



November 30, 2008 -  
December 13, 2008

## Calendar

### Sunday, November 30

9:00 Worship Service  
11:00 Worship Service  
12:30 UUSC Forum/Talkback  
12:30 VIA LOC Meeting  
7:00 Young Adult BYOT

### Monday, December 1

\*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)  
All Day Holiday Bazaar Set Up  
9:00 Newsletter deadline  
7:00 Grief Group

### Tuesday, December 2

All Day Holiday Bazaar Set Up  
12:00 Staff Lunch  
4:30 Voices From Chernobyl  
6:30 Knitting Group  
7:00 Executive Board Meeting

### Wednesday, December 3

All Day Holiday Bazaar Set Up  
9:00 Staff Meeting  
6:30 RE Committee Meeting  
7:00 Choir Rehearsal  
7:00 American Humanist Assoc.

### Thursday, December 4

All Day Holiday Bazaar Set Up  
9:00 Newsletter Crew

### Friday, December 5

All Day Holiday Bazaar Set Up  
6:30 AA Men's Group

### Saturday, December 6

All Day Holiday Bazaar

### Sunday, December 7

#### Socially Responsible Santa Sunday

9:00 Worship Service  
10:00 Women's Spirituality Group  
11:00 Worship Service  
12:30 UFETA Meeting  
7:00 Community Sing & Reception

### Monday, December 8

\*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time.)  
5:00 All Committee Night  
7:00 Grief Group

### Tuesday, December 9

10:00 Wisdom Wanderers  
12:00 Staff Lunch  
5:30 Property Committee Meeting  
6:00 Assist. Minister Relations Com.  
7:00 Book Discussion Group

### Wednesday, December 10

9:00 Staff Meeting  
5:00 DRE Relations Committee  
6:15 Music Committee Meeting  
7:00 Choir Rehearsal

### Thursday, December 11

10:00 SGM Steering Committee  
7:00 Weatherization Workshop

### Friday, December 12

6:30 AA Men's Group

### Saturday, December 13

6:00 Second Saturday Potluck

## Got Used Toys?

To raise money for their Boston trip, 6th graders will be collecting used toys for resale at the Holiday Bazaar. Anything you have grown out of or want to circulate to some other lucky family, we'd be happy to take. Please functional toys only. We'll collect them after the service on the 30th or you may drop them off at the UU Society Monday-Thursday 12/1-12/4. You can also drop off at 107 Cherry Lane in the South End of Burlington. Thanks!  
Chip Patullo

## On My Mind

Barack Obama's experience as a faith-based community organizer reveals a lot about his leadership style.

When he was 24 years old, Obama got involved with *Gamaliel*, a network of churches and synagogues working for grassroots social change. He started meeting with congregations on Chicago's predominantly black, working-class south side. In Chicago politics, you usually needed back-room connections to get things done. Bosses ran the city. But community organizing, as taught by Chicago's Saul Alinsky (author of *Rules for Radicals*), had a bottom-up strategy: listen to people, help them identify their own self-interests, target winnable issues, hold public officials accountable.

During his three years as an organizer, Obama didn't achieve any revolutions. But he did help people build playgrounds, create after-school programs, clean up landfills, and remove dangerous asbestos from their neighborhoods. Working with both Protestants and Catholics, Obama learned to speak a language of values that accentuated commonalities rather than differences. He became a consensus-builder and pragmatist. He gained faith in the power of ordinary citizens to take control of their lives.

These lessons informed his campaign, offering a glimpse of what kind of President he'll be. And the power of faith-based community organizing that launched Obama toward the White House still works.

Our congregation is part of Vermont Interfaith Action, affiliated with a national network called PICO. Like *Gamaliel*, PICO connects thousands of congregations and millions of families across the country to promote people's basic interests in healthcare, shelter, education, and meaningful employment. Thanks to activism from folks like Sally and David Conrad, Don MacDonald, Mike Reed, and Kathy Bonilla, VIA has started achieving some victories in Burlington, improving zoning ordinances, winning increased funding for affordable housing and more. Not revolutionary changes maybe—but change we can believe in!

Don't expect hope to flow down from Washington now that the election's over. It still has to bubble up from below. Get involved with VIA! For when ordinary people start to lead, the leaders will have to follow.

**Gary**

## Upcoming Sundays

### November Worship Theme:

#### Compassion

Jesus said, "Be compassionate as God is compassionate." (Lk 6.27) The Dalai Lama has said, "If you want to be happy, practice compassion." And our own UU Principles recommend "justice, equity and compassion in human relations." But how do we balance the goal of mercy with the demand for justice? How do we avoid compassion fatigue? Can we really love everyone?

### Sunday, November 30 9 am & 11 am

#### "Fleecy Locks and Black Complexion"

These are words from a famous 1782 anti-slavery poem, but they found their way into Martin Luther King, Jr's first civil rights speech. That address to the Montgomery Improvement Association on December 5th, 1955 was unscripted, but we have it due to a recording by a local radio station. Charlie Clements, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's President and CEO, will reflect upon that speech and its relevance to the election of Barack Obama. Dr. Clements will hold a forum following the service at 12:30 for those who want to know more about the UUSC's work and mission.

### December Worship Theme:

#### Beginnings

What new being do you carry inside waiting to come to birth? What nova is shining on your horizon? What sacred gifts do you bear for a world in need of hope? *"Very early, I knew that the only object in life was to grow."* Margaret Fuller

### Sunday, December 7, 9 am & 11 am

#### "Darkness and Possibility"

A meditation upon the creative beauty of darkness.

### Sunday, December 14, 9 am & 11 am

#### "This I Believe"

An annual service that introduces us more fully and intimately to our co-congregants journey and beliefs. Today, the Worship Committee invites Mark Pendergrast and Peggy Owen Sands to speak.

## Grief Support Group

Loss can be lonely. Our culture has few rituals for expressing the mixture of sorrow, searching and re-integration that accompany the death of a loved one. Judy Brook and Gary Kowalski create a safe place to share feelings, memories and hopes during the difficult holiday season. If you have experienced the death of a friend or family member, we invite you to join us, Monday evenings in December. Call Judy (865-0557) or Gary (862-5630 ex. 24) if you would like to join us.



## Message from Martha In Memoriam



I'm a big proponent of experiential learning. Yes, we can learn when we are told something. We also learn more when we can watch, witness, and observe. But we learn the most, and the best by actually *doing*.

The month of November has been a great month for experiential learning about *democracy*, a leadership model that we as UUs hold dear, and which is expressed in our fifth UU Principle. Guided by the light of our own human conscience, we support one another to stand up and speak out for what we believe is true and right. And when it's election time, we get involved and we vote!

As a child, I remember my dad bringing my sisters and me to into the voting booth on Election Day. Where I lived, we had the big grey mechanical voting booths with the curtains and little levers by each candidate's name. We'd crowd into the booth with dad, and he'd lift us up and let us click the little levers next to the names of the people he wanted to vote for. Then, after he checked to make sure everyone he wanted was chosen, we got to pull down the big red lever at the end of the machine, dramatically locking in his slate of votes and simultaneously whipping open the curtains on the booth.

There's a tradition of teaching children about voting here at the UU too. Every Sunday, class groups in Preschool – 5th grade take a monetary collection called, "Magic Penny." Last spring, I asked families to have discussions at home about nonprofit organizations we should consider to receive our Magic Penny money. From these discussions, we received a large slate of nominees whose work we organized into four categories: People near us, People far away, the Earth, and Animals. On a recent Sunday, our UU children cast votes for organizations they felt should receive Magic Penny funds. We used a multi-voting process, in which children placed stickers next to the organizations of their choice. From this, we will determine "winners" in each of the four categories, then divide and donate the funds, which currently total approximately \$400.

As you might imagine, our Magic Penny voting process was a little "messy" around the edges... 40-50 children in the Community Room at each service, each with a handful of stickers, all with differing degrees of comprehension of the process; and with varying confidence in the choices they were making.... When we were done, there were stickers on faces, stickers on the floor, stickers wadded up in sticky little hands, yet many stickers stuck next to the names of organizations doing good in the world!

Our children are part of a true Magic when the pennies they drop in a can each week contribute to a sizeable sum; and the votes they cast as individuals contribute to a collective decision about who will receive their generosity. Their money becomes their will and power applied towards bettering the world. Now, that's democracy in action!

**Martha**

Paula Brownstein, a long time member of our congregation, died on October 23 in St. Albans. Paula was born on July 3, 1914, in Tibilisi in the country of Georgia. "*Hugging was her medicine and philosophy.*" Our condolences are with her son Mischul of Charlotte.

## Society Administrator Relations Committee

The committee held it's first monthly meeting for the church season on October 20th. The purpose of the committee is to act as a liaison and facilitate effective working relationships within the church so as to strengthen the quality of church administration. Two new members were welcomed, Julie Devins ([jmdevins@comcast.net](mailto:jmdevins@comcast.net)) and Elaine Sopchak ([esopchak@mac.com](mailto:esopchak@mac.com)). Two continuing members are Bill West ([bill.west@mac.com](mailto:bill.west@mac.com)) and Wallace Robinson ([zotober@yahoo.com](mailto:zotober@yahoo.com)). Please contact any of us with questions or concerns related to the work of this committee.

## Media Matters

Thanks to generous donations, our UU underwriting on North Country Public Radio (FM 88.1) now includes four weekly programs, *On Point* [Mondays at 11:19 a.m.], *Fresh Air* [Fridays at 12:15 p.m.] and *All Things Considered* [Saturdays at 5:38 p.m.] in addition to *Speaking of Faith* each Thursday. Broadcast across the Champlain Valley, each show carries the message, "*This program brought to you by the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington, nurturing the spirit, helping to heal our world, on-line at [uusociety.org](http://uusociety.org).*" If you listen to public radio and want to support quality news and music, please consider channeling your contributions through our office to keep us on the air. Donations accepted year round! Gary

## Spectrum Needs for the Chill Program

As many of you may know, Spectrum has declined the snow boards and clothing provided by Burton's Chill program as a part of the protest against Burton's decision to market a new snow board line with pornographic and self mutilation graphics. As a result, Alpine Shop has offered new snow boards from a different manufacturer. Spectrum is still in need of the following items: two Thule carriers, ski gloves, goggles, snow pants, ski jackets, long-johns, hats, helmets, thick socks and ski gloves (varied teen sizes). Also, blankets are needed for homeless youth on the wait list for their shelter. Any of these items that you can provide either new or used but in good condition are greatly appreciated. Contact Mark Redmond at 864-7423 or [mredmond@spectrumvt.org](mailto:mredmond@spectrumvt.org).

## VIA UU LOC Meeting

Thanks to Barack Obama's candidacy for the presidency, the world now knows what a community organizer is. Here in Vermont community organizing is happening at Vermont Interfaith Action. If you are interested in effecting change in our community, please join fellow UU's at our next Local Organizing Committee meeting scheduled for Sunday, November 30th after services at 12:30 p.m. Please contact Kathy Bonilla at 355-

8971 or via email at [kbonilla@drm.com](mailto:kbonilla@drm.com) if you have any questions.

## Next Newsletter

### Deadline...

Monday, December 1, @9am sharp, covering December 14 - December 27, 2008. Articles gratefully accepted before this deadline!

## COTS Phonathon

The Social Action Committee is organizing volunteers to help with the annual COTS Phonathon from 5:30-9:00pm on Wednesday, December 10. We'll be making calls to previous contributors who are happy to receive our calls and appreciate our efforts on behalf of those benefitting from their generosity. COTS will provide pizza and other goodies (chocolate) along with door prizes. Members of our UU Society have been doing this for years and can tell you its really a fun time and isn't difficult at all. If you're not comfortable making calls there are other helpful roles for you to fill that night as well. To volunteer please email Bruce Brown at [babrown@sover.net](mailto:babrown@sover.net) or leave a message at 899-3395.

## UU Knitters and Crocheters

As our Ministers Gary, and now Elaine, can attest during Sunday services we have several knitters in our midst! If you have a yen for yarn, I hope we can all meet to knit for fun or a cause! Bring your patterns and current projects to share with the group on Tuesday, December 2 at 6:30 pm. Please contact Donna Canniff, [herbivorecake@hotmail.com](mailto:herbivorecake@hotmail.com), if you are interested in being a part of this new group.

## Holiday Gift Idea

Need a meaningful holiday gift? In 2001 a collection of meditations and sermon excerpts written by Robert Senghas was published. Books from the second printing are still available! *Cycles of Reflection* will be sold at coffee hour on December 7, and 14. Bob Senghas donates all sales' proceeds to the First UU Society! You can support this fund-raising effort AND choose a gift that will give hours of comfort and challenge.

Julia Blake

## Thank You!

Heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to my parting and CD release party! Your love and support is precious to me and I will never forget it! Although I need to be closer to my real family now, I know I have a beautiful spiritual family in Vermont! I am very grateful and hope we keep in touch. For more info about my new CD: *One Spirit* by Dawna Hammers and the World Unity Choir, please go to [www.dawnahammers.net](http://www.dawnahammers.net) Half the proceeds go to UNICEF! Your support is greatly appreciated especially at this difficult financial time of unemployment and transition!

In spirit & song, Dawna

## Quilt Display

Aileen Chutter will be sharing an exhibit of her quilts {prize winning} at the Charlotte Senior Center December 1 - 5. The center is open from 9am - 4pm, Monday through Friday.

**First Unitarian Universalist  
Society**  
862-5630

*Gary Kowalski, Minister*

*Elaine Bomford,  
Assistant Minister*

*Jerrold Packard,  
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)

## Community Sing

Sunday, December 7, at 7pm, the annual Community Carol Sing will resound with songs of the Christmas season. The event will take place here at the First Unitarian Universalist Society. The choirs of The First Congregational Church, College Street Congregational Church, St. Joseph's Co-Cathedral, and the First Unitarian Universalist Society will each bring an anthem, and the audience will join in singing favorite Christmas carols. This family friendly event will be followed by a reception in the Parlors. For over 25 years, the various downtown churches have shared hosting the Carol Sing, and we look forward to welcoming all in the community for a fun evening of music. Bring the kids and join the fun!

## A UFETA Chapter is Born!

The First UU Society of Burlington is excited to announce the creation of a Unitarian Universalist for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (UFETA) chapter! Our first meeting was attended by an enthusiastic group who unanimously voted to create a UFETA chapter and elected Jacki Brewster as president. There are so many issues that need tending regarding animal protection, welfare, and rights that there is room for everyone. We hope that you'll join us on December 7th at 12:30 pm and be part of the creation of a community of compassion for animals. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact Jacki Brewster at: [curiousbrewster@yahoo.com](mailto:curiousbrewster@yahoo.com) or 802-540-0486.

## Want to Save Money & Energy this Winter?

The new Green Sanctuary Task Force presents a free "Button-Up" workshop on December 11, 7-9 pm in the Parlors. Chip Patullo, an energy efficiency aficionado of 27 years (and a member of our congregation active in RE), will lead you through air-sealing and insulation tips you can use in your own home. No talking-head spectacle here - a sample blower door test for air leakage, specific images of trouble areas in a home, and hands on materials available as part of the demonstration. You will have a chance to get your specific questions answered and will also find out what financial and technical resources are available to all people. Prizes will be offered, too, for answers to myth-busting questions. Mark the date and tell your neighbors! Open to the public.

*Wes Sanders and Chip Patullo*

## Author, Author!

UU Ricardo Johnson, assistant professor of educational leadership and policy studies at UVM, has published his first book *Resilience*. Subtitled, "Queer Professors from the Working Class," Johnson writes painfully of an early experience playing with his cousin's Barbie dolls, which he loved for their flowing hair, until the day he was ordered by his father to stand before his extended family and repeat, "I am not a little girl." Ricardo will be talking about his book and his personal experiences as a black, gay man in the academic world on Sunday, December 28 at 12:15 p.m. following our Kwanzaa service. Copies of *Resilience*, co-authored with Kenneth Oldfield, are available at the UVM Bookstore and through [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). Gary

## Christmas Breakfast

Yes, it's that time of year. The shopping list is ready, the strata recipes are being hunted up and the posters are being printed! So bring your apron and your family to our annual Christmas Breakfast: we share food, conversation and ourselves with each other and with neighbors who need a welcoming place for a holiday meal. Just like at home - we all pitch in to make it work! Please contact Lynn Douglas to volunteer, donate food or if you have questions (yes, it really is on Christmas morning!) [moonglow@pshift.com](mailto:moonglow@pshift.com), 802.644.2197 (there is NO sign-up sheet at the Meetinghouse).

## Care Network Ministry

The Care Network Ministry Committee is interested in knowing how many members of our society need a ride to Sunday services. If you are a person who needs a ride, or know of a person needing a ride. Please send an email to [wally-robinson@comcast.net](mailto:wally-robinson@comcast.net) or give me a call. The Care Network Ministry is in the process of developing a ride board that will bring together our members needing rides with those willing to offer them.

## New Book

Member Bill Cleary notes *The Jesuit's Escape* is his first novel, a religious path into UUism and a link to Roddy. Available at Hopkins Bookshop inside St. Paul's Cathedral, or call (877) 287-2422.

*Bill Cleary*

## ARC Gallery

The ARC Gallery on the second floor of our meeting house is currently featuring paintings and 3-D pieces by artist/ UU member Melanie Putz Brotz. Melanie's artwork has a decidedly natural feel, and includes acrylic paintings on canvas, watercolor paintings, charcoal sketches, and wall hangings and vessels made with twigs, seedpods, and vines. Melanie's artwork will be displayed through December; wander on up and take a look.  
*Melanie*

## Bazaar Wreath and Greens Orders

Wreath Orders - Sign up on the bulletin board to order a memorial wreath or poinsettia which decorate our Sanctuary during December & January. Also order plain or decorated wreaths for your home or office. Wreaths will be ready for pickup at the Bazaar.

**Workers/Decorators Needed** - Helpers are needed to decorate wreaths, make swags, table decorations & bows on Thursday & Friday December 4 & 5. No experience is needed! Sign up on the bulletin board and join the fun! We also need a few sales people to sell wreaths at the Bazaar on the 6th. Please bring donations of natural materials like milkweed pods, nice pine cones, white pine boughs, bittersweet, red bark dogwood, cedar with berries, holly etc. **These donations can only be dropped off between Monday, December 1 and Thursday, December 4.** Contact Sarah Forbes with questions or a materials donation, 802-872-8743. Thank you!

## The Giving Tree

Throughout the month of December, the annual Youth Group Giving Tree will stand in the Sanctuary, decorated with ornaments featuring requested donations for the Humane Society, Socially Responsible Santa, COTS and Spectrum. Donations may be placed in a bin beside the tree. Also, on the tree will be photographs the YUUth have taken of our many RE children. The Youth Group apologizes for any missing photographs, but parents are more than welcome to bring a picture from home to hang on the tree. We thank you in advance for your generosity during this busy holiday season!

*The Youth Group  
and George Rutherford, Advisor*

## Responding to Our Uncertain Times

We are living in challenging times – world economies are in slowdown and joblessness is rising. It is in times like these when our Society's programs become even more vital to those in our community. The number of people served through our community outreach programs, loose plate charities, and the food shelf is growing. And more people are attending our services for a source of inspiration, spirituality and comfort.

To respond to these challenges, our Society needs your continued financial support. There is great power in our numbers - when you give to our Society, your gift is magnified many times over. Many thanks for your past generosity and your future consideration. With your help, we will be able to support those we serve

and remain a beacon of light during these difficult times. - *Bill West, Treasurer*

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

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## **Celebrate the Guest at Your Table!**

Our Guest at Your Table program is now underway. Many families and friends are bringing human rights home and are welcoming Guests to their lives!

Thanks to our support, our Unitarian Universalist Service Committee is working throughout the United States and around the world to advance human rights. Your beautiful Guest at Your Table box and Stories of Hope booklet introduce you to people whose lives have been changed by this work. Each week, families and friends can focus on a different Story of Hope as we sit down to meals together and consider our many blessings.

Meet Serafina, the South African grandmother who partnered with UUSC and others to restore marginalized people's access to water. Consider what water means to you and your family. Consider what even a small gift to your Guest at Your Table will mean to Serafina and her friends. You can learn more about UUSC's work on protecting our right to water online [atwww.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org).

*If you have not yet picked up your Guest at Your Table box, you can do so next Sunday by helping yourself to a box on one of the tables in the back of the sanctuary. Or pick up a pre-addressed envelope to join UUSC or renew your membership! All contributions to UUSC are tax deductible! David Conrad*

## **October 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 Parlors.*

An ongoing discussion before the Board is the planning of possible capital or planned giving campaigns to coincide with the upcoming Society and meetinghouse bicentennial anniversaries. At this meeting, the Board agreed to follow the Executive Committee's recommendation to start the process of hiring a capital campaign consultant to assist with this process.

Another current topic of Board discussion is the exploration of converting one of our rental properties into a function in line with the Society's mission, for example, pairing with an outside organization to provide affordable or transitional housing. Look forward to hearing more on this topic in an upcoming newsletter.

The year to date budget is reviewed at each Board meeting. In October it was noted that we are on track to meet our budgeted income and expenses for the year that includes an operating deficit of \$16K.

In recognition and in gratitude of the completion of the Assistant Minister Search Committee's hard work, the following resolution was passed at the October meeting:

*"Be it resolved and recorded this day that the Board of Trustees of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington, Vermont, hereby recognize, appreciate and thank all the members of the recent Assistant Minister Search Committee for the successful completion of their task of the searching for and the subsequent hiring of Rev. Elaine Bomford. Members of the committee: Bridget Meyer and Lynn Foster- Co-Chairs, Gary DeCarolis, Merl Grossmeyer, Barbara Heeter, and Jonathan Sands."*

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

*Daniel Wilds, Board Secretary*

## **Interweave Connection**

Have you been looking forward to Interweave potluck lunches? Would you like to meet or reconnect with UUs who are members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Ally community? Perhaps you'd like to find out more about what's happening in the larger LGBTQA community. If so, come join us on Sunday, December 14, for a Holiday Interweave Potluck @12:30 at the First UU Society. The December potluck traditionally includes a "Yankee Swap." Each adult brings a wrapped gift. It may be new or "newly recyclable", something fun, or beautiful, but not too expensive. Let your imagination soar! Please bring a dish to share, a gift (if you want to play the game), and a desire for fun and festivity! Call Rebecca Anderson with questions, 864-5971. All are welcome!

## **Winter Film Series**

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What happens when a middle school in rural Tennessee decides to collect six million paper clips to better understand the Holocaust? Ohavi Zedek Synagogue opens its Jewish film series on Saturday, December 13 at 7 p.m. with a showing of the documentary *Paperclips*, followed by a dialogue on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. RSVP by Wednesday December 10, to [Barbara@ohavizedek.com](mailto:Barbara@ohavizedek.com). Free with snacks provided. *Gary Kowalski*