful, deliberate education of our children about this.

My own sense of it, having been raised Episcopalian, is riddled with questions, gaps, and contradictions. For example, basically I don't believe the resurrection story, yet I really miss the feeling of grand, joyous triumph in singing "Jesus Christ is Risen Today! Alleluia!" That's just a piece of my truth in this complex season. Claim a piece of your own truth, however unrefined and messy, and share it with some kids. It's an opportunity to affirm and engage the spring fever we're all feeling these days!

Martha

## Privatization of War

Come hear award-winning investigative journalist Jeremy Scahill, *Nation* columnist, Democracy Now! correspondent, and author of *Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army* (Nation Books), discuss the radical privatization of war and its threat to American democracy. Friday, April 13, 7:00pm, at the First Unitarian Universalist Society, at the top of Church St. in Burlington, VT.

The veil of secrecy is about to be lifted. Their mercenaries operate in Iraq, Afghanistan and within the US as the Bush administration's Praetorian Guard. Most people have never heard of Blackwater USA. For more information see [www.blackwaterbook.com](http://www.blackwaterbook.com).

This event is co-sponsored by the First Unitarian Universalist Society's Social Action Ministries and the Peace & Justice Center. Donations at the door. For inquiries about the event contact David Mickenberg at 863-6372 or [mickenberg@gmail.com](mailto:mickenberg@gmail.com).

## COTS Walk

It's time to plan for the 2007 COTS Walk, May 6th at 2pm! Registration is at 1:30. This is the 18th year that hundreds of individuals, families and teams will raise funds for COTS and walk the 3-mile route visiting COTS shelters and programs along the way. Last year, our fabulous Walk participants raised \$125,000 to support COTS programs and shelters! COTS would love to top that amount this year, but they need your help to do it! Please donate generously if a walker approaches you. For a walker's packet, contact Lynn Douglas 644-2197, [moonglow@pshift.com](mailto:moonglow@pshift.com)

UU COTS walkers will have a brown bag picnic between the Intergenerational Blessing of the Animals service and registration. Drinks and dessert and games will be provided. We will be making neckerchiefs stamped with chalices for the UU team! If weather permits we will be outside on the lawn. Please join us and walk to the WALK with your UU community.

## Advanced Directives for Healthcare

The Adult Programs Committee is pleased to sponsor Dorothy Seale-Brown as she provides information about advanced directives for healthcare. This event is scheduled for Thursday, April 12, from 6:30-8 pm at the UU meetinghouse.

## NH/VT District Meeting

Our new district executive Mary Higgins is the keynote speaker on Friday, April 13 and Saturday, April 14 in Concord, NH where UU's will gather to elect a new board (including our own Brian Haas, running for Vice President). The conference theme is "Where Have We Come From, Where Are We Going?" as delegates prepare to vote on a proposed merger with Maine. If you want to attend and represent our Society, please contact Gary. For more info, visit [www.nhvt.uua.org](http://www.nhvt.uua.org).

## Viva la VIA

For some people, Nancy Pelosi has been a household word for many years. People have relied on her voice as a pitch for sanity. Now, as Speaker of the House and third in line for the Presidency, she is well situated to affect change. Politics is not new to Nancy Pelosi for she grew up in a household where her father served in various elected positions including time as Baltimore's mayor.

According to an interview in MS Magazine, (Winter, '07), Nancy Pelosi's mother was no shrinking violet. The magazine quotes Pelosi as she speaks about her mother, "How can we teach children love and respect without giving them a place to live? ... My mother was a driving force. My mother was very committed and passionate about the issues - about the issues in the economy and housing ..." In truth, Pelosi's mother was a catalyst for the recognition of the needs in the community of Baltimore.

VIA, Vermont Interfaith Action, is similar in some ways to Pelosi's mother. Our UU local organizing committee, the LOC, has been actively researching and acting on affordable housing with officials at UVM, Burlington City, nonprofit housing developers, and other agencies bent on doing good works for people in the area of affordable housing. Our efforts are moving into surrounding communities. You may have heard about our "Road Show."

Eight faith-based congregations in Burlington are working to improve the quality of life for others in a variety of ways. The Sisters of Mercy are letting the powerful know that the working poor need SCHIPS, a health plan for poor working families and their children. SCHIPS is a federal program on the chopping block. Christ Church Presbyterian has researched the many needs of youth and are advocating that the Gosse Court Armory be a place for youth oriented activities. Ohavi Zedek Synagogue has held seminars regarding health, housing, and other issues for Seniors. Other congregations remain active and lend a hand when needed. For example the Cathedral of St. Paul's has joined us on our housing work.

We are all catalysts much the same way as Pelosi's mother. She made certain that her husband, the mayor, knew what needed to be done for the benefit of the citizens of Baltimore. VIA is bringing light to issues that need attention by those in power.

Would you like to learn more about VIA? Do you know that the President of the VIA Board of Directors is a UU? (Kathy Bonilla) The Treasurer of VIA's board is our own Lois Holbrook. Gary Kowalski is a Member at Large of the Board of Directors. One woman said, at a recent meeting: "I am tired of talking about what needs to be changed. I want to do something!" If you have that desire, then come, do something with us. Call the VIA office at 651-8889. The office can provide you with UU names who are active in VIA. They'd like to hear from you. Or, call Pat Allen at 864-9799 for more information. We need your help, your energy, and your goodwill. Thank you, *Pat Allen*

**First Unitarian Universalist  
Society**  
862-5630

*Gary Kowalski, Minister*

*Roddy O'Neil Cleary,  
Affiliate Minister*

*Brian Haas,  
Board President*

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## Won't You Be My Neighbor?

Do you dream of living in a neighborhood where you know all your neighbors, socialize and enjoy meals with them regularly, share resources, help one another and live green? Do you wish your children had friends nearby, with a friendly community to support you? Dreams do come true – Burlington Co-Housing is under construction and units are still available: 1, 2 and 3 bedroom flats, townhouses and a single family house. Many units are eligible for subsidies from Champlain Housing Trust. Located on East Avenue abutting Centennial Woods, we will have a common building with dining facilities, living room, play room and space for socializing and relaxing, as well as garden space and a playground. The best part is, we are a really fun group of people, including several UUers! Ready for occupancy this fall, 2007! Learn more at [www.bcoho.org](http://www.bcoho.org) and come to an informational meeting at the First UU Society on Sunday, April 29 at 12:30.

## New UU Class

If you are thinking of becoming a member of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington or would simply like to learn more about all things UU, you are invited to attend the next New UU class on Saturday, April 21, from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM in the Parlors. You'll have the opportunity to meet other people on the same journey and also hear from our ministers about UU history and other specifics about this Society. Child care will be available if requested in advance. Please sign up on the bulletin board or call Ginger Hobbs 865-9682.

## Interweave

## Date Change and Special Event

The April GLBTIQQA Interweave potluck will be the third Sunday, April 15, @12:30. At this April Interweave, there will be a creative activity after the potluck for those who wish to participate. We will be creating face masks (like one might wear to a masquerade ball) which will be used for decorating the sanctuary for the 20th Anniversary Coming Out Service in October, 2007. Materials will be provided. All are welcome.

## Easter Flowers

If you wish to remember someone on Easter Sunday by contributing to the Easter Flower Fund, please make checks out to "The Women's Alliance", marked "Easter Flowers" and send them to the UU Society office or mail to Ann Livingston, 300 Lake St, #301 Burlington, VT, 05401. 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.

## Invitation to Membership

I was talking with an R.E. mom last week. She teaches Sunday School. Her daughter is a regular attendee. And she serves on the Religious Education Committee. But she's not a member of the Society. "I guess I just never got around to it," she explained. Our congregation never pressures people to join. But sometimes I wonder if we shouldn't more pro-actively invite people to become full fledged stakeholders in our faith community. Life is too short to stay on the fringes. If you believe in our principles and enjoy our programs, why not give me a call? I'd look forward to answering any questions you might have and welcoming you to membership. I'll even buy you coffee.

Gary (862-5630 ex. 24)

## Planned Giving

Our Society received a check for \$4,119 last month from a UUA Charitable Gift Annuity established by my mother Tid Kowalski. She was a strong supporter not only of this congregation, but also of All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa and the larger denomination, all of which have become recipients of her generosity. Our Society has been fortunate, remembered over the years by individuals who made provision in their estates to support their chosen faith in death as in life. If you have questions about how to manage your financial planning in ways that will benefit not only you but also the institutions that will live on, please speak with Debby Bergh (985-3859). Thank you! Gary

## "Counter-Intuitive Wisdom for Large Congregations"

UUA Large Church Consultant Rev. Stefan Jonasson has visited the biggest, fastest-growing congregations in the country, from Mormons to Methodists, to distill the secrets of success for UU's who want to expand their faith into the wider world. Known for his quick wit and savvy insights into emerging trends of the twenty-first century, Stefan visits Burlington on Saturday evening, April 14th, to share his discoveries. Childcare will be provided from 7:30-9:00 p.m. to enable as many as possible to attend. All leaders and wannabe-leaders are especially encouraged at this free event. A Second Saturday Social Supper will precede Rev. Jonasson's talk, from 6:00-7:30 p.m. To reserve a place at the potluck, please contact Mark and Shanna Moyer at 316-4775.

## Anti-Racism News

House Bill 486 and its Senate form, Senate 131, address the weaknesses in the current School Harassment Law, widely seen as needing stronger enforcement requirements. At a meeting on March 21st, anti-racism committee co-chair Monica Sargent and several members of a state-wide interfaith anti-racism committee met with legislators including Senate Education Committee Chair Don Collins, to urge their support of a new anti-harassment law with teeth. On April 9th at 9am, the interfaith anti-racism committee will meet again to review progress and decide on next steps. Anyone interested in a stronger school harassment law needs to call the Sargent-at-Arms at 1-800-322-5616 and ask for Senator Don Collins. For additional information, call Monica Sargent at 863-5188 or Nini Worman at (802) 285-2201.

## For Whom the Bell Tolls

Thank you to Kit Gilleland who recently contributed \$3500 toward the repair of our bell. Kit writes, "Personally, I am thrilled to hear the bell ring again. It sounds dignified and reliable like our church building and our faith, but more than that it provides not a dull 'clunk' or a horrible electronic squeak, but a 'bell like' musical quality which lifts one's spirit toward the future with assurance. How bell makers achieve that tone is their secret but we are the lucky beneficiaries." We not only owe gratitude to Kit but to all those bell makers, known and unknown, who grace our world with acts of beauty and generosity.

*The Canvass Committee*

# First Unitarian Universalist Society

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[www.uusociety.org](http://www.uusociety.org)

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## February 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.*

David McFeeters, our UU property manager, presented an overview of a program, "New Dollars, New Partners", offered by Partners for Sacred Places. It assists churches in identifying the value of its facilities and how to increase their use by the local community. The board agreed to pursue the opportunity further to understand the specific benefits we might receive by participating in the program.

The board reviewed the first draft of next year's budget and discussed some of the cost challenges we will face, including continued funding of our two services program. More detailed reviews will take place over the next few months.

It was announced that Stefan Jonasson, UUA large church consultant, has agreed to visit the Society the weekend of April 13th – 15th. The board brain-stormed topics we would like to discuss with Stefan, including long term staffing, canvas planning, membership growth, religious education with two services, and capital campaign planning.

*The Board of Trustees meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 PM. Society members are welcome to attend.  
Bill West, FUUSB Trustee-at-Large*

## Stephen Kiernan to Speak

The Madison-Deane Initiative Presents: "End-of-Life Activism: Regaining Control While Vermont Falls Behind", presented by Stephen Kiernan, award winning journalist and author of the new book Last Rights: Rescuing the End of Life from the Medical System. This talk frames the problem and offers concrete solutions – all of which begin with people empowered to demand better care for themselves and their loved ones. The event is scheduled for Tuesday, April 10, 2007 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Doubletree Hotel, South Burlington. Please call 860-4419 for more information.

The Madison-Deane Initiative is a program of the Visiting Nurse Association's End-of-Life Care Services promoting quality end-of-life care through awareness, information and education for medical professionals, other care providers and the general public.

## First UU Society Silent Auction Donation Form

Day Sails & Dinners, Sporting goods, Jewelry, Art & Collectibles, Vehicles, Consulting Services ... Turn your treasures and talents into cash for our congregation's urgent needs. Items worth \$75 or more are especially appreciated. Please complete this donation form and return it to the UU office by Sunday, April 29 (actual items can be stored at the meetinghouse).

Name and Contact Information (include phone number and email address):

Description of Goods or Services and Minimum Bid (if any):

All donated items will be on display in the Parlors during the month of May, sold to the highest bidder at closing on Sunday, May 20, 12:30 p.m. Questions? Contact Auction Organizer Gary Kowalski, 862-5630 ex. 24.

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