

# The Call

Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
of the Upper Valley

Autumn 2015  
September - November

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## Sunday Services

### 10 AM Black Community Center, Hanover

*Sermon topics may be found on our website, [www.uucuv.org](http://www.uucuv.org), as well as in the Sunday Order of Service.*

## We are

**A Green Sanctuary,  
A Welcoming Congregation,  
and A Partner Church**

## The Journey Home

*Rev. Patience Stoddard*

***It is good to have an end to journey toward, but it is the journey that matters in the end.*** ~Ursula K. Le Guin

I've been thinking recently of the 30+ year journey this congregation has been on since it began meeting in people's houses, community centers and schools and the nearing milestone of moving into a mostly new Meetinghouse complex designed to be a home for the next 30+ years and beyond. While many hoped for a permanent, suitable home sooner, those years have certainly not been wasted and, indeed, may have been necessary.

I am reminded of a lecture in an Ethics class at Harvard in which the professor spoke of the importance of the 40 years in the desert for the Hebrew people. It would have been a mistake, he opined, if the Hebrews had traveled directly from Egypt to the Promised Land. The time in the desert was necessary for them to form a strong and lasting identity as a community. It was in the desert that they were tested.

They needed to learn how to be in community-- how to handle and delegate authority, how to work together, and how to manage conflict. They needed to shift their identity from individuals, who were struggling to survive in an oppressive situation, to a covenanted community ready to shape their own destiny.

So, too, you have learned much in the last 30 years. You have experienced different organizational structures, different types of ministry, different approaches to leadership. You have developed a clear mission and vision and are learning how to live in covenant. You too have been tested. And I believe, and more importantly you believe, that you are ready to have a permanent home.

It has been and continues to be a blessing to be on this journey with you.

*Patience*



## President's Message

*Cappy Nunlist*

In the past five months I have had the privilege of spending extended time with each of my adult children. Mark and I toured Italy for three weeks with Kimberly. I drove to Georgia with younger son Corey and spent ten days supporting him as he speed-walked the 280 miles of the Appalachian Trail he had missed on his first trek 9 years earlier. Older son Cabot holed up in our basement for a week computer programming while I entertained his 3 1/2 year old son upstairs. At some point during each of these events, I took a deep breath and raised an anxiety-provoking issue (a different one for each child). It was difficult to embark on such a conversation, risking a breach in an otherwise lovely time together. However, I have always preferred potential conflict over letting unresolved issues simmer – whatever the consequence. These discussions did raise anxiety on both parties, led to a few heated exchanges and some soul-searching. But there was also love on both sides – and a willingness to engage and to reach a deeper understanding of the other. In every case, we parted with a hug and a deeper bond.

This congregation is another family. Several times in the past couple of years I have been confronted with members who have taken issue with something I have said or done. This was done with love, respect and a desire to bring into the open something that had disturbed them. I was deeply grateful for their openness and their trust that I would be able to hear them without risking our relationship. These exchanges renewed my efforts to be more thoughtful in my words and actions – and left me grateful for such good friends. I am proud of this congregation for creating an environment in which difficult issues can be raised in safety – although I confess that due to the congregation's work on building trust and open communication, few of these issues have arisen! As we look forward with increasing anticipation to moving into our beautiful new space, I hope we will celebrate not only the physical structure but, even more importantly, the continued open-heartedness of those who gather within its walls.

## Lifelong Learning Together

This fall Sparrow and Patience will be offering two different thematic discussion groups which will each meet once a month after Sunday Service. It is hoped that these will provide opportunities to explore and develop one's own beliefs, learn something from others' and get to know fellow participants in new ways.

### **The Heart of Christianity**

The first series is named *The Heart of Christianity* after an excellent book by the scholar Marcus Borg. This fall our youth will be traveling to several neighboring churches to learn more about the faith and practices of a variety of Christian denominations. As a complement to that program, Patience will be leading four monthly discussions on the basic tenants of Liberal Christianity and its similarities to and differences from Unitarian Universalism.

It is her hope that this will provide an opportunity to understand some of the distinctions that differentiate liberal Christian churches from the many types of conservative Christian churches (which tend to dominate the media). While organized around specific thematic chapters in Borg's book, in each session we will also include

excerpts from Unitarian and Universalist seminal documents which address the same theme.

If you wish to attend all four sessions, it is recommended that you buy Borg's book or borrow one on loan from Patience. However, reading the book is not necessary as each session will be distinct, based in part on that day's sermon and open to all who wish to attend.

### **Parents as Resident Theologians**

The second series led by Sparrow and Patience will be based on an excellent adult RE program: *Parents as Resident Theologians*. This series of discussions and brief readings is intended for Unitarian Universalist parents, grandparents and other adults in order to help "us as adults to be able to respond to the religious searchings and questionings of young people." According to the authors, to do so well it is helpful "to examine our own experiences and beliefs, and be able to articulate them." This discussion group will meet once a month after Sunday Service beginning in October and meeting through March. While it is most helpful to attend most of the six sessions, the group will be open to newcomers throughout the series.

# Board Report

*Bess Schmidt, Board Secretary*

The building project has continued to be a major focus of the board in June and July. In June, the board authorized a contract with our contractor Estes & Gallup with a guaranteed maximum price of \$1,017,186 and authorized a mortgage loan from Mascoma Bank in an amount up to \$250,000. The mortgage will not be assumed until after the project is complete and is currently estimated at \$125,000-\$150,000. The board also authorized a third contract with our project manager Shawn Donovan to cover the construction phase of the project.

Thank you to departing board members Phil Kern, Dan Mendelsohn, and Lucy Taylor for their service to the congregation. In July, the board welcomed new members Vice-President Frank Gould, Treasurer Kathy Christie, and member-at-large Jeremy Coylewright. President Cappy Nunlist, Secretary Bess Schmidt, and members-at-large Anne Alford and Mary Shain continue to serve on the board this year.

This summer the board authorized new employment contracts with all staff members: a two-year contract with Rev. Patience Stoddard, and one-year contracts with CRE Sparrow Alden, office administrator Rachel Clark, and music director Linda Hoover. As new treasurer, Kathy Christie was added as an authorized signer on UUCUV bank accounts.

Complete minutes of board meetings are available at the UUCUV office. All board meetings are open to the congregation. Check the calendar for meeting times and locations.



*A reading from our groundbreaking service...*

**Threshold Moments** by John Gibbons

There are threshold moments in each of our lives: moments when the past that lies behind us seems present and real, moments when the future that lies before us seems apparent and hopeful. Times such as these when past and future meet in a vivid awareness of Now are rare and holy. These times remind us that our time together comes to us as a precious gift, a gift that comes with choices and responsibilities for how it is to be used. We recognize the importance of these choices in our lives, and we celebrate them. This is a special threshold moment, here and now, which we are gathered to witness and to honor.

***Speaking of threshold moments--Congratulations to Sparrow on successfully defending her non-traditional Master's project in Language and Literature!***

## Home

the walls are going up  
pieces of trees hanging  
in their clear splendor  
anchored together  
holding onto the earth  
there are no doors  
only open walls  
offering entry to all  
the doors will be added,  
as we arrive as one  
hand in hand in hand  
collecting, to open for  
all to gather

we watched crumble  
the remnants of who  
we were and are  
the House is only  
what's left of a piece  
of the peace we seek  
in a place of peace  
to build a Home where  
the family we create  
amongst all responses  
answers a question  
of who we are  
and have become

as we hang on  
to the strands  
woven into our home  
with every sermon  
on who is home  
and where we go  
to find it  
we meet Sundays  
in our outer space  
with our altar  
egos gathered under  
a chalice open to  
a slam dunk  
Let it be so

*~Frank Gould, June 2015*

# New Building News



Joani Nierenberg

What an adventure this has been! Hopefully you have all had the chance to at least drive by the construction site to watch the extraordinary progress that is being made on our new UU home. Cappy and Joani felt like proud, excited mamas showing off our congregation's collective baby on Sunday, August 23! If you weren't available for that tour, don't worry; we will be scheduling more tours soon.

The Steering Committee meets weekly with Cappy (Board liaison) the architect (Andrew Garthwaite), the foreman (Jeremy Maheu), the general contractor (Nick Estes), our project manager (Shawn Donovan), and various sub-contractors. We have been impressed by how organized the meetings are, keeping close tabs on costs, scheduling, new and ongoing issues. But what has made us the most impressed is the quality of our team, and the resulting quality of the work that is being done for us. We are being exceedingly cautious about costs, but you can be assured that no decision has compromised the truly superb construction.

As this is being written, the crew is working fulltime to get the building closed in to protect the materials from further rain. As soon as that happens, the electricians and plumbers come on site to start their work. Within the next few weeks, installation of windows will begin (plastic will cover the openings in the interim). We are still on track to be able to celebrate a Thanksgiving service in our new Sanctuary, although we doubt final touches will be finished that soon.

We probably sound like a broken record, but we repeat how appreciative we are for your faith, and the support you have shown for our committee. Knowing that you believe it unnecessary to go to you for consensus on all the zillions of decisions being made has allowed the process to move forward remarkably smoothly and quickly. Some decisions we were uncomfortable making on your behalf without your input (renovation vs. razing, color of siding) and we

will continue to come to you if other such issues arise.

In the meantime, the Steering Committee and Board are planning a joint meeting to discuss how future responsibilities will transition from our Committee to other task teams (selection of chairs being one example). We know that many are itching to get involved, and those opportunities will be coming soon!

If you should have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact any of us. We love talking about this project!

## Steering Committee:

Bill Brawley: [bbrawley.nh@gmail.com](mailto:bbrawley.nh@gmail.com)

Joan Nierenberg: [joan.nierenberg@gmail.com](mailto:joan.nierenberg@gmail.com)

BJ Shabel: [elizabethshabel@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethshabel@gmail.com)

Cappy Nunlist (Board liaison)

[cappy.nunlist@gmail.com](mailto:cappy.nunlist@gmail.com)

## Keeping Informed of Church Events

Please read your Weekly Email Blasts for important up-to-date news!

If you do not already receive our Weekly Blasts and wish to be added to the list, email Rachel at [office@uucuv.org](mailto:office@uucuv.org) and let her know. That is our primary means of communicating our news.

## Church Calendar

Our up-to-date online calendar can be found by clicking on "Calendar of Events" on our home page at

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



# What's Up for Kids?

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE



*Dear Friends,*

Children's religious education happens on Sunday mornings at 10 AM during our services at the Black Center in Hanover, NH. After gathering as a whole community to light the chalice and sing and share a story, young people move to age-appropriate learning time. When the adult service is over, parents should collect their younger kids in the classroom.

This fall we are lucky to have Sheena Morris returning as pre-school and kindergarten teacher. Miss Sheena's Pre-school and Kindergarten class explores Unitarian Universalist identity through stories, arts and crafts, songs, and games. The symbol of the flaming chalice is the center of their exploration. Miss Sheena helps each child find their voice to express joys and concerns, share, cooperate, and have fun. The seven principles of UUism are expressed as ways to be kind to our friends - including the earth and ourselves.

**"The great end in religious instruction is not to stamp our minds upon the young, but to stir up their own;**

**Not to make them see with our eyes, but to look inquiringly and steadily with their own;**

**Not to give them a definite amount of knowledge, but to inspire a fervent love of truth;**

**Not to form an outward regularity, but to touch inward springs;**

**Not to bind them by ineradicable prejudices to our particular sect of peculiar notions;**

**But to prepare them for impartial, conscientious judging of whatever subjects may be offered to their decision;**

**Not to burden the memory, but to quicken and strengthen the power of thought;**

**Not to impose religion upon them in the form of arbitrary rules, but to awaken the conscience, the moral discernment;**

**In a word, the great end is to awaken the soul, to excite and cherish spiritual life."**

~ William Ellery Channing

My own Elementary class is going to take advantage of our big, open, mirrored classroom. We're exploring the kinesthetic side of our spirituality with body prayer, sacred dance, and nonverbal communication. We'll also talk about our self images and ways of seeing one another. We express joys and concerns and share a covenant of treating one another kindly.

The Youth and Junior Youth have a full schedule this autumn. The centerpiece of the plan is our beautiful downtown Hanover classroom! Walking visits to the Church of God, Our Savior Lutheran Church, the Friends' meeting, and St. Denis Roman Catholic Church are on the schedule! These visits will be supplemented with lunch meetings with Patience to discuss observations, as well as two special UUCUV services to provide UU context to the neighboring faiths experience.

An exciting season! I can't wait to share it with you all.

*Peace,*

*Sparrow*

*Thanks, Bobbie Kendall, for helping out in children's learning time when needed this summer!*

*Thanks, Darsie Riccio, for thinking of our children's program during back-to-school sales!*

*Thank you to Bobbie, Bess, Cappy, Peter, and Val — our volunteer Baby Snugglers!*



# Parents Speak: Some Things I'm Glad I Did

Barbara Tolman and Lori Fortini

*One of the great pleasures of our temporary office at 3 Ridge Road is gabbing with our host BJ Shabel a few minutes each week. "What article would you really be interested in reading?" I asked her. "I'd love to hear a few words from the parents of those wonderful young women that we've watched grow up," she said. Here are some words gathered from two of those parents! -Sparrow*

From Barb:

When my daughters were young, we moved to the Upper Valley. Living in the Upper Valley with children is wonderful. A focus on nature comes easily through hiking or gardening. The area provides many opportunities for recreational, academic, artistic, and sports activities. And we joined the UUCUV, which is a great community and a place to expand your knowledge, beliefs, and experiences. I'm really glad that we moved to the Upper Valley with our two daughters.

I'm also glad that I gave my daughters choices as they were growing up. Which vegetable would you like for dinner? Peas or green beans? Which book shall we read at bedtime? "Good Night Moon" or "I Love You Forever"? What song would you like me to sing to you when I put you to bed? "Twinkle, twinkle little star" or "Sleep my child and peace attend thee"?

As they grew older, the choices were more involved. So I still wanted to offer my daughters choices, but I wanted them to know we had limits we must live with and respect. We have limits of time, money, energy, and resources. When Jenny started seventh grade, she played soccer for all of one practice session. She didn't like the competitive quality of the coach or team. So she quit. At the time, she had no other activity outside of school and home. So I said she had to do something. What did she want to do? She said that she wanted to volunteer at the Upper Valley Humane Society. I loved the idea, but I didn't love driving 45 minutes one way, twice on a Saturday, particularly when my commute to work was 2-1/2 hours one way (twice a month). I really didn't want to drive any more than was necessary. So I suggested to her that we call our vet to see if she would accept a weekly volunteer. To our great surprise, the vet said that she often takes volunteers and would love to have Jenny. The conversation with the vet started

a five-year volunteer opportunity for Jenny. It was a great experience.

So I'm glad that I offered my children choices but I'm glad, too, that I let them know that we live within limits and we must respect those limits. Good things can happen when recognizing and working with limits.

From Lori:

Surround your child with a circle of people of all ages with loving spirits and open minds - Curious people with a love of books and learning and nature. I was so fortunate to have that group right here in our congregation. This has made my job of parenting so much easier.

Give your child encouragement and confidence to step out on his/her own to try and maybe even - gasp - fail. This makes his/her spirit soar to great heights and know that great things come from great effort.

Be your children's number one cheerleader, but not the "fixer." This teaches that the world may not always be fair, but there is love and comfort at home to lick any wounds and to give you strength to face the next challenge.

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*This anonymous untitled poem was created at Ferry Beach Women's Week this August and hung on a card on our Poetree:*

"Blackbird has spoken, like the first bird."

What was that like,  
the first note,  
of the first song, of the first bird?

That first, pure, ringing note  
sent into that first sunrise,  
into that first sparkling morning?

Hope.

*~submitted by Leah Goat*

# Celebrate the Wheel of the Year! Mabon

*Sparrow F. Alden, CRE*

While we're in temporary quarters, please join me from the comfort of your home to celebrate Mabon, the autumnal equinox. This sun-holiday is all about balance, justice, and education - an excellent time for your family to choose your special justice project for the year. Appropriate meditation for Mabon includes prayers for resources to be freely shared among all people of the world. All balance games (rock-to-rock, hopscotch) are good for Mabon.

## A personal meditation:

- with your body relaxed in a symmetrical position, breathe deeply, letting your belly and chest rise fully
- tense and relax your feet, calves, legs, hips, torso, hands, arms, shoulders
- massage your face
- seek and release muscular tension that you may have held unconsciously
- review your last few weeks as though you're looking at a scrapbook. Acknowledge what you see and let the pages turn.
- review your plans for the next few weeks - do they seem balanced? reasonable? Do they nurture your spirit and embody your values? Do they need revision later to include these things?
- consider with gratitude the abundance in your life
- consider with gratitude your own talents, gifts, and graces
- consider with gratitude your wholeness and completeness
- welcome wisdom from your subconscious or guides or the Great Spirit in whatever form it may come to you

Mabon is a quarter day, so it's an excellent time to invite friends in to break bread. Here's my recipe for

## Sparrow's Extremely Meditative Bread

3 cups of warm water

6 tbsp of active dry yeast

1/2 cup honey/molasses/syrup

3 cups of whole flour

Mix well but gently, let sit for 30 minutes

Add ¼ cup olive oil

2 tablespoons salt

enough more flour (about 4 cups, I use white at this point) that the dough kneads cleanly away from the sides of the bowl.

Let rise 1 hour

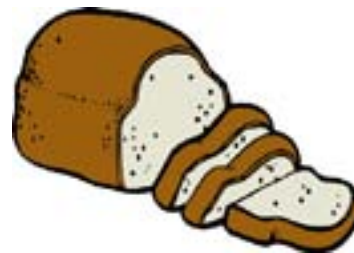
Punch down

Let rise another hour

Shape into loaves or rolls

Let rest 30 minutes

Bake at 400 F. 20 minutes for rolls, 40 minutes for loaves.



*Belief in oneself is one of the most important bricks in building any successful venture. ~Lydia M. Child*

# How to Join This Congregation

*Sparrow F. Alden, CRE*

Welcome! Thank you for walking in the door - or the electronic portal - to our beloved community. You've come in, felt the friendly atmosphere, sampled the culture of excellent music and fabulous food and open-hearted justice work. You wonder how to be fully part of this community. As the UUCUV goes through a spiritual and physical growth phase, many people are involved in the process of welcoming new visitors, new friends, and new members.

Visitors generally find us through the web or word of mouth, and first meet us by choosing to attend an event - Sunday morning worship or perhaps a community dinner. When a visitor shares basic contact information (known around here as a "blue sheet"), they get a letter of greeting, can opt in to the Weekly Blast email list, and can ask for personal contact with the minister or religious educator.

After two or three visits, this place might feel really right: interesting, funny, safe, lively, calming, nurturing. When you feel that, you choose to fill out the "yellow sheet" to ask for a reusable name badge, receive our weekly emailed news (and quarterly electronic newsletter) if you are not already on the list, and be added to the Directory as a Friend. You might find that fellow parents invite you to a play group or Babette calls and asks if you'd like a ride to Elder luncheon or the young adult group will let you know their next plan. Keep your eyes on the Weekly Blast for more

events, projects, needs, adventures, book groups, resources. When Mary Shain, the Hospitality Team Manager, does her magic with calendars and names, she will be in touch with you to talk about being on a team of 6 or 8 people to make the Sunday morning coffee, set up chairs, bake treats, tidy the kitchen, or greet folks.

You'll get a note encouraging you to come to Lunch with Patience and Sparrow, a once-a-month gathering which we use as an orientation to Unitarian Universalist history, theology, congregational polity, current best practices and to the specific history, governance, and philosophy of this congregation. We'll talk together about the responsibilities of membership. We'll look in detail at the covenant of right relations which all UUCUV members agree to - a covenant to work on ourselves when we make mistakes and to communicate with kindness.

It might feel like home. And then you say "Yes." Tell the minister you're ready.

Rev. Patience will provide an opportunity to sign the book - our formal symbol of membership. You will add yourself to our 30 year history and our 300 year future and you'll incorporate yourself in covenant with every other member. Welcome. And thank you for walking in the door.

## On Potluck Gatherings:

Please never, ever let the label "potluck" keep you from attending a UUCUV event! If you didn't happen to bring something, don't bat an eyelash, get in line—there is always enough to share. If you have food sensitivities and allergies and ethical eating disciplines, know that many people bring foods with these issues in mind. Many folks who bring dishes bring ingredient labels or are standing right there to tell you what they put in.

*"Home is the one place in all this world where hearts are sure of each other. It is the place of confidence. It is the place where we tear off that mask of guarded and suspicious coldness which the world forces us to wear in self-defense, and where we pour out the unreserved communications of full and confiding hearts. It is the spot where expressions of tenderness gush out without any sensation of awkwardness and without any dread of ridicule."*

*~Frederick W. Robertson*



## Caring Circle Update

*Rich Greenlee*



Our Caring Circle was very active in the month of July! There were too many folks pitching in, visiting, making calls, driving, running errands to name them all! At the end of the month I turned “the blue book” of helper lists over to Babette as she was the contact point for the month of August. It has really been a pleasure to see so many UUCUV folks giving of themselves, their time, and their loving hearts. What a joy and point of optimism! I saw the strength and the shared joy of “community.”

A Summary of activity for the month of July:

- kept track of a member who moved to a new level of assisted living
- communicated with a member in medical care - informed her closest UUCUV buddies and Caring Circle visitors when visits, calls, and cards were appreciated!
- followed up on a friend with changing medical needs, kept Patience in the loop
- laughed with a member while waiting in a waiting room
- drove various folks to medical appointments - drivers signed up immediately and enthusiastically!
- wrote and sent greeting cards
- brainstormed ways to involve a lonely friend in activities at the UUCUV
- learned of another member who had become ill and called to ask what we could do
- did a couple of loads of laundry
- picked up a few bags of groceries for someone who temporarily couldn't get out of the house
- reached out with email and phone calls to a member whose spouse had become suddenly ill
- loaded a UHaul for a friend who was moving and had sprained her ankle! Shout out to our Youth and our friends at the Lutheran Church who also came - the truck was loaded in 90 minutes flat!

If you have needs, please see the Weekly Blast for the monthly coordinator to contact.

To join the Caring Circle, simply answer here on the list of things you might be able to help with!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/UUCUVCare>

## **New Book for Our Library:** *Together*, by Jennie Lou Harriman

*Rev. Patience Stoddard*

When visiting a few of our members who live at Kendal this summer, I saw some wonderful large cutout art of residents interacting with children. When I asked about the artwork I discovered it was done by our UUCUV friend Jennie Harriman, and had been made into a “children’s” book. I promptly bought it for our library. It will be with other children’s books in our new library. If you wish to see it beforehand, just let me know as it is now in our temporary office.

## 21st Year of Pods for the Pulpit Crafts Fair

*Margo Nutt*

November 27 and 28 will mark the 21st Annual Pods for the Pulpit Crafts Fair, a major fundraising event put on by our church. This year the funds raised will be shared by UUCUV and three local nonprofits who serve the wider community. Revenue comes from booth fees and the raffle.

Once again, this year's raffle item is a colored woodblock print donated by Lyme artist Matt Brown. Music will be provided by Chief Noda, guitarist, from Brockton, Massachusetts.



Two floors, with 45 vendors, will show a wide variety of high quality crafts including jewelry in many forms, pottery, rag rugs, quilting, woodblock prints, herbals, marbled paper and silk, basketry, floor cloths, etchings, felted sculptures, knits and woven goods, fiber art, cactus gardens, wreaths, hand spun yarn and woven wool rugs, braided rugs, ornaments, photographs, painted gourds, elf slippers, pins made of recycled zippers and sweaters, wooden lamps, stained glass, pickles, wreaths, buoy

bats, cupcakes, and more. You name it, we've got it!

The fair is held at Tracy Hall on Main Street in Norwich, Vermont from 10-4 on November 27 and 28. There is no admission fee. But people are strongly encouraged to purchase raffle tickets. Spread the word!

How can you help?

We will need the congregation to pitch in and help in various ways: to make soups and desserts for the vendors; serve lunch and booth-sit while vendors eat; be a greeter at the door and sell raffle tickets; help craftspeople set up before the fair and break down when it ends; email postcards

of our poster to non-UU friends; plaster the Upper Valley and beyond with posters.

Lori Fortini is in charge of signing on volunteers for lunch, raffle, set-up and clean-up.

Mary Layton chairs the lunch, and Suzanne Simon the raffle, and Sally Page the exhibitors. Margo Nutt is in charge of all publicity including recruiting people to put posters at designated locations.

Be thinking of how you can volunteer. Additional details and sign-up opportunities will be provided in the Weekly Blast and Order of Service as we get closer to the date of the fair.

Plan to come to the fair, and bring family and friends who are visiting for Thanksgiving!



**November 27 & 28**  
**Tracy Hall**



*21st Annual "Pods for the Pulpit"*

# CRAFTS FAIR



2015

FRIDAY & SATURDAY  
NOVEMBER 27 & 28

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

TRACY HALL, NORWICH, VERMONT

A benefit for Unitarian Universalist  
Congregation of the Upper Valley

# Spiritual Practices and Readings

*Rev. Patience Stoddard*

How shall we mend you, sweet Soul?  
What shall we use, and how is it  
In the first place you've come to be torn?  
Come and sit. Come tell me.  
We will find a way to mend you.

I would offer you so much, sweet Soul:  
This banana, sliced in rounds of palest  
Yellow atop hot cereal, or these raisins  
Scattered through it, if you'd rather.  
Would offer cellos in the background singing  
Melodies Vivaldi heard and wrote  
For us to keep. Would hold out to you  
Everything colored blue or lavender  
Or light green. All of this I would offer you,  
Sweet soul. All of it, or any piece of it,  
Might mend you.

I would offer you, sweet Soul,  
This chair by the window, this sunlight  
On the floor and the cat asleep in it.  
I would offer you my silence,  
My presence, all this love I have,  
And my sorrow you have become torn.

How shall we mend you, sweet Soul?  
With these, I think, gently  
We can begin: we will mend you  
With a rocking chair, some raisins;  
A cat, a field of lavender beginning  
Now to bloom. We will mend you with songs  
Remembered entirely the first time  
Ever they are heard.

We will mend you with pieces of your own  
Sweet self, sweet Soul—with what you've taught  
From the very beginning.

From *Instructions in Joy* by Nancy Shaffer

*These are the Days of Awe, Rosh Hashanah,  
The Jewish New Year.  
A holy presence hovers in the air  
And you are asked to unpack your very heart,  
To turn with the turning of the year.  
To drop humbly and gently to the earth  
And praise the Source of Life,  
the source that gives you breath.*

By the Rev. Nurya Love Parish

## **A Body Meditation by Erika A. Hewitt**

"Holy One, You knit me together in my mother's womb."

Psalm 139

Let us remember and celebrate, this morning,  
that each of our bodies was woven together  
in the depths of mystery:

cells multiplying, tissue taking form,  
organs taking up their function,  
all under the silky cover of skin.

Let us gather in reverence for the gift of these bodies,  
whatever their ages,

their shapes,  
their abilities,

and may we know them to be channels of the world  
coming alive through us:

These bodies,  
these blessings,  
bring the world to life  
through seeing, taste,  
hearing, scent, and touch.

May we bring to our intricately woven bodies  
a sense of sacred caretaking.

In doing so, let us also be grateful  
for the embrace of the Holy:

the Presence that creates and sustains life,  
the Mystery that knit together each of our bodies,  
and the force of Love that celebrates our desires.

## Partner Church News

*Polly Gould and Claudia Kern*



*Students in the Khasi Hills – photo by Rev. Bruce Johnson*

### Student Sponsorship Update

UUCUV and individual members and friends are currently sponsoring 5 students from Mukhap, the village of our Partner Church in India. Although it is back-to-school time for students here in the US, students in India have been in school since January. Polly Gould just sent a package to our students in Meghalaya. Each student is receiving a different one of our favorite hymns like “Morning Has Broken” or “Spirit of Life,” also a poem or two, mechanical pencils that don’t need sharpeners, and a special letter and post card. For most of them there is a photo of the student’s sponsor or sponsors. Neeta Shain made a knitted hat for the Youth Group’s student, Blessfulness Rabon, so the hat went too. Some of the other items were a walking map of historical Norwich, a map of Vermont, photos of

the new meeting house under construction, photos of the Youth Service in June, and a puzzle of the United States. Before sending the puzzle, Polly assembled it, and wrote their names and some greetings on the plain back of the puzzle, and then put the loose pieces in a plastic bag. Maybe they’ll have fun putting it together and reading the back. Because of the sponsorships, these five Khasi students have friends in the UUCUV thousands of miles from India.

### Learn About Our Partnership Activities. Chai & Sweets, October 2

Each November, we renew our commitment to supporting these students and welcome new sponsors for additional students. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor or are new to UUCUV and wondering about our partner church program, come to sip chai and enjoy Indian sweets Friday, October 2, 7:00 PM. Polly & Frank Gould and Phil & Claudia Kern will host this casual event at Phil & Claudia’s home in Wilder, VT. Space is limited; so to attend please RSVP as soon as possible to Claudia ([Claudia.anne.kern@gmail.com](mailto:Claudia.anne.kern@gmail.com)).

### Travel Grants Available for Pilgrimage to Visit Meghalaya and Our Partner Church in March!

Up to \$500 is available for a person from our congregation who would like to make the pilgrimage to India this coming March. The grant and trip are offered by UU Partner Church Council. To learn more about the trip please visit <http://www.uupcc.org/pilgrimages/pilgrimage-opportunities>. Reservations must be made by mid-November. To learn more about the grant application process see: [www.uupcc.org/pilgrimages/travel-grants](http://www.uupcc.org/pilgrimages/travel-grants). Deadline for applications is October 15.

# Ways to Get Involved in Our Congregation!

## Join a Sunday Team

Anyone who would like to participate in hosting Sunday Services as part of a team, who has not already been assigned to one, please email Mary Shain at [jimandmaryshain@gmail.com](mailto:jimandmaryshain@gmail.com).

This is a good way to meet people and have a lot of fun --and help the congregation as well. The teams take responsibility for one month of services. They set up for the service, provide refreshments, welcome people as they arrive, and put things back in order afterwards.

If you have been assigned to a team, but are also willing to be put on a "call" list if there is a need on a particular day, please let Mary know.

## Join the Caring Circle

We have begun a new way of matching up people who need a hand in some way (rides, cards, visits, meals, etc.) with people in the congregation willing to help when able. (Please see the article on page 9 about this initiative!) If you would like to be part of the Caring Circle in some way, please talk to Patience or Sparrow. The more willing hands we have listed for various needs, the better we can take care of each other when those needs arise.

## Sing in the Choir

The UUCUV choir sings September through June. We rehearse at a once-a-month potluck and on Sunday morning when we sing (twice a month). Whenever possible, music and listening links are made available in advance. **New this year--Open Choir Sundays.** On Sept. 27, we will have our first open choir Sunday. Starting at 9:00 am, with whomever shows up, Linda will warm up the group, and we will learn and prepare a piece to be sung in the service. If you love to sing but can't do choir regularly, give this a try. There are also opportunities to provide special music throughout the year. Contact Patience, Linda Hoover or Paul Schmidt of the Sunday Services Committee if you are interested!

## Contribute Music & Readings

The Sunday Services committee is always looking for people to share special music, provide accompaniment,

or read for the chalice lighting or opening words during a service. They are very interested in adding other voices and diversity to our music offerings.

## Join the Women's Group 3rd Thursday monthly, 5:30 PM

Women's Group has met since 2005 and our goal has remained the same – to relax, get to know each other better, and to keep it simple!

We gather at Sally Page's (visit the church website or contact the office for directions) on the third Thursday of each month. For those who want to sup together we meet by 5:30 (eat at 6) for a simple pot luck salad meal. Just bring some ingredient(s) to add to a pot luck salad. Peppers? Sunflower seeds? Lettuce? Cukes? Tomatoes? Bread? Salad dressing? Not a lot. Just enough.

Those choosing not to eat will come at 6:30.

Once we are fed, and others have arrived, we move to the living room and take time for brief check-ins to share how our lives are going. Here, and throughout the evening, the right to reticence will be honored and confidentiality respected. We then have a discussion generated from suggestions from the group. The evening generally includes a good belly laugh, and though we don't try to resolve each other's problems they seem lightened by sharing.

We will be mindful of those coming from a distance and break up by 8:30.

Please email Sally for directions to her home.

Sally Page [baciquail@comcast.net](mailto:baciquail@comcast.net)

## Volunteer at a Special Event

The church has numerous events throughout the year, and volunteers are hugely appreciated for set up, cooking and baking, planning, manning tables, sorting donated items, cleaning up, crafting, helping with children's activities, carpentry, taking pictures, gardening...you never know what might be needed! Watch for opportunities in the Weekly Blasts.

## More Ways to Get Involved! Our Social Action In the Wider Community

### LISTEN Community Dinners

It is easy to overlook the hidden poverty of our scenic and affluent region. Our UUCUV cook team is one of more than 40 teams who prepare and serve hot, nutritious meals for the LISTEN Program. Upwards of 20,000 meals are served annually, at no cost, and as you might imagine, the need increases each year. We currently cook for up to 100 guests at each dinner. Seniors and families with children make up the majority of our guests.

Participating in the LISTEN Dinner Program is just one of the ways our congregation gives back to the Upper Valley community. All are welcome to join our team - no experience is necessary, and you are not required to work at every dinner; only sign up for the ones that fit your schedule. We offer 2 shifts: prep & cook from 3:00p.m. - 4:45 p.m. and serve & cleanup from 4:45 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. and you may choose to work one or both shifts. Please call me at 603-643-7494 or send an email to [knitrmom@gmail.com](mailto:knitrmom@gmail.com) if you would like to sign up or have questions.

Stay tuned to the weekly blasts for our schedule. I hope you will consider joining us: work at a dinner, donate fresh produce or a homemade dessert, or offer funds to purchase such items to supplement the meal. We have a good time together doing meaningful work for our Upper Valley neighbors. I find this work deeply gratifying, and I hope you will, too.

*Suzanne Simon*

### Partner Church

Our congregation has a partnership with the Mukhap Unitarian Church in India. Our two churches communicate regularly and find ways to enrich each other's lives through our common spiritual aims and varying resources. Please talk to Claudia Kern or Polly Gould if you are interested in being part of this endeavor.

[claudia.anne.kern@gmail.com](mailto:claudia.anne.kern@gmail.com)  
[polly1gould@yahoo.com](mailto:polly1gould@yahoo.com)



### Supporting the Work of The Haven

We collect food and personal care items at Sunday services to be delivered to The Upper Valley Haven. We also support them financially through the Pods for the Pulpit Craft Fair earnings. This year, a portion of the minister's discretionary fund was donated to help families in need of emergency housing or support.

### Dismas House

“Dismas House provides transitional housing for men and women leaving Vermont’s prisons, with residences in Burlington, Rutland, Winooski, and Hartford. The mission of Dismas is to create a supportive, family-like environment where healthy community is nurtured, and relationships between offenders and society members are mutually healed. We help former prisoners return to productive lives by reducing revolving-door incarceration, increasing public safety, and saving taxpayer dollars. Dismas House does not have a therapeutic model to work with sex offenders.” (from a Dismas House brochure)

If you are interested in helping Dismas directly, they are looking for volunteers to help with meals occasionally, do projects at the House or participate in a committee. Please contact Deb Diegoli, 1061 Route 5, Springfield, VT 05156 [dldiegolivt@gmail.com](mailto:dldiegolivt@gmail.com)

### Interfaith Power & Light

We are a member of this national organization of faith communities dedicated to the promotion of clean energy and awareness of global warming. For more information, contact Mardy or Colin High.

[mhigh22@gmail.com](mailto:mhigh22@gmail.com)  
[chigh@rsginc.com](mailto:chigh@rsginc.com)

## Board of Directors

*Cappy Nunlist, President*  
*Frank Gould, Vice President*  
*Kathy Christie, Treasurer*  
*Bess Schmidt, Secretary*  
*Anne Alford, Member-at-Large*  
*Mary Shain, Member-at-Large*  
*Jeremy Coylewright, Member-at-Large*

## Staff

*The Rev. Patience Stoddard, Minister*  
*Sparrow F. Alden,*  
*Credentialed Religious Educator*  
*Linda Hoover, Music Director*  
*Rachel Clark, Office Admin.*

## Committee/ Task Force Chairs

Committee on Ministry: *Lori Fortini, Phil Kern, Suzanne Simon*  
Library: *Olive MacGregor*  
Sunday Teams: *Mary Shain*  
Partner Church: *Polly Gould, Claudia Kern*  
New Building Steering Committee: *Bill Brawley, Joani Nierenberg, BJ Shabel*  
Newsletter Help Team: *Margo Nutt, Mardy High, Claudia Kern*  
Nominating Committee: *Suzanne Simon, Barbara Clapp, Paul Schmidt*  
Sunday Services: *Paul Schmidt*  
Ways and Means: *Lori Fortini*

# About the UUCUV



**OUR MISSION:** We strive to be a joyful, inclusive congregation that nurtures spiritual and intellectual growth for everyone while encouraging lives of service and integrity.

**OUR VISION:** We, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Upper Valley, unite to provide diverse gatherings with music, ceremony, dialogue, and joy in support of each other's spiritual well-being;

to maintain an active program of religious education for adults and children;  
to find ways for each of us to participate in activities that will provide fellowship, be intergenerational, and serve the wider community;  
to sustain our vitality toward building a sanctuary and increasing our membership;  
to fulfill our commitment to be environmentally responsible;  
to fulfill our commitment to be a Welcoming Congregation;  
to be a positive influence in the world;  
to welcome all who share our mission and covenant.

**OUR COVENANT:** We covenant with each other to speak and act with thoughtful intentions, compassionate truthfulness, and constructive encouragement, in order to build and nurture a loving and supportive environment where all will feel safe to explore our spiritual truths.

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**SUNDAY SERVICES:** Services are currently held at the Black Community Center in Hanover at 10 a.m., while our new building is being constructed. Child care is available. Religious education classes are provided during the service.

**MEETINGHOUSE:** Located at 320 Route 5 South in Norwich opposite The Family Place, the Greek Revival farmhouse contains our offices and meeting spaces. It is currently undergoing renovation and a new sanctuary should be completed by this winter.

**MINISTER:** You may contact Rev. Patience Stoddard at minister@uucuv.org, at her home phone (603) 756-9260, or if urgent, (603) 313-1169 (cell). Her regular office hours are Tuesday and Thursday 10:00-4:00.

**CREDENTIALLED RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR:** Email Sparrow F. Alden at education@uucuv.org.

**MUSIC DIRECTOR:** Email Linda Hoover at music@uucuv.org.

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE:** Rachel's regular hours are Tuesday through Friday 10-1, unless otherwise posted. Contact her at (802) 649-8828, or email office@uucuv.org.

**CARES AND CONCERNS:** With cares and concerns, please contact the Caring Circle Coordinator and/or the Rev. Patience Stoddard or Sparrow Alden (contact information above).

**NEWS:** To receive our weekly email news "blasts" and/or The Call, our quarterly e-newsletter, email Rachel at the office (above) and ask to be added to our list. Hard copies of The Call are available on Sundays for those who need them.

### NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

The submissions deadline for the Winter issue is November 15. Please send your submissions to Rachel: [office@uucuv.org](mailto:office@uucuv.org)

### "WEEKLY BLAST" DEADLINE:

Send news items to Rachel by 9 AM Wednesdays for inclusion in the weekly news email.

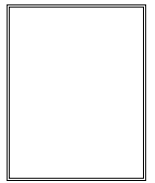




Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
of the Upper Valley

PO Box 1110

Norwich, VT 05055



**Pods for the Pulpit  
Craft Fair**

**November 27 & 28**

**Tracy Hall, Norwich**

**UUCUV September - November**

*UUCUV Phone: (802) 649-8828*

*Web: <http://www.uucuv.org>*

*E-mail: [office@uucuv.org](mailto:office@uucuv.org)*

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