



November 15, 2009 -  
November 29, 2009

## Calendar

### Sunday, November 15

9:00 Worship Service  
9:30 Care Network Ministry  
10:00 Women's Spirituality Group  
10:00 Silent Auction Bidding  
11:00 Worship Service  
7:00 Dialogue on Class

### Monday, November 16

\*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)  
9:00 Newsletter Deadline  
12:00 UU Family Brown Bag Lunch  
4:00 Bicentennial Committee  
6:00 Administrator Relations Com.

### Tuesday, November 17

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

### Wednesday, November 18

9:00 Staff Meeting  
7:00 Choir Rehearsal

### Thursday, November 19

9:00 Newsletter Crew  
5:20 UUBF Zen Meditation

### Friday, November 20

6:30 AA Men's Group

### Saturday, November 21

#### Sunday, November 22

##### No RE Classes Today

10:00 Women's Spirituality Group  
10:00 Silent Auction Bidding  
10:00 Planned Giving Workshop  
11:00 Worship Service  
12:00 VIA Action Team Meeting  
12:30 Social Action Forum

### Monday, November 23

\*\*\*\*\* Zen (Call office for time)  
12:00 UU Family Brown Bag Lunch  
5:30 Transitions

### Tuesday, November 24

12:00 Staff Lunch  
12:00 JUMP Bag Transit

### Wednesday, November 25

##### Office Closed

7:00 Choir Rehearsal

### Thursday, November 26

5:00 Mostly Veggie Thanksgiving Dinner  
5:20 UUBF Zen Meditation

### Friday, November 27

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

### Saturday, November 28

#### Sunday, November 29

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

## Interfaith

### Thanksgiving

The Burlington Area Minister's Association invites you to a community celebration on Sunday, November 22 at 7:30 p.m., to be held at the First Baptist Church, 81 St. Paul St., in Burlington. An ecumenical choir will sing. *Gary Kowalski*

## Current Notes

What a chord was struck with the October subject for Current Notes, applause! Many of you have graciously, thoughtfully, and resolutely responded with your own perspectives regarding whether to applaud, or not to applaud, during Sunday morning services in the sanctuary. It seems sensible to devote a second column to the topic in order to sum up and share your comments.

First, a word regarding folks who conveyed opinions. Thank you! I received handwritten notes, e-mails, phone calls and comments in person. People who participate, or have participated, in the following areas of congregational life volunteered responses: small group ministry, board, membership committee, religious education volunteers, parents, choir members, women's alliance, staff, newsletter crew, worship committee, council, newcomers, old timers, non UUs who frequent our services. No child offered an opinion.

A point of agreement: People often said they enjoy clapping in rhythm when the music calls for it. I agree!

Another agreement: Many said they like or are familiar with a silent sign for gratitude, turning hands raised in the air.

Three eloquent voices spoke in favor of liberal applause in services. Several said when they really like something, it's hard to keep from applauding!

The majority were not in favor of applause in services. Being jarred out of peaceful appreciation was frequently cited. However, a number of those generally opposed to applause also stated that there are times when applause seems right, and it takes discernment to choose well. Several said they didn't want to take away anyone's right to applaud.

In sum, it appears to me that what is yearned for is sensitivity, intentionality and freedom of expression. Automatic or casual applause detracts from the peace and sincerity of a service. Applause is optimally a conscious choice, not an habitual custom.

Heartfelt, enthusiastic, hand clapping applause sometimes seems natural and appropriate.

Silent applause (hands in the air) is a friendly option; one person volunteered to demonstrate this sign some Sunday. Many would be grateful for silent applause, particularly after reflective music. A number commented that they hope to remember to employ this or another quiet sign of gratitude more often.

Two or three said they'd like to feel free to call out "Amen," "Allright" or "Thank you!" if so moved during the service. Right on! *Elaine*

## Upcoming Sundays

### November Worship Theme: Connection

When have you felt connected to a reality larger, older, or more powerful than yourself? What relationships give your life purpose and meaning? When have you felt disconnected and alone? And what patterns connect the star to the starfish, and each of them to you and me? *"Thou canst not stir a flower without troubling a star."*  
Francis Thompson

### Sunday, November 15, 9 & 11 am

**"The Power of Connection"** One to one relationships are not only doorways to intimacy and friendship, but effective tools for social change. This morning Gary explores the power of community organizing, joined by Reverend Debbie Ingram, Director of Vermont Interfaith Action. Our choir will sing.

### Sunday, November 22, 11am

**"Loaves & Fishes"** This morning we celebrate Thanksgiving with inspirational stories, singing from our Senior Choir and Children's Choir, and actively sharing with our neighbors through a) the distribution of "Guest-At-Your-Table" boxes that will support the international human rights and economic development projects of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and b) a collection of filled grocery bags for JUMP. This is a child-friendly, intergenerational service; there will be no Sunday School as all ages gather in the Sanctuary at eleven o'clock. Join us!

### Sunday, November 29, 9 & 11am

Our guest this morning is the Executive Director of our Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, Dr. Charlie Clements, whose life is a profile in courage. As a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Academy who had flown more than 50 missions in the Vietnam War, he decided the war was immoral and refused to fly missions in support of the invasion of Cambodia. Later, as a newly trained physician, he chose to work in the midst of El Salvador's civil war, where the villages he served were bombed, rocketed, or strafed by some of the same aircraft in which he had previously trained. Based on these experiences, Clements wrote *Witness to War* (Bantam) and became the subject of a 1985 Academy Award-winning documentary of the same title. Twenty-five years later, Clements continues to work for peace, visiting Iraq, Darfur, Kenya and other trouble spots in overseeing the UUSC's campaigns to promote economic and environmental justice around the world.



## Message from Martha



In 8th grade, I was confirmed in the Episcopal church. One of the requirements of confirmation class that year, was to attend church EVERY Sunday. The cool thing about this requirement was that "church" was defined somewhat broadly, such that I got away, one Sunday, with creating and leading worship with my two sisters at home. My middle sister was the organist and choir director (she could play the piano), my youngest sister was the congregation, and I played the minister. We wrote up an order of service, including a few elements of Episcopal liturgy. And I gave a little sermon. I recall how easy and obvious my choice of sermon topic was. At age 14, I knew that the essence of my faith was LOVE.

I probably read the passage from First Corinthians, about how faith, hope, and love abide, but that the greatest of these is love. And then in my sermon, I told my sisters whatever it was I believed about love at that time.

Having now cultivated my spiritual home among Unitarian Universalists for almost 15 years, the practice of love within my faith remains; and currently, I find my interest and hunger for growth bending in a Universalist direction: towards our spiritual ancestors who believed that every single one of us is essentially good and is *deeply loved*.

At a UU conference I attended recently, our keynote speaker, the minister and theologian, Thandeka, shared a new, simple, yet infinitely rich phrase to describe the meaning of Unitarian Universalism:

*Love beyond belief.*

In other words, we love one another beyond belief; *and* we are loved beyond belief. There's a bit of a double meaning to it, or perhaps it's that one meaning can be taken more literally than the other. In my mind's eye, I "see" our varied beliefs around us: a busy UU menagerie... but these are limited, and when they come to an end, what flows out beyond them, merging calmly, simply, and harmoniously, is love. Love, by its very nature, reaches farther and deeper than our beliefs. We UUs love beyond belief.

... which is such a true gift! As someone who grew up in an Episcopal religious environment, love's central place in my faith was instilled from my infancy. While through the years, I've examined and picked through the various attachments and decorations that adorned the religion of my upbringing, love has remained. And love will hold me while I journey forward in my Unitarian Universalist faith.

May it be a prayer. May it be a blessing. May we *love*, and in turn, *be loved beyond belief*.

*Martha*

Martha Dallas,  
Director of Religious Education

## Activity Sunday Help Needed

Interested in having some fun and supporting RE but don't have a lot of time? We are looking for creative ideas regarding crafts and activities as well as volunteer leaders for our "Simple Gifts" Activity Sunday Nov 29th. This is an opportunity to share your creativity and/or lead mini 10-minute craft or activity units that help young and old ones alike create simple gifts they can present to others. Previous ideas included fancy gift certificates of time or service, cards, bird feeders, ornaments, paper "stain glass" creations...almost anything is possible. Time and imagination are our only limitations. Come and be a part of this fun Sunday morning experience and offer a Simple Gift to the youngest members of our congregation. Please contact John Grimm, Religious Education Committee Chair, with questions, ideas or interest. 863-2672 or [vtgrimm@comcast.net](mailto:vtgrimm@comcast.net).

## Welcoming a Guest at Your Table

Each year at this time, friends and families in our congregation participate in the UU tradition of Guest at Your Table. By bringing home a beautiful Guest at Your Table box, families and individuals learn about how the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee puts our shared principles into action in the United States and around the world. Through a potent combination of advocacy, education, and partnerships with grassroots organizations, UUSC promotes economic rights, advances environmental justice, defends civil liberties, and preserves the rights of people in times of humanitarian crisis.

Sharing our blessings through Guest at Your Table ensures that UUSC's human rights work continues, while building UUSC membership. UUSC members are vitally important, as UUSC is an independent, membership-based organization that receives no funding from the UUA or the U.S. government.

Through the booklet *Stories of Hope* we connect with people in the United States and around the world who are working hard to advance human rights — and protect their own rights — in partnership with UUSC. In each household, the Guest at Your Table box is placed in a prominent spot, often at the family meal table. When family and friends gather to enjoy their blessings, they can reflect on the contributions of their Guests to the movement for universal human rights and share generously. Each week, we can choose a different story to read, bringing our Guests to life and helping to celebrate our own rights. If you would prefer not to bring home a box, you can take a donation envelope or support UUSC directly online at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org).

We will open our Guest at Your Table program with an intergenerational worship service on Sunday, November 22.

## Book Group

Please join us on Tuesday, December 8th, 7:00 p.m. at the UU, as we discuss Gary Kowalski's book, Science and the Search for God. Gary argues that many of the ills of the modern world stem from the mistaken view that science and faith are antagonists and not natural allies. Rather, both science and faith compel us to move beyond materialism toward an understanding of the world that includes the realities of consciousness and spirit. New light is shed on old questions: Who are we? Where do we figure in the larger scheme of things? What can we honestly believe? Gary will be present to speak and answer questions at the December 8th meeting.

## Giving Tree Project

Pictures will be taken (with permission) of all R.E. children on Sunday, November 15, 2009 at both first and second services. The pictures will be used as ornaments on the Giving Tree in the Sanctuary (no names will be used). Parents: If your child doesn't have their picture taken and wants one used for the tree, parents are able to provide a picture by November 29, 2009 to the designated box in the James Reeb Room (Youth group room). Thanks,  
*Erin Marvin-Riley, for the Youth Group*

## Got Used Toys?

To raise money for their Boston trip, 6th graders will be collecting used toys for resale at the Holiday Bazaar on December 5, 2009. Any functional toy or complete puzzle that you have outgrown and wish to recycle to some other lucky family, we'd be happy to take (**no stuffed animals please**). We'll collect them after the Sunday services on November 22 & 29, or you may drop them off at the UU Society Monday - Thursday 11/30-12/3 **only**. If neither option works, or you have a lot to clear out, call 497-0365, and we will try to arrange a home pick-up. Thanks!  
*Brenda Balon*

## Thanksgiving Pies

The 6th grade class will be selling holiday pies after services on November 22. These freshly prepared then frozen pies can be pre-ordered after services on November 15, or by calling 497-0365. A small number will be available without pre-ordering as well. All proceeds will help fund the traditional end of year 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Spring Boston Trip. Thank you in advance for your support! *Brenda Balon*

## Holiday Books

Our UU Book Cart will be open for business on Sunday, November 29 and Sunday, December 6, featuring titles from Beacon Press, Skinner House and our own UU authors like Bill Cleary and Gary Kowalski. Purchases help support our Society and make a great alternative to buying from the chain stores. Thanks for your patronage! *Gary Kowalski*

## Newsletter News

The next deadline is Monday, November 16, 2009 @9am covering events from November 29 - December 13, 2009.

**First Unitarian Universalist  
Society**  
**862-5630**

*Gary Kowalski, Minister*

*Elaine Bomford,  
Assistant Minister*

*Linda Gross,  
Board President*

*Martha Dallas, Director  
of Religious Education*

*David McFeeters,  
Facilities Manager*

*Wayne Schneider,  
Music Director*  
[wayne.schneider@uvm.edu](mailto:wayne.schneider@uvm.edu)

*Christina Fulton,  
Society Administrator*

*Kathleen Kemp,  
Administrative Assistant*

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

## Installation Invitation

The congregation of the UU Church of Rutland, Vermont has called Rev. Erica Parsley Baron, granddaughter of FUUS member Jeanne Parsley, to be their Minister. Members and friends of the Burlington Society are warmly invited to her installation service at the Rutland church, 117 West Street, on Sunday, November 22, at 3:00 pm.

## Women's Alliance Holiday Bazaar

It's coming up on that time again when you can buy wreaths and other beautiful greens, home made food, books, toys and games, attic treasures, crafts, and then enjoy lunch in the parlors. All of this (plus a silent auction) from 9am - 2pm on Saturday, December 5. Mark your calendars now and consider what you can donate to make this a special event. More to follow. Contact Lois Holbrook, 985-5294 or [lhobrook67@yahoo.com](mailto:lhobrook67@yahoo.com) with questions.

## Plan For Your Family and the First UU, too!

On Sunday, November 22, from 10 to 11 am the UU Planned Giving Committee will sponsor the third workshop in its fall series, "Our Children – Wills, Codicils, and the Future." Sarah Gentry Tischler, a local attorney specializing in estate planning, will discuss wills, codicils and how charitable giving can fit with your family's future. She will answer your questions. Refreshments and childcare provided.

## Mostly Veggie Thanksgiving Dinner

Come share a friendly holiday meal with members and friends of our own First UU Society on Thursday, November 26 at 5 p.m. Our minister Gary and his wife Dori are host and hostess for this "mostly veggie" dinner, with plant-based recipes encouraged so that all can enjoy the feast. We'll be playing Charades and "Dictionary" after the meal, games all ages can enjoy. Bring a friend or just yourself. Sign up on the bulletin board for this potluck event.

## Montstream Studio Annual Sale and Benefit

The 21st Annual event happens Friday, November 13 from 2-8pm and November 14-15 from 10am - 5pm at One Main Street, Burlington. You can find holiday cards and original paintings, but this Benefit/ Sale offers many ways to help our community. Food drive, please bring your canned goods for the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf. The first fifty patrons each day will receive a print with their donation to COTS. A raffle will be held to win an original watercolor with all proceeds to Lake Champlain Land Trust, preserving land for the next generation. Farm2School greeting cards will be sold to bring more locally grown produce to our public school cafeterias. Contact [kmmstudio.com](http://kmmstudio.com) or [kmmstudio@gmail.com](mailto:kmmstudio@gmail.com) with questions.

## Vermont Interfaith Action

What are your dreams and passions? What personal concerns and public issues weigh on your mind? What keeps you coming to our congregation? And how do you think our Society could better serve you and the wider community? During the week of November 15 thru 21, you're invited to get a firsthand taste of the 'one-to-one' conversations that are the core of faith-based community organizing. Your UU VIA Action Team will help you schedule a visit with another member of our Society to share hopes, worries, and priorities. Then we'll gather on Sunday, November 22 at noon for a quick lunch and opportunity to de-brief on what we've learned and discuss next steps. This is change you can believe in ... come participate!

## Invitation to Membership

Do you attend our services? Support our principles of diversity and inclusion in the religious search? Want to deepen your connection with our congregation? If so, we invite you to become a member of our Society. Please contact Ministers Gary Kowalski, Elaine Bomford or Martha Dallas, DRE. They will be happy to answer your questions, explain the privileges and responsibilities of membership and welcome you to our Society. Call the main office Monday through Thursday from 8:30am - 4pm.

## Grief Support Group Forming

Daniel Wilds of our Care Network Ministry and Gary Kowalski will facilitate a bereavement support group on Monday evenings, starting November 30 at 7:30 p.m. and continuing through December 21. For those who have experienced the loss of a loved one, this group will offer an opportunity to tell stories, share memories and find companions on the journey to healing. Please contact Gary (862-5630 ex. 24, [gary@uusociety.org](mailto:gary@uusociety.org)) or Daniel (372-4838, [dc.wilds@mac.com](mailto:dc.wilds@mac.com)) if you would like to join us.

## UU Families Monday Brown Bag Lunches

A series of six Monday Brown Bag Lunches for parents and caregivers of UU children and youth will begin on November 16. Childcare will be offered from 11:45 to 1:15. We'll share conversation over lunch from noon to 1:00. You are welcome to come to as many or as few of the meetings as you wish. Please contact Reverend Elaine preceding lunch if you plan to come. Each discussion, excepting the first, will require a little "homework."  
[elaine@uusociety.org](mailto:elaine@uusociety.org), 862-5630 x 25

November 16 - Introductions, overview  
November 23 - Rituals  
November 30 - "To Question is an Answer"  
December 7 - UU Family Values  
December 14 - Sources and Resources  
December 21 - to be determined

## McClure Senior Center

Autumn is officially here and winter is surely right around the corner. Although many have inclinations to stay indoors once the days grow cold, it is important everyone gets out and about for some social activity. The Champlain Senior Center located in the McClure Center at 241 North Winooski is the type of place to do just that!

Every Monday through Friday at noon, a nutritious and affordable lunch (suggested donation \$3) is served to local Senior Citizens. Seniors of all ages come to share a warm meal with friends both old and new. Special restaurant lunches and party days are also offered. We would be delighted to have more folks eat with us regularly to strengthen the wonderful community we have built for ourselves here.

We also offer a wide variety of programs. Playing cards, crafting, creative writing, yoga, computer classes and Nintendo Wii games are just a few examples of the activities offered at the Center. We are always expanding our program options and if you have a special talent or skill you would like to share with fellow seniors, please let us know. We exist to serve you!

If you have any questions please contact us at 802-658-3585 or visit our website at [www.champlainseniorcenter.org](http://www.champlainseniorcenter.org). Our doors are always open, feel free to drop in and check us out! Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30-2.

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

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## **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 parlor.*

This month the board continued its work on developing a new mission statement for the Society. Completion of this work is considered critical in bringing focus to our Society's work and in developing key goals for the next 3 – 5 years. Common themes were identified from four proposed mission statements and the board will complete this work in November.

Gary Kowalski gave an update on the Planned Giving Campaign that kicked off in late October. A planned giving brochure has been completed and several information sessions on gift planning are scheduled. The board acknowledged the hard work of the committee and thanked them for their efforts.

To become more proactive in its work, the board developed agenda items for the remainder of the year, including: short and long term staff planning, goal setting, by-laws and governance reviews, stewardship campaign and budget planning.

Bill West, treasurer, presented a summary of the September financial statements marking the end of our 1st fiscal quarter. He reported that our financial status has improved, driven by increased pledge income and cost saving efforts. He outlined opportunities and risks to the budget including a possible decrease in rental income from one of our Elmwood Avenue buildings. In addition, he reported that the Executive Committee of the Board approved a scaled-down request to fund the Society's bicentennial events. The money was allocated from the NIMS D Fund, a set aside fund that was created for special 1-time needs.

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

## **Support the UU Silent Auction November 15 and 22 in the Parlors**

Your participation in the Silent Auction is a Win-Win! Our Burlington Society benefits with revenues that will help support its budget through economically challenging times. Participants benefit by nurturing new and existing relationships with other UU members and friends, creating a greater sense of community, and by finding one-of-a kind items that are great for holiday gift-giving! Donors benefit by feeling that their contributions have been well-received and have served their intended purpose.

From Dining Experiences to Services, there is something for everyone at the Silent Auction:

Dining Offerings include a Spring Brunch, a Northern Italian Meal, a Tea Party in the Country, a Mexican Dinner & Game Night, a Vermont-Style Tapas Dinner, and experiences for children such as the Almost Slumber Party, the Holiday Cookie Making Session, and the Family Barbecue. Services include Outdoors Adventures, such as an introduction to sea kayaking and a sail on a 30' sailboat; Wellness services, such as yoga, massage, hair service and a dental exam, cleaning and X-rays; Skill Building services, such as Spanish, math, or physics tutoring, computer instruction, music lessons, or family coaching; Services For the Home, such as architectural design services, plaster/sheetrock finishing, emergency home repair, and mending and sewing. Additional options entail the delivery of baked goods or a soup and bread meal.

Participation is easy. Read item descriptions in the Silent Auction Bid Booklet. Come to the Parlors on Sunday mornings between 10 AM and 1 PM where you will find bid sheets posted for each item. See what other bidders have offered for bids and write in your bid for the same price or higher. (If you did not get a copy of the Bid Booklet on November 1<sup>st</sup> you may pick one up in the brochure rack outside the main office, or contact a fundraising committee member and request either the pdf version or a paper copy by mail.)

Don't Wait – the Silent Auction ends November 22nd!

*Fundraising Committee Members: Sarah Forbes, [sarahforbesdesign@comcast.net](mailto:sarahforbesdesign@comcast.net) or 872-8743, Hope Swanson, [hope.swanson@myfairpoint.net](mailto:hope.swanson@myfairpoint.net), Barbara Benton 338-2172, Carolyn Munger 652-4609, and Kristin Kany 540-0768.*

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