

The Call

Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of the Upper Valley

Winter 2014-15
December - February

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Sunday Services 9:30 & 11 AM

Sermon topics may be found on our website, www.uucuv.org, as well as in the Sunday Order of Service.

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

Many Hands Make Light Work

Rev. Patience Stoddard

Recently I was asked by the UU District Executive, Joe Sullivan, if there was anything happening in our congregation that other congregations might find valuable. I responded, "Yes. Our Monthly Teams!" The list of benefits from this experiment in hospitality and welcoming are many. Not only do our Teams do a great job of setting up the room for Sunday Services and feed us well at coffee hour, they also have proven effective in welcoming visitors, encouraging participation by those who we tend to see infrequently or who are newcomers, and, most importantly, reminding us that the work and ministry of the congregation is the responsibility of all of us.

There is a long history of dedicated and hard-working members in this congregation. However, to become a truly vital community that reaches both in and out to others effectively, we need many open hearts and willing hands, many perspectives and new ideas. We need to remember this as we move forward in the plan to build a new Meetinghouse for services and community gatherings. While currently the leadership of this effort is being spearheaded by an astoundingly competent and dedicated Steering Committee with support from the Board, as the project moves forward it will require everyone's ideas, suggestions, financial contributions, and eventually elbow grease.

This focus on "the work of the whole" may mean less dependence on traditional committees and more on creative ways to marshal our individual gifts on behalf of the congregation and its members. An example of this approach is the newly launched Caring Circle plan described later in this newsletter.

At the conclusion of our long discussion on the past year at UUCUV, Joe Sullivan commented that it was amazing how much had been accomplished and how united the congregation has become. While the challenges of raising money and planning for a new Meetinghouse may seem a bit daunting, there is no doubt in my mind that we are ready to move forward together.

With gratitude and excitement,

Your Minister,

Patience

**Save the Date: Dec. 14
Congregational Meeting on
Building Design & Funding
* Members Will Be Voting ***

See page 11



President's Message

Cappy Nunlist

There were times in the past 30 years with the UUCUV when I questioned my commitment to the UUCUV.

I was raised a UU and valued this community as a place to raise my own children. Certainly I shared the UUCUV's mission of being a welcoming, socially active community. But there was something missing – a spark, a sense of joy, the comfort of cohesiveness.

I agreed to serve as board secretary in 2011 and there began a series of unfortunate events – to put it mildly. A number of our beloved congregants died, moved away or left the church for a variety of reasons. The illness of our interim minister left us without ministerial guidance, and those members who were called upon to shoulder additional duties were exhausted and disheartened. It was in these dire circumstances, I suddenly realized that this was a community that deserved to be saved. I volunteered to serve as president. Shortly thereafter, Rev. Patience Stoddard arrived at our doorstep in a wave of warmth, kindness, and

can-do optimism—and the sun came out.

I no longer wonder why I remain committed to this congregation. When I enter our Meetinghouse on Sunday mornings, the spirit of joy is palpable. When I look around for newcomers during coffee hour, I find each one engaged in conversation with a member (and often several members). When congregants are asked to join a committee or task force, the answer is almost always an enthusiastic yes – and we keep finding chores being done even before anyone has been asked to do them! We have children again at our services – and they want to be there. Both the UUA and the District are astounded that we have launched a building project with lightning speed against all odds. The shared vision, transparent process and communication with the whole community at every benchmark has defied these odds. We have become a true community – in every good sense of the word – and I am so glad to be a part of it.

Board Report

Bess Schmidt, Board Secretary

The board held a retreat in September at the home of board president Cappy Nunlist, in lieu of a regular board meeting. It was a day of fruitful discussion and brainstorming focusing on issues of governance. Together with Reverend Patience Stoddard and CRE Sparrow Alden, the board identified key areas in the structure of our congregation and evaluated their effectiveness. Communications and membership were chosen as target areas for improvement, and the board is currently examining new ways to fulfill these important services at UUCUV.

In October the board met with the Steering Committee to hear of their progress and to discuss the most effective ways to structure the process as we go forward with the building project. In addition, the board authorized the hiring of a new teacher for children's religious education and approved a contract for the removal of a dead tree in front of the Meetinghouse.

In November the board considered and discussed several congregational policies. The cancellation policy was reviewed and approved, a revised charitable gifts policy was approved, and the current safety policy was revoked

in anticipation of a new safety policy to be voted on in December. The board will continue to review and update congregational policies throughout the year and will make them easily accessible to all. The board also approved the proposed motions from the Steering Committee in advance of the upcoming special congregational meeting.

The board meets the second Thursday of each month at the Meetinghouse (check the calendar for details). Board meetings are open to all members of the congregation. Minutes of the board meetings are available at the Meetinghouse.

Snow/Cancellation Policy

If Sunday service, or any other UUCUV event, is cancelled due to inclement weather, all members and friends on our e-mail list will be notified by e-mail at least two hours before the service or event. The change will also be noted on the recorded message at the UUCUV Meetinghouse (802-649-8828).

“Caring Circle” to Begin

Rev. Patience Stoddard

First, I want to thank Sparrow and Lori for their work on getting out the survey on ways in which we can support each other, and thank the 38 individuals who volunteered to be called when needed. In addition, 10 of the respondents offered to serve as monthly coordinators.

The offerings of service included:

- Offer rides
- Take someone shopping
- Help with household chores
- Help with outdoor chores
- Cook and deliver food
- Visit someone at home / hospital / nursing home
- Provide onetime childcare
- Help with minor repairs
- Make a phone call or write a card
- Help someone with filling out forms or writing letters
- Share a holiday
- Provide respite for a caregiver
- Get information about community resources
- Pet sitting
- Reading aloud

THIS
SEASON,
MEND A QUARREL.
SEEK OUT A FORGOTTEN
FRIEND. DISMISS SUSPICION AND
REPLACE IT WITH TRUST. WRITE A
LOVE LETTER. SHARE SOME TREASURE.
GIVE A SOFT ANSWER. ENCOURAGE SOMEONE.
MANIFEST YOUR LOYALTY IN WORDS AND DEEDS.
KEEP A PROMISE. FIND THE TIME. FORGO A GRUDGE.
FORGIVE AN ENEMY. LISTEN. APOLOGIZE IF YOU ARE
WRONG. TRY TO UNDERSTAND. EXAMINE YOUR DEMANDS
ON OTHERS. THINK FIRST OF SOMEONE ELSE. FLOUT ENVY. BE
KIND. APPRECIATE. BE GENTLE. LAUGH A LITTLE. LAUGH A LITTLE
MORE. DESERVE CONFIDENCE. EXPRESS YOUR GRATITUDE. SAY A
PRAYER. WELCOME A STRANGER. GLADDEN THE HEART OF ANOTHER.
TAKE PLEASURE IN THE BEAUTY AND WONDER OF THE EARTH.
SPEAK YOUR LOVE.
SPEAK IT AGAIN.
SPEAK IT
ONCE AGAIN.

December will be the first official month to begin this approach to fulfilling our mission to be a caring and compassionate congregation. Lori Fortini will be contacting those who offered to be coordinators. We plan to have cards that will be put out with the hymnal at each service by January and publish each month's coordinator in the Weekly Blast email. All specific requests from oneself or out of concern for another should go to Patience, Sparrow or Rachel by phone or email or emailed directly to that month's Caring Circle Coordinator. All requests will be considered confidential beyond the staff and the Coordinator. And please, please don't hesitate to ask! While most of us are more comfortable giving than receiving, there can be no giving without those who are willing to receive.

Caring Circle Coordinator this winter:

December: Lori Fortini

January: Mary Shain

February: Claudia Kern



Most commonly, generosity is understood to be about giving freely,

and putting others' needs before one's own.

While this definition isn't wrong,

I think it's a bit too simplistic.

Over the years, I've come to realize that generosity is a two-way street.

It's an openness of heart

that's just as much about graciously receiving as it is about giving.

~Sunada Takagi



Holiday Opportunities



Holiday Services at the UUCUV

Sunday December 21st at 9:30 & 11 AM: Light in the Dark of the Year. Patience and Sparrow will lead a service for all ages including reflection on the winter solstice and a very special story.

Wednesday, December 24th at 4:30 PM: The Christmas Pageant. Come prepared to don animal ears or halos and to join in the readers'-theater narration and music of the Christmas story. Pajamas are completely acceptable pageant attire, particularly if they make you look like a lamb. Will Frank Gould reprise his role as King Herod? There's only one way to find out!



The Alden family brings a pot of chili con carne to enjoy after this service, anyone who needs a nice place to bring-their-own dinner or share is more than welcome to join them. Sparrow and Miss Sheena might just have a little bibliophilic gift for their RE kids.

Wednesday, December 24 at 6:00 PM: Silent Night. Come for quiet contemplation, come to hear the story of the gospel according to Luke, come to believe in the miraculously ordinary story of a baby. We will sing, we will pray, we will shine a light in the darkness.

Hartford/Norwich Holiday Basket Helpers

This very organized group does an excellent job getting food and some needed gifts to many Upper Valley neighbors. Please see their website for more info.

<http://holidaybasketsvt.org>

Support The Family Place Gingerbread House Festival! Dec. 13

It's fun, delicious, and an excellent way to share the love with our across-the-street neighbors! <http://www.family-placevt.org/category/gingerbread-festival/>

Caroling at Nursing Homes on Christmas Morning!

Once again this year we will be visiting Brookside and Hanover Terrace Nursing Homes on Christmas morning to visit with residents, sing carols, and share holiday cards and greetings. We will meet at Brookside at 10:00 AM and at Hanover Terrace at 11:00 AM. If you are planning to attend or need directions, please contact Rich Greenlee (802-436-1150 or Hartlandvt@aol.com). Car pooling from the Meetinghouse may be arranged. Thanks!



The Upper Valley Haven Needs Us!

Unsure what to give the person who has everything? How about support for The Haven? They particularly need: warm, good quality winter gear; diapers and adult diapers; personal care supplies including soap and feminine hygiene products; 6'x8' tarps; sleeping bags.



Knitting for a Cause

Sparrow is knitting scrubby washcloths for The Upper Valley Haven and sending a note to her friends and family far away, "I made you a washcloth and gave it to someone else. #VolunteeredInYourHonor"

With cotton yarn, cast on 3 stitches.

Slip 1, yarn over, knit to the end. Repeat until the row is 8 inches across.

Knit 1 row plain

K2tog, knit to the end. Repeat until you have 3 stitches.

Cast off.

Member News

New Members: The Coylewrights

Our newest members, Megan and Jeremy Coylewright, joined the UUCUV in a quiet moment early in November. Megan's busy schedule as attending physician in her cardiology specialty at DHMC makes it a rare treat to see her, Jeremy, and their four kids all in one moment! The family came to us from Minnesota, so they're well prepared for winter, but their eldest daughter Izzy says the small size of Hanover took a little bit of adjustment. The whole family loves being outdoors and active; their favorite spot in Minnesota is a summer camp which various members have been attending for many years. Perhaps they'll enjoy paddling on the Connecticut at a UUCUV event next spring!

The Coylewrights are a Unitarian Universalist family of long standing. Jeremy's calling as a leader of the Our Whole Lives sexuality education program led to their swiftly finding and joining the UUCUV. Jeremy's education chops include OWL for the teen and pre-teen age groups plus, well, *every* subject for every age from cradle through high school. All the Coylewright kids have enjoyed the advantages of home schooling from the start. The family specializes in Baking Science!

Willa (who loves animals), Angel (who loves gymnastics), Indigo (who loves just about anything active), and Izzy (who truly loves to fuss over her little siblings and to do child care and is training to be a counselor at the summer camp) have all integrated themselves into the UUCUV religious education program. The two elder kids are part of the very active Junior Youth group; Izzy will graduate to senior youth when she completes Coming of Age this year with the help of her mentor Suzanne Simon.

We will all enjoy getting to know the Coylewrights, their gentle voices, and mischievous smiles. Congratulate them on signing the membership book and take the time to talk with any one of them over a cup of coffee and - if you're lucky - some of their fabulous baked goods.

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE



Update from Karen and Terry

Karen Kluge and Terry Rosenmeier are beloved former members who moved away to Arizona in September.

Dear UUCUV:

We have been here in Green Valley, AZ now for 6 weeks. We've gotten through the monsoon rains and are starting to notice a gradual decrease in the temperature. We still get up before dawn and walk the mile down to our rec center, work out for a while, and then walk back home. After that we go birding or butterflying, or go to a class, or a walk in the desert, or what have you. We've been to UUCGV (yep, just one letter changes!) a couple of times, and Karen has even sung with the choir! Karen also went beyond her comfort zone and went to the auditions for the local community theatre group's upcoming production. Not knowing what the play was or what the roles being cast were, and not having done any theatre since high school. She was really surprised to be cast in one of the 4 leading roles!

We've had bad news to contend with as well.... Karen's Mom's second husband Lee also had cancer return, was moved to hospice, and died last Friday night. We feel that it is a real blessing that we can hop in the car and be there in less than 3 hours. News of Jan Sorice's death has reached us as well, and we join with you in mourning her passing.

We join too in hopes for the congregation's continued progress towards a new building. We never thought the congregation was on firm enough ground financially to build a new building, but we'd be tickled pink to be proven wrong....) Keep us informed of your progress. Missing you all!

Karen and Terry, October 2014

“Becoming a Member” by Jack Mendelsohn

Joining [this congregation] for you may mean fresh steps along a familiar path. It may mean venturing in uncharted territory. In either case, the initiative is yours. You do not sign on someone else's dotted line of spiritual development, and there is no fine print. Your signature is your affirming symbol of commitment to an open-minded, inclusive, reasoned, seasoned, compassionate and contemporary approach to life.

Sharing the Voice of Marj Hybels

Mardy High

I love going to see Marj Hybels, who was such a dear friend of our mother, Toni Stoneback, and visited her often when Mom lived in Hemlock Ridge. Marj now lives in Brookside Nursing Home in Wilder and Kathy and I visit her there, often singing to her.

On a recent visit I was by myself, and I found her resting in bed after lunch. I was on a mission to find out if Marj might like to share a thought or two with the rest of the Congregation. Our new format in the CALL gives us the chance to offer some deeper reflections.

Those of us who are fortunate to be coming to services really do miss those who are homebound. We can visit one-on-one, but we are still missing their voices among us when we are gathered.

At this time of year when the cold and dark close in, even we who are mobile tend to “hunker down” and perhaps turn to inner contemplation. Deliberately slowing down and taking time to nourish the inner spirit is one of the good things that can happen in the winter. We may have something in common with our homebound friends when we do this.

So I wondered if Marj was willing to share some thoughts with us, in the CALL.

I asked her this question near the beginning of my visit, not expecting an immediate answer. We went on to talk about many wonderful things, and as I was almost ready to leave, I reminded her of my original question, thinking I would come back in a few days and take notes.

What follows is the remarkable gem that she offered. My words are in italics. There were some long pauses where I just waited quietly, still holding her hand.

What sustains your spirit when you are here, unable to come to services and gatherings at the UUCUV?

.....

Love makes angel music.

.....

The thought that God is love makes me happy, always has made me happy.

.....

There is a line from a Christmas Carol we used to sing long ago, “Love makes angel music.” I have always loved that idea. That line comes into my head very often.

.....

“Though in David’s city angels sing no more,
Love makes angel music on earth’s darkest shore”

.....

What a beautiful carol, I don’t think I’ve heard it. I’ll look for it when I get home.

.....

“In the lonely midnight, on a wintry hill,
Shepherds heard the angels singing, ‘Peace, good will.’

Though in David’s city angels sing no more,
Love makes angel music on earth’s darkest shore;”

.....

Thank you for sharing this. Next time I come, I hope to sing it with you.

Thank you for coming. It’s lovely to see you.



In Remembrance of Jan Sorice,

1954-2014

Jan, a much-loved member of our congregation since 1990, died peacefully at home on September 24.

Jan had an enduring, joyful spirit; a tenacious determination to suck the marrow from each experience, a huge capacity for intellectual curiosity, and deep passion for the Earth and for the rights of all beings.

You wouldn't have know it, but her roots were Southern. Born and raised in New Orleans, she went to high school in Chappaqua, NY. After high school, she was to attend Wellesley College. Her tuition had already been paid when she learned that Dartmouth had just voted to begin accepting women. She couldn't resist the challenge to be in the first co-ed Dartmouth class. She was one of the first women to letter in athletics at Dartmouth.

During college she studied in Italy and in France, loving both so much that she stayed on in both countries after the semesters ended. After graduation with a BA in anthropology, she put on her advocacy boots and worked on sovereignty rights for the Mashpee Tribe of Native Americans. Then she was off to Alaska which was to remain her soul home for her entire life. When not working on environmental protection, she skied, crabbed, salmon-fished, sea-kayaked, and strapped on a tool belt to help build a cabin on a coastal island.

In her late twenties, Jan became ill with Lymphangiomyomatosis (LAM) and eventually had to return to the Upper Valley. Despite the many complications and crises of this disease, Jan lived vibrantly. She loved music and theater and avidly attended lectures at the college. She was very active in the work leading to UUCUV becoming a Green Sanctuary, she served on the Board, and she just showed up – even when it wasn't easy.

Our congregation had a place deep in Jan's heart. She was so appreciative of the care she received from her UU friends – rides, casseroles, walking and kayaking companions, and many, many cards, hospital and home visits, and more. In return, she taught us all so much about living.

Claudia Kern

They whom we love and lost are no longer where they were before. They are now wherever we are.

~St. John Chrystostom



In Remembrance of Rev. Lee Devoe,

1959-2014

Rev. Lee Devoe came to the UUCUV as an interim minister in September 2011. She saw us through some exciting times and some difficult times. She encouraged us to reflect on who we are as a congregation and where we wanted to go. Under her leadership we took first steps in long process of evaluating what we wanted and needed in a settled minister. She helped us draft a new Covenant, and Mission and Vision Statements. She energized and organized us. In March 2012, the Board voted to extend her contract for another year. Unfortunately, that was not to be, as she received a cancer diagnosis and had to go on indefinite medical leave. Her time with us was short, but she left a lasting impression.

Lee grew up in Vermont, attended Middlebury College, and earned her Master of Divinity degree from the Pacific School of Religion. She served congregations across the country and in Canada as an interim minister, which became her specialty. The UUCUV was lucky to have her among us, even for a short time.

Margo Nutt

Rev. Lee Devoe passed away Saturday, Oct. 18, 2014.





Children & Youth Religious Ed News

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE

Schedule

Remember to check the Weekly Blast, <http://uucuv.org/category/religious-education-news/>, and the calendar for topical details on our children and youth religious education programs. We have 30 registered children whose Sunday morning RE plan takes advantage of our two-service format:

9:30: Child care with Miss Sheena

9:30 twice a month: Junior Youth with Sparrow

11:00: Preschool with Miss Sheena

11:00: Primary grades with Sparrow

11:00 once a month: Youth and Junior Youth with a Special Guest

We Have a New Preschool RE Teacher!

What's going on in the preschool?! Sheena Morris, known as Miss Sheena to the kids, keeps them hopping! She is our newest religious education teacher, adapting the famous *Chalice Children* curriculum for kids from three through kindergarten to match our special congregation and space. She is focusing on the Chalice as the central symbol and the seven principles as the guiding ideas for her small students. Lessons have already included sorting the food for the Haven, a fire drill, making chalices, and decorating cards to send to shut-in congregants.

Her BS in Early Childhood Ed from Berry College included student teaching and field experiences with preschool through 5th grade. For her ESL qualifications, she spent a month in Italy teaching in Palermo and Tuscany while experiencing immersion in a foreign language environment. As an educator, she leans toward the foundational principles of Maria Montessori, acknowledging that the teacher's privilege is preparation of a rich multisensory environment which allows children's natural instinct for learning to flourish. Miss Sheena provides structure and agenda for the kids and her high expectations of behavior include gentle reminders so everyone can participate in their learning community. She holds a Vermont teacher's license to work with kids from birth through 3rd grade as well as licensure in Georgia and Massachusetts. She has

learned the fundamentals in ASL and hopes to strengthen that language in her repertoire.

Miss Sheena travels from Massachusetts to join us every Sunday with her mother Bobbie and her high-school aged sister JoJo who has joined the Youth group. She's a knitter (guess how she met Sparrow) and had primary responsibility for homeschooling her sister when her mother was deployed with the Air Force in Iraq and South Korea. When she first agreed to be our preschool leader, Sparrow gave her a crash course on Unitarian Universalism; they discovered that "Universalism" is exactly the philosophy behind how Bobbie led her family's spiritual and ethical development.

Five children are registered in Miss Sheena's preschool which meets every week at the 11:00 service. Children place soft foam blocks of joy and concern and if they have not yet found their voices, their block can read their minds and hearts and hold their feelings for them. Their Covenant "Be Nice to One Another" is displayed prominently and reviewed every week. Miss Sheena also leads the child care at 9:30 service including a gentle structure with story time and crafts and outdoor time if the weather allows. How fortunate we are to have a creative, exciting teacher leading our smallest RE kids on their adventure of learning.

Many thanks to the Board for creatively finding funds to hire a consistent, professional, fun, and loving teacher for the children who need her most!

Coming Of Age

What happens when a congregant needs a little help making her home more accessible and a Coming of Age mentor is handy with tools? A young person gets experience with project planning, power tools, and that can-help attitude which characterizes this congregation. Everybody wins.

It's an aphorism among UU religious educators that:

All we do is religious education

The only thing we teach is Unitarian Universalism

And the congregation is the curriculum.

Therefore Coming of Age program of the UUCUV takes a straightforward approach to welcoming eighth and ninth

Children & Youth Religious Ed News

(Continued)

graders into adult status.

What is it exactly that UUs do? We practice justice, equity and compassion - so CoA kids do community service. We strive to make our democratically run congregations microcosms of how we want the world to be - so CoA kids participate in the life of the church. We encourage one another to spiritual growth and the free and responsible search for truth and meaning - so CoA kids develop personal spiritual practices.

And how do we do these things? With a little help from our friends. I am thrilled to say that four wonderful members have said, "Yes!" to the pleasure of mentoring our four Coming of Age students this year.

- Izzy Coylewright will be working with Suzanne Simon.
- Val Alden and Joani Nierenberg have teamed up.
- Peter Schmidt and Dave Nierenberg are already wielding drills and hardware
- And Sam Shain will be exploring UUism with Phil Kern.

Please take a moment to ask these kids how they're doing on their challenges and to thank the mentors for their gifts and graces.

OWL

UUs value health, inclusivity, self worth, joy, responsibility, and justice and that's why we sponsor and lead Our Whole Lives, the UUA/UCC sexuality education program. OWL is one way for whole congregations to make sure kids know *our* opinions: we trust that, given clear information and an opportunity to work out their ethics on sexual topics, our kids are going to reach good conclusions which work for them; everyone's values and beliefs are works in progress which will continue to develop over a lifespan of free and responsible search.

From the kindergarden module (can you name five healthy things to eat?) through the adult course (reflection on a lifetime of growth and relationship), this excellent curriculum affirms that we are whole beings, capable of making decisions, learning, and finding joy.

Jeremy Coylewright and I are both trained OWL facilitators and we've already had our heads together about hold-

ing classes for adults and youth this year. Two volunteers have stepped forward to receive training in the next budget year. The UUCUV's commitment to OWL is ongoing: we are all accepted, protected, and respected for who we are.

Youth/Junior Youth

from Jenny Tolman

The Youth and Junior Youth have had a good fall. We've enjoyed Youth Fridays, doing arts and crafts as well as unwinding after our school week.

As we approach the end of the year, we would love it if people could bring a recipe (with a little bit about what it means to them) to a church service to drop in the box labeled "Recipes." We will be ending our collection at the end of December, and hope to create a cookbook with profits benefiting the Youth fund.



Scarves for The Haven made by RE Kids

Parenting in the Holiday Rush

Here's what children really want:

Time with their family

Meaningful traditions

Relaxation, including plenty of sleep

Activities spread out over the whole month

Realistic expectations about gifts

Knowing the schedule beforehand

More time with their family

New Adult Programs and Services

Sparrow F. Alden and Rev. Patience Stoddard

Souper Second Sundays

What are the theological foundations of Unitarian Universalism? How does General Assembly work? What do people who have been longtime members as well as new visitors need to learn as our faith tradition adapts and changes and moves forward? But wait - this is winter. We're cold, we're skiing, we're not sure we can make a multi-week commitment to a "class". Fear not. Just have Souper Sunday with Patience. On second Sundays, Patience will bring her lunch (she makes a fabulous vegetable soup!) and have a discussion with whoever shows up! Bring your sandwich to this informal chance to talk, share stories, and contribute to the life of UUism while anchoring yourself in its heritage. If we have a crowd, Sparrow will host a children's table at the same time.

Artist's Date

Are you following the program of the book *The Artist's Way*? Or does "time with the pastels" simply sound good to you? On some Sundays this winter, Sparrow will set up the studio with clay, pastels, watercolors, journals, fiber - and bring your own medium - for a relaxing couple of hours together. Keep your eye on the calendar and Weekly Blast for dates!

Communicating with Care

This two-part discussion will be held at the end of January with Patience on developing the thoughtfulness, gentleness, clarity, and beneficial effects of communication. As we move into a time of making big decisions together, we can embrace new skills and renew our intention to work together in covenant.

Mid-Week Meditation

2nd and 4th Thursdays, you are invited to gather for centering and quiet contemplation with mutual support for developing and deepening your silent spiritual practice. Both beginners and experienced contemplatives are welcome. The initial gatherings have been led by



Sparrow Alden and/or Claudia Kern and, as time goes on, they hope to be joined by others.

The training of attention and awareness to foster body/mind well-being is part of diverse spiritual traditions. In addition to the mindfulness meditation familiar to many, we will now and then explore other traditions and techniques for those who wish to broaden their practice.

Around the holidays in particular, the schedule will change a bit, so keep your eye on the UUCUV calendar (<http://uucuv.org/calendar/>) as well as the Weekly Blast.

Spirit Sing and Supper

At 5 PM on the First Sundays of each month, we have a new tradition of singing meditation. Simple chants and songs from the world's many religious traditions will form the center of this worship time. We welcome our neighbors from the whole community. Bring some food to share if you are so inclined, but no pressure. There will be hot soup and good bread waiting following the singing. Our minister, Patience, is leading the initial sessions.

Thank you, Nancy Menton, for teaching Sparrow how to do sign lettering.

Thank you, Grace Alden, for the loan of your tools for sign-building.

New Building News

Bill Brawley

Architect Andrew Garthwaite presented three concepts for a new Meetinghouse at the Congregational meeting on Oct. 12. Following that meeting, the Steering Committee met with Andrew to review the congregational input. Based on that discussion, Andrew, of Norwich-based Haynes & Garthwaite Architects, has been refining the conceptual drawings and working closely with estimators at Domus Inc. to develop a detailed cost model for one of the three plans.



The detailed cost estimate, and a summary of an ongoing independent feasibility study, will be presented to the Congregation at a meeting on Dec. 14 at the Howe Library. The Congregation will then discuss the results and vote on the next steps in the process of building a new Meetinghouse

and support spaces, as well as renovations to the current Meetinghouse.

The Steering Committee reconvened the week of Nov. 16 with Andrew and Bruce Williamson of Domus to review the cost estimates and refinements to the conceptual design sketches, and begin planning the Dec. 14 presentations. We have also begun planning the next steps in the pre-construction process, assuming the Congregation decides to proceed. This will allow us to hit the ground running after the holidays and keep us on the optimistic track for a groundbreaking in 2015.

The Steering Committee: Bill Brawley, Joan Nierenberg, and BJ Shabel

What is a Capital Campaign?

Kathy Christie

Should we decide in December to go ahead with our New Meetinghouse project, we will need to conduct a capital campaign. Here are some answers to questions people normally have regarding capital campaigns, annual funds, pledges versus gifts, endowments, and more.

Most non-profit organizations support their budgets through annual giving. From time to time, though, they might need to raise a much larger sum for capital items such as a new building, or major repairs to an existing structure. For these kinds of expenses they will hold a capital campaign, typically asking for pledges in a short, concentrated period. Capital campaigns differ from annual primarily because their aim is to build assets that will help the organization better fulfill, and even expand, its mission.

Most pledges to a capital campaign are significantly larger than annual donations. Donors may give outright during the campaign, or they may pledge a certain sum to be paid in installments, typically over three to five years, so that they can stretch their pledge amount.

Although some organizations conduct their annual and capital campaigns concurrently, capital pledges never take the place of annual contributions for operations, which need to be sustained. To make larger gifts, and often to

secure tax advantages, donors may choose to pay with investment instruments such as stocks. A bank or a financial advisor can easily set this up.

A capital campaign has several phases, beginning with a feasibility study to discover whether the organization has a chance at succeeding in its campaign. If the answer is yes, the next phase involves quiet solicitation of leadership donors who might, as a group, be able to pledge as much as half the goal. Next, other major gifts are solicited, and finally the campaign is opened to everyone associated with the organization. This might include outside sources such as local businesses or other non-profit organizations. Funds might also be sought from granting foundations. Everyone is asked to stretch and every gift, no matter what the amount, is critically important to the success.

Endowment is another way organizations build their assets and future security, by investing the principal and using some of its interest income toward operating costs. Typically, organizations today use no more than 4.5% of interest, and often less, toward operations. Some capital campaign goals include increasing endowment, although it is not required.

In its capital campaign of 1996, the UUCUV raised ap-

What is a Capital Campaign?

(Continued from page 11)

proximately \$165,000 in six weeks, to buy the 7+ acres and present Meetinghouse which is now our worship, religious education, meeting, office, fundraising, and meditating space. In the years since, we have continued to deepen and enrich our mission and sense of community, and now we are bursting at the seams. If we decide in December to build the Upper Valley’s first full Unitarian Universalist worship space, the engines of our success will be our people, our mission, and our spirit. Should you have any questions about the project or the potential capital campaign, anyone on the Board, or the Steering Committee, or Kathy Christie, or Patience will happily talk with you.



Petite Boutique at the Upscale Resale

Ways & Means Update

Lori Fortini

On October 11, we held our annual “Upscale Resale and Everything Apple Bake Sale.” The donations and baked goods this year were outstanding. Thank you to all the people who helped put this event together: the bakers, the people who set up and priced the items, the sellers, those who stayed late to box things up, and everyone who helped me keep track of all the little details.

This year, Claudia Kern created a “Petite Boutique” in the upstairs of the Meetinghouse to spotlight a large donation of lovely clothing from the family of Jan Sorice. I can’t say enough about the way Claudia transformed the RE space into a warm and lovely place to show the clothing.

There were many heroes and champions. Some of our heroes are: Sally Page for allowing things to be stored in her garage, Mardy and Colin High for the use of their truck (over and over again!), Mardy for also making about a dozen pies, Margaret Robinson for staying the whole day of the sale as our cashier and Claudia Kern and her team of helpers for organizing the Petite Boutique.

All the hard work paid off in the end. Here are the final totals:

\$ 388.00	Apple Pie sale
\$2,032.66	Upscale Resale
\$4,787.00	Petite Boutique

\$7,207.66	Total



This event gave us a great start for fundraising for this church year. Great job everybody!

Spiritual Practices for Self-Compassion

Rev. Patience Stoddard

Loving-Kindness Meditation

This is a simple meditation practice. Begin by repeating the following phrases over and over (5-10 minutes) once or twice a day. At first this meditation may feel mechanical or awkward or even bring up the opposite feelings of irritation or anger. If this happens, it is especially important to be patient and kind with yourself. You begin with yourself because without loving yourself it is almost impossible to love others.

May I be happy

May I be well

May I be safe.

May I be peaceful and at ease

When a sense of loving-kindness for yourself has begun to grow, you can gradually expand the focus of your loving-kindness to include others. Begin with someone who has truly cared for you. Include others as you feel ready: friends, family members, people in other parts of the world, the whole earth. When your heart feels strong and open, you may feel ready to include a difficult person in your life, perhaps someone you are angry at or who has hurt you in the past. This simple practice will help calm your life and keep you connected to your heart.

May you be happy.

May you be well....

If these four phrases don't feel quite right for you, you are encouraged to write your own. Some examples are:

May I be free from anxiety and from fear

May I be filled with loving kindness

May I be healthy in body and in mind

For times when you are feeling badly about yourself or your actions:

I have sometimes done things I ought not to have done,

And left undone things I ought to have done;

But there is much health within me,

And strength, and time

To forgive myself and others

To reach out and care, and begin again.

Grief and the Holidays

1. **Accept that the holidays are difficult for grieving people.** Don't "should" yourself. Let other's know what may be hard for you. Plan an exit strategy if the "celebration" feels overwhelming.

2. **Be compassionate and take care of yourself.** Try to lower your expectations of yourself. Make a list of activities that bring comfort and try to schedule one such activity a day, e.g., listen to music, buy some flowers, take a warm bath, walk in a beautiful place.

3. **Start a new ritual or tradition.** Place a lighted candle or a picture on the dinner table; hang a stocking and have family members write down good memories and place them there; give money to their favorite charity; buy the gift you wish you could give to the one you've lost and give it to someone else.

4. **Help someone else.** Find a way to volunteer your time, whether to a shelter, community dinner or visiting a local nursing home or hospital. Service can be healing.

5. **Share your feelings with someone.** It's important to have at least one person who knows that your insides don't match the cheerful decor of the season. Let others know what you need; they might not guess.



*I am looking at a witch hazel blooming in a garden
Bright yellow flowers in the middle of wintertime
And I tell my heart be strong like the witch hazel flower
And you will not be injured by this dark and troubled time.*

*We must say goodbye to the one we love, we must say good-
bye to many*

*And we must say goodbye in way too short a time
And I tell my heart be strong like the witch hazel flower
And you will not be injured by this dark and troubled time.*

~Tom Gala

Contributed by Sparrow F. Alden

“You Are Beautiful” by Katherine T. Owen

God says, “You are beautiful.”
I say, “No I’m not.”

God says, “Do you think I am a liar then?”
I say, “Of course not, You are God.
You do not lie.”

God says, “Do you think I am mistaken then?”
I say, “Of course not, You are God.
You do not make mistakes.”

God says, “Do you think you know yourself better than I know you?”
I say, “Of course not, You are God.
You see everything. You know me better than I know myself.”

God says, “Do you think I created something ugly and bad when I created you?”
I say, “Of course not, You are God.
You create, and You see it is good.”

God says, “Do you think you are more powerful than me? Perhaps I create you beautiful, but you change yourself?”
I say, “Of course not, You are God.
How can I be so powerful as to change the essence You give me?”

God says, “When you look at it, what you think about me is insulting.
You think I am a liar, or mistaken, or don’t know you well, or create bad things, or that I’m less powerful than you.”
I say, “I’ve never looked at it that way before.”

God says, “Do you listen to other people more than you listen to me?”
I say, feeling ashamed, “Yes Lord. But I thought they were talking for You.”
God gives me a look of sadness and frustration that His people do not always speak His words.

God says, “You are beautiful.”
I say... and I don’t know what to say. My head, full of contradictory information, feels like it will burst.

And I know God is telling me something I really don’t want to know.

It goes against what I’ve been taught.
I don’t want to know that everything I’ve been taught is wrong.

I reply, saying,
“Yes God, I am beautiful.”
I am crying, and I am confused.
And I feel God will punish me for my pride.
Yet it is God who pushes and pushes me to see this as the truth.

God holds me in His love and lets me cry.
“Thank you,” He says. “Thank you for listening.”

Contributed by Lori Fortini



You look up at the sky and imagine the galaxies and possible worlds up there. “Wow, how insignificant I am,” you think. But, you are not insignificant. You are the one person who means something to me. And when you look up at the sky and imagine the galaxies and possible worlds up there, all I think about is exploring them with you.

~Laurel Mendelsohn

The UUCUV Library

Olive MacGregor, Library Chair

New Books



On November 6, Polly Gould, Margo Nutt, and Olive MacGregor met with Reverend Patience to look over some donated books from two retired UU ministers, Olivia Holmes and George Brooks. We chose a few to catalog and saved some for the book sale. Margo is storing Jan Sorice's many books at her home until we can sort through them. We tried to visualize where the library might be in a new space. At this time we hesitate to add many books to the collection. However, we did add two books, *The Battle for God*, by Karen Armstrong (a replacement) and *The Unitarian Universalist Poets: A Contemporary Survey*, edited by Jennifer Bosveld (donated by Anne Alford for the UU Collection).

The Library Committee: Olive MacGregor (chair), Polly Gould, Margo Nutt

Darwin Updated in Dublin

To a middling fly in a medieval painting:

With fly's eye view of God and man,
your artist was an insect's man.

For you assail the Church of Christ.

Jerome or Gregory---doctor, fool?---
whose hand you buzz on wooden stool.

(All miters look alike these days.)

With crooked legs, crocketed nose,
who quilled epistles, Vulgate prose?

You trespass apple, desk, and scroll.

My parable of wing and eye,
I find you ageless---unlike Aquinas.

Our millennium's too short a time.

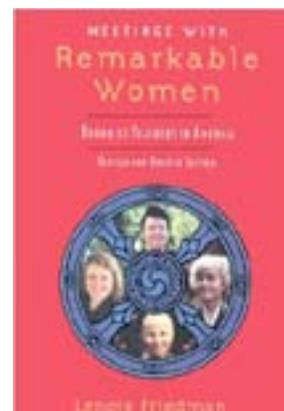
~Carole Spearin McCauley

Book Review

By Margo Nutt

***Meetings with Remarkable Women: Buddhist Teachers in America*, by Lenore Friedman**

Of the seventeen women profiled in this book, Pema Chodron and Joanna Macy are probably the best known. But there are many other interesting teachers from different Buddhist traditions (Zen, Tibetan, Theravada) included in this book. As the author notes in the preface, since 1987 when the first edition of this book was published, there has been a “staggering” increase



in the number of women teachers and leaders (at every level and in all Buddhist traditions). In 2000, in this revised edition, Friedman reconnected with the women she first profiled (or in the case of their death, with close associates), and found renewed appreciation for each woman's uniqueness and commitment to her chosen path. Friedman doesn't just interview these women, but spends time studying and meditating at their retreats. What emerges is conversations, rather than interviews, with each of them. This makes it a very personal telling of how each of these women came to this place in their lives. It also gives a sense of how women give a new flavor to a tradition created by men.

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 e-mail Mary Shain at jjmandmaryshain@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.

Sing in the Choir

This year, we are singing at both services, two Sundays each month! Sunday rehearsals will start at 8:30 AM.

If you think that group singing for a friendly congregation looks like fun, you're right. It's also a deeply satisfying way to connect with our souls, each other, and according to some--the universe.

Join us for a rehearsal--especially the Friday potlucks. You don't have to be able to read music, and no audition is required. We are especially in need of tenors and basses. I often make music and listening links available ahead of time to help singers prepare. While you don't have to commit to each and every date, some music will require being at more than one rehearsal. To get on the mailing list, email me at Linda.Hoover@dartmouth.edu.

Linda Hoover, Choir Director

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 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 3 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.

Come to Elder Journey Lunches

When did you start your Elder Journey?

I started mine the day I was born.

Once a month a group of us meets for lunch and exchanges stories and observations about the processes of change as we age. The group, as a whole, has always met these changes as a challenge, not a burden. This allows us to learn coping skills from the wisdom of others while chatting and eating.

Please plan to join us wherever you are on your Journey. We meet the **3rd Tuesday of each month at 12:30** at the Meetinghouse.

Babette Hansen

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.

(continued next page)

Ways to Get Involved! In Our Congregation... (Cont'd)

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



Volunteer at a Special Event

The church has numerous events through 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.

Join a Committee or Work Group

Talk to any committee chair or group coordinator if you are interested in contributing some of your time and talents to the behind-the-scenes work involved to maintain this vibrant church community. Tell them about your interests and skills and let's see what could be a good fit! Some current possibilities include working on a fundraising activity (Ways and Means, Lori Fortini), visiting a member in a nursing home (sign up sheet), organizing space and materials (Patience), or helping with upkeep at the Meetinghouse (Mary Layton or Carl Tracy). Remember many hands make light work.

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 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



Within the shining of a star we catch a glimpse of who we are;

In every infant born we see the hope of our nativity.

The miracle of each new birth can shake and save the stony earth;

Triumphantly the newborn's cry strikes echoes from the waiting sky.

~UU Christmas Hymn

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 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

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
chigh@rsginc.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

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
polly1gould@yahoo.com



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.

SUNDAY SERVICES: Services are held at the Meetinghouse at 9:30 and 11 a.m. . Child care is available during the 9:30 service. Religious education classes are provided during the 11:00 service.

MEETINGHOUSE: Located at 320 Route 5 South in Norwich opposite The Family Place, the Greek Revival farmhouse contains our offices and meeting spaces.

MINISTER: You may contact Rev. Patience Stoddard at the office Tuesdays and Thursdays (802) 649-8828 or if urgent, (603) 313-1169 (cell), or email her at minister@uucuv.org.

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

CHOIR DIRECTOR: Email Linda Hoover at music@uucuv.org

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE: Regular hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9-12, unless otherwise posted. Contact Rachel Clark at the office at (802) 649-8828, or email office@uucuv.org.

CARES AND CONCERNS: With cares and concerns, please contact 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 at the Meetinghouse for those who need them.

Board of Directors as of 7/1/14

Cappy Nunlist, *President*
 Phil Kern, *Vice President*
 Bess Schmidt, *Secretary*
 Lucy Taylor, *Treasurer*
 Anne Alford, *Member-at-Large*
 Dan Mendelsohn, *Member-at-Large*
 Mary Shain, *Member-at-Large*

Staff

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

Committee/ Task Force Chairs

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

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

The submissions deadline for the Spring issue is February 15. Please send your submissions to Rachel at office@uucuv.org

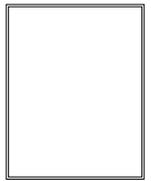
"WEEKLY BLAST" DEADLINE:

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



Dates to Remember

- Dec. 14- Congregational Meeting
- Dec. 21- Solstice Service
- Dec. 24- Christmas Eve Services
- Dec. 25- Caroling
- Feb. 6- Indian Dinner

UUCUV December-February

UUCUV Phone: (802) 649-8828

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

E-mail: office@uucuv.org

Winter Issue 2014-15