



The First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington, Vermont
*"We gather to inspire spiritual growth, care for each other and our community,
 seek truth and act for justice."*

June 6, 2010 -
 Entire Summer

Calendar

Sunday, June 6

8:30RE Classroom Clean-Out
 10:00 Worship Service
 11:15 Annual Meeting

Monday, June 7

***** Zen (Call office for time)
 9:00 Mondays at Martha's
 3:00 UU Psi Meditation
 4:00 Creative Spirit SGM
 4:30 Celebration Committee
 5:30 YMAT Meeting

Tuesday, June 8

10:00 Sprouts SGM
 12:00 Staff Lunch
 5:30 Property Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 9

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

Thursday, June 10

10:00 SGM Steering Committee

Friday, June 11

5:00 UU Dungeons & Dragons
 6:30 AA Men's Group

Saturday, June 12

**200th Anniversary
 Celebration!**

10:00 Wise Together SGM

Sunday, June 13

11:00 Worship Service
 10:00 Women's Spirituality Group
 12:15 **200th Anniversary
 Celebration!**
 12:30 UU Burlington Animal Ministry

Monday, June 14

***** Zen (Call office for time)
 5:00 All Committee Night
 5:30 Membership Committee

Tuesday, June 15

10:00 Seekers SGM
 12:00 Staff Lunch
 6:00 Assistant Minister Relations
 Committee
 7:00 Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 16

9:00 Staff Meeting

Thursday, June 17

6:00 Practicing Your Faith SGM

Friday, June 18

6:30 AA Men's Group

Saturday, June 19

Sunday, June 20

10:00 Summer Worship Service

**Newsletter
 Publication**

Our bi-weekly publication goes on hiatus for the summer with this issue. Next year's deadline and crew schedule to be posted soon on our website: www.uusociety.org. The deadline for the first fall issue is Monday, August 23, 2009 @9am. Early submissions welcome. Have a wonderful summer!

Minister's Musings

by Olivia Holmes

Dear Members and Friends of FUUSB,

Gary has graciously invited me to write a column to introduce myself to you. I can only imagine how difficult it must be for all of you and for Gary to be saying good-bye after so many years of sharing life's joys and sorrows, after so many years of building your dreams of all this Society can be, together.

What first drew me to you was the reputation you and Gary have so carefully nurtured over the years. I did my homework preparing for interviews with your Interim Search Committee. Everyone said something to this effect, "Olivia, this is a great church. You are going to love it!"

Then I was impressed by the packet the Search Committee sent me: it highlights the mission and goals work you've been doing, the stewardship and planned giving work, the extraordinary variety of lifespan learning opportunities you offer, and the profound commitment you have to service beyond the church.

Then came the interviews. Your Search Committee asked all the right questions, and that was it. I knew I wanted to become your Interim Minister. I am deeply grateful to the Search Committee and the Board of Trustees for the faith they have placed in me in the call to your ministry.

Interim ministry is shared ministry, really. It is a time to recognize and honor the real grief many are feeling at the loss of a beloved minister. It is a time to acknowledge the fear or concern some feel as we enter the unknown together. As you celebrate 200 years of history, it is a time for discovering what you are most proud of through the years, as well as what you would most wish to do differently in the years to come.

For me it is also a special time of discovering and appreciating the many gifts each of you brings to this sacred community, which grows in depth and beauty because you come. You come to build, together, a sanctuary for the soul, a safe place for adults and children to explore that which is sacred, to discover principles to guide us all to be in right relation with ourselves, with one another, with the larger world, and with that which we call God or Goddess, by whatever name, however understood.

Daniel Wilds did an excellent job of introducing my professional background in his letter to the congregation. In addition to the work of interim ministry, I love to sing, garden, ski, sail, and I have a passion for designing and creating mahogany jigsaw puzzles. In 2007 I moved to Temple, NH, where I had found the house of my dreams; a little white cape with green shutters on a hill. I have become devoted to the community of friends and neighbors I have found here.

Soon I will be coming to Burlington to look for an apartment that will be home-away-from-home for me and my two cats, Winston and Wiley. It is with profound joy that I look forward to meeting all of you, and to beginning the work of ministry that we will share in the year to come. In faith, Olivia

Upcoming Sundays

**Sunday, June 6, 10am
 Youth Sunday!**

Sunday, June 13, 11am
"The Wheel of Life" (One Service Only)
 Gary introduced this annual celebration to our Society when he was settled as minister here in 1989. This morning, as we mark the universal transitions of birth, marriage, death and growth that keep our Society young, he will occupy the pulpit for the last time, another milestone in our congregation's journey through time. Our Senior Choir and Children's Choir will sing for this multi-generational event, followed by UU bicentennial festivities on the front lawn.

Blue Books

All Committee Chairs and Board Members: Please bring your Blue Book to the Annual Meeting on June 7. Updates and changes to the Blue Books are made during the summer so that they are ready to hand out to new Chairpersons in the fall. If you will not be at the Annual Meeting, please drop off your Blue Book in the main office as soon as possible. Thank you!

Everyone Loves a Parade!

Come help celebrate FUUSB's 200th year with a multigenerational parade down Church Street before the service on June 13th. Gather in the Community Room between 8:30-9:30 to prepare decorations, music and signs, eat breakfast goodies and march at 10:00. Don't miss the fun! Suzie DeBrosse, sdebrosse1@gmail.com, 658-1677.

Message From Martha

Last weekend our Sixth Graders went on their annual Boston Trip – an experiential foray into segments of our Unitarian and Universalist history rooted in Boston and surrounding areas.

Early Friday morning when we gathered, by my observation one or more members of the group were: sleepy, reserved, anxious, quietly curious, and (perhaps) excited. Two nights and three full days later, we returned to Burlington. "How was it?" parents asked as they pulled in to collect their children. When we chaperones reported that it was great, parents replied that they could tell just by looking at the kids. The shared experience together induced a blatant and wondrous creation: the kids had become a bonded group, laughing and playing with collective goofiness. They were tired, but did not want to separate and go home.

One of the trip rules was to keep activities inclusive. The first night, one child was listening to an iPod with earphones in the livingroom, while the others were playing together upstairs. I went up and suggested some of the kids invite the other child to come join them. After an initial exchange of "You do it." "...No, you do it," two of them kindly went and offered the invitation, which was instantly accepted. The lone child yanked out the earphones, hopped off the couch and skipped upstairs to join the silliness.

On the surface, this trip is to help kids "see" the historical circumstances and ideas that helped to shape our living tradition of Unitarian Universalism. Indeed, we sprinkled their fertile minds with many seeds in three days. With a combination of grace, hope, faith, and luck, some will one day sprout. Over the years, those sprouts may even flower, fruit, and ultimately bear seeds of their own.

The deeper reason for the trip, however, is to create that thing which was so obvious, yet ultimately inexplicable Sunday evening to the parents who had dropped off their children just days prior. Indeed we adults were fairly speechless, yet smile-filled, to witness the transformation upon our return.

Call it group bonding; call it the-whole-is-greater-than-the-sum-of-its-parts; call it *je ne sais quois...* I believe we were witnessing a face of the Sacred. Inclusivity, an essential assumption (or in our case, a rule!) was the key ingredient here.

As summer opens up, inviting us into its warmth and green profusions, let's be like newly bonded twelve-year-olds with one another: sunny, generous, open and full of life!

Martha Dallas,
Director of Religious Education

Celebrating Gary's Ministry

Sunday, July 4, an **old fashioned family picnic** will bring a fitting close to Gary Kowalski's ministry here in Burlington. We will see him off to Santa Fe with Fourth of July fare, including hot dogs (traditional and vegan), his favorite potato salad, chips, and watermelon. We will even have a seed spitting contest, so get the kids to practice up! Please bring a green salad, bean salad or dessert. We will provide the lemonade, hot dogs, buns and watermelon. We will set up a volleyball net, badminton, croquet, and maybe even toss a few water balloons to cool us off. The fun starts at noon, so plan to join us as we wish Gary the best. There will be a sign-up sheet available the next three Sundays to get an idea of attendance, or email picnic@fultonvt.net. Now, where are those old Frisbees, anyway?

July Services?

No...and Yes! After thoughtful conversation, a decision was made to take a breather this year from Sunday services during the month of July. A time-honored saying among Unitarian Universalist congregations which close during a portion of the summer is "God is at the beach." Most certainly! The source of mystery and wonder may be experienced at the beach, and it's a powerful place for renewal. Let our July services be "tuning in" to one another and to our community when we find ourselves, gratefully, at one beach or another. - Rev. Elaine

Volunteers Needed for Father-Child Visits

On Saturdays for about two hours, young children are able to visit with their Dads at the Chittenden Correctional Facility in South Burlington... IF there are two volunteers present to take the children on bathroom breaks (if needed). This is the volunteers' only task. But there are many rewards, the most heartwarming of which is watching the loving interaction between the fathers and their children. If you'd like to learn more about this rewarding opportunity, or would like to volunteer, please call Rosanne Greco (497-0711) or email her at rosanne499@aol.com.

Summer SAC Function

The Social Action Committee will hold its summer meeting on Saturday, August 21, 10:00am at the home of Maggi Hayes. We will have a potluck lunch, discuss plans for the following year and welcome new members with new ideas. Please contact Maggi, 878-4418 or mehayes@uvm.edu for more information and directions.

Pet Food Donations Needed

The UUs of Burlington Animal Ministry team is asking for pet food donations one more time. We take your donations to the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf for people in need, who are then able to feed their animal companions. Please try to be extra generous, as June 13th will be the last collection date this spring/summer. Because of the irregular church services in the summer and vacation schedules, the Animal Ministry members decided to cease solicitations of pet food until September. Of course, if anyone wishes to donate pet or people food, these may be taken directly to the Food Shelf during their normal weekday hours of operation. We hope to "see you in September." Contact Rosanne Greco at 497-0711 or rosanne499@aol.com with questions or comments.

UU Library to Close for the Summer

Once again, our UU Library will be closing for the summer, as we prepare for an exciting year ahead. The last day to check out books from our UU Library will be May 30, 2010. Please return all books to the Library by Sunday, June 13, 2010.

I have enjoyed serving you as UU Librarian, and wish to thank all those who have supported our Library within the past year. Have a great summer! I am already looking forward to re-connecting with everyone in the fall!

Sincerely,

Rebecca Anderson

Splinters from the Board's May Meeting

There were brief reports on the monthly budget, the Stewardship Campaign, and the Interim Minister.

In preparation for our Annual Meeting June 6, the majority of the meeting was over the budget. The Treasurer – David Bardaglio - presented to us the proposed budget. With a reported pledge shortfall of over 10% below the goal, reductions had to be made in what could be funded with that money. There was much discussion of where and why to make the decreases. Finally we ended up voting on what we call a proposed amended budget to present to you at the Annual Meeting.

Submitted by Adam Bortz, Council Chair

"Splinters" is a summery of the monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees. If you would like more detailed information, please see the published minutes, with other board reports, kept in a red binder in the Parlors.

First Unitarian Universalist
Society
862-5630

Gary Kowalski, Minister

Elaine Bomford,
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Linda Gross,
Board President

Martha Dallas, Director
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Summer Office Hours

During the summer we go down to a skeleton crew. Those of us that work through the summer like to take vacation time. Therefore, please note our reduced summer hours. For the most part, these are the hours that the building will be open. However, if you are making a special trip to the meeting house, please call ahead as there may be times when the staff is on vacation and the building closed. Beginning on Monday, June 21, the building will be open Monday through Thursday from 9am - 2pm. If you come during these hours and the door is locked, please ring the bell. If a staff person is alone in the building, they will keep the door locked. We return to normal business hours (M-Th, 8:30 - 4) on Monday, August 23.

NING and Facebook

About two years ago we tried to launch a Burlington UU Social Networking site on NING. The going has been slow and we find that not many people are using it. And now we find out that NING will soon be charging a fee for their services. So we will be closing down our NING site at the end of the church year. I am looking for a member of the Society who may be interested in getting us set up on Facebook, as I do think it is important for us to have a social networking venue, and many of us are already using Facebook. If you think you might be interested in taking on this project, please contact Christina at xina@uusociety.org.

Warning of the 2010 Annual Meeting

The members of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington are hereby warned of the Annual Meeting to be held at the meeting house at **11:15 AM on Sunday, June 6, 2010.**

Among other business items, we will be voting on a by-law change that reads "New budget items identified by congregation members must be submitted to the Board by April 30 of each year for consideration of inclusion on the agenda of the upcoming Annual Meeting." Please mark your calendars and set aside time to attend this meeting.

Legacy Society Exceeds Goal!

As of the middle of May, the Planned Giving Committee has exceeded its 2009-2010 goal of 50 members to establish the First UU Legacy Society. Our congregation is blessed by the individuals who plan to leave a bequest or life income gift to help insure the vitality of our liberal faith into the next century. This group of people have the foresight to perpetuate their love and support beyond their own lifetime.

In addition to three donors who wish to remain anonymous, founding members of the Legacy Society are: Jan Abbott, Susan and Peter Alden, Patricia Allen, Jessie and Eugene Ashley, Linda Ayer, Debby Bergh, Rita and Adam Bortz, Diane Bothfeld and Mary Peabody, Judy Brook, Sally and David Conrad, Gary DeCarolis, Marla Emery, Martha Fitzgerald and Ed Knight, Christina and Woody Fulton, Mary Gade, Roseanne Greco, Linda Gross, Merl Grossmeyer and Jerrold Packard, Susan and Brian Haas, Ginger Hobbs, Peggy and Beal Hyde, Nancy Knox and Thomas Porter, Gary Kowalski, Janice Lange, Ann Livingston, Donald Martin, Peggy Owen Sands and Jonathan Sands, Ruth and Proctor Page, Doro and Ethan Sims, Cherifa and Ken Swearingen, Beth Tolmie, William West and Daniel Wilds, Brenda Williamson.

Childcare for the 2010 Annual Meeting

There is only one service on June 6 which will be at 10:00 A.M. Since it is the annual youth service and there are no RE classes scheduled for that day, children ages Preschool and up will be with us in the Sanctuary for the full service. Nursery care, however, will be available for infants and toddlers. The Annual Meeting will start at 11:15 and child care and supervised activities for older children will be available. If you will need childcare during the Annual Meeting, please bring your children to the Nursery after the service and check in with childcare staff who will need to know the names and ages of children in their care. They will also tell you where supervised activities will take place. The Annual Meeting will start in the Sanctuary promptly at 11:15. Questions? Call Linda Gross, 865-0038, or Martha Dallas at 862-5630, ext. 28.

2010 Summer Services

All Summer Services begin at 10 a.m. Childcare will be available.

June 20, "Father's Day" Would you like to share fathering experiences you've had with your children or your father? Stephen Rainville (343-9546 or stephen@stephenandburns.com) is coordinating this service.

June 27, "Summer Music and Poetry" Have you written a poem or short prose piece you'd like to share? How about reading one of your favorite summer poems? Do you play a musical instrument or sing? Welcome summer by sharing your writing, reading or musical talent. Bridget Meyer, coordinator, bmeyer1038@aol.com.

No Services in July. See article elsewhere in this newsletter.

Pianist Joe Pepper will be the August musician. He'll play our beautifully sonorous, newly-acquired piano for Sunday services and be on hand with music for the Open Houses.

August 1, "Birdology, Take Two" In 2007, Rev. Elaine coined a word, "Birdology" (def. the practice of perceiving the divinity of creation through paying attention to birds) and preached a sermon about it. Nature writer Sy Montgomery attended the service, became enamored with the word, and entitled her new book "Birdology." Elaine reprises her "Birdology" service in the light of Sy's birdological insights.

August 8, "Acceptance: Our Key Determination Regarding Life"

Do we or don't we? Reality cares not which, but the joy of life depends on our answer. First UU Society member Ken Swearingen shares his reflections.

August 15, "Wild Fruits: Thoreau's Last Manuscript" "In wildness is the preservation of the world," wrote Henry David Thoreau. In Wild Fruits, his rediscovered last manuscript published in 2000, Thoreau set out to fulfill the task he considered his life's work: "...to watch for, describe, all the divine features which I detect in Nature." UU Keith Penniman, who holds a Master's degree in Theological Studies from Boston University, reads selections from Wild Fruits and reflects on Thoreau's conservationist message.

If you'd like to coordinate a Summer Service or want more information, contact Bridget Meyer at 879-5409 or email bmeyer1038@aol.com.

August 22 & August 29,

"Open House" Join us for a free-flowing morning for inquirers and newcomers, members and long time friends. An informal discussion of Unitarian Universalist Principles and Sources, a tour of the historic meetinghouse, music and meditation, refreshments and conversation in the Parlor. Hosted by Rev. Elaine Bomford, Martha Dallas, Director of Religious Education, and FUUSB members.

First Unitarian Universalist Society
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Stewardship Campaign Update

As we tally the final pledges, the stewardship committee reports that our campaign raised \$427,000 in pledges this year. The results were a modest increase over last year's \$420,000 but fell \$35,000 short of the amount needed to balance the 2010-2011 budget.

Although it was disappointing that we did not reach our goal, a breakdown of our pledge results tells a very positive story. The number of households that continue to pledge year over year has been steadily increasing for the past 3 years: from 277 pledge units and \$338,000 in 2008 to 296 units and \$410,000 in 2010. Also, we noted that the negative impact from households that stop pledging to our Society dropped by \$9,000 - a 22.5% decrease over last year.

Other positive results (compared to 2009):

- Average pledge increased to \$1,281 from \$1,120, a 14.4% improvement
- Median pledge increased to \$780 from \$610
- Households that increased their pledge over the prior year: 57% vs 48% in 2009

So, we have many reasons to celebrate the generosity and support of our community - a big THANK YOU goes out to all !

What appears to be the main reason for our shortfall is the reduced amount coming from new members & restarting pledge units. New / restarted pledges accounted for just \$16,000 this year- down from \$46,000 last year. This difference is almost equal to our budget shortfall. The committee will be analyzing this data to understand the reasons for this drop and will present its findings to the board for their consideration.

The stewardship committee extends its gratitude to the 30+ members of our community that helped with our events, provided inspirational reflections at our services, and made follow-up phone calls with households. A special thank you to Christina Fulton, Kathleen Kemp, Elaine Bomford and Gary Kowalski for their support and guidance. *Your Stewardship Committee*

Glebe Land Coffeehouse Takes a Break

Anyone who attended one of the first four Glebe Land Coffeehouse sessions in the UU Parlors over the past few months knows that the music, the people, and the food were all delicious. If you missed out, you may want to know that this opportunity for sharing acoustic music will start up again in the fall. Watch for notices in future newsletters about the start up date.

The Glebe Land Coffeehouse has been occurring on the fourth Friday of each month and is an opportunity for musicians and their friends to gather in a comfortable living-room-like setting to share original and favorite songs and instrumental music.

A nominal donation is collected for admission and refreshments and the proceeds go to local non-profit organizations. The four past sessions raised a total of over \$500 for VIA and JUMP. Thank you to all who contributed time to planning and making these sessions possible. If you would like to know more about connecting with this growing circle of musical friends, contact Brian Haas (658-4747 ; bhaas@viscc.com) or Michael Oman (899-3146; MFO337@aol.com). Have a great summer and we'll see you in the fall at the Glebe Land!

The Big Payoff!

A huge Thank You to each and every one of you who have been paying on your pledge this year! As the fiscal year draws to a close, we rely on those pledges being paid in full to meet our budget obligations. At this point, 30% of you are current on your pledge payments. That means that the other 70% have fallen behind or haven't even begun to pay on this year's pledge. Please check your records and see if you need to catch up. Please contact Christina at xina@uusociety.org or 802-862-5630 ext. 22 if you'd like to talk about your pledge.

Champlain Valley Folk Festival

The Champlain Valley Folk Festival will be held at the Burlington waterfront this year on July 30, 31 and Aug 1, 2010. The folk festival has always provided housing for its performers in private homes near the festival site. With the change in location this year, we will need to recruit new host homes for our performers. Each home that hosts a performer or performers receives two free passes for the entire weekend of the festival. Hosts are only required/expected to provide a bed and breakfast each morning to the visiting performer or performers. If you are interested in this great opportunity to meet some really nice people and attend the folk festival free, please contact me for further information. Deb Wright, wrightdebby@hotmail.com
