

The Call



*The mission of
The Call is to
inform, inspire,
and build
community.*

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Upper Valley -Different People, Different Beliefs, One Faith/ December 2013

December Services

Services are held at the Meeting House at 10 AM unless otherwise posted.

December 1 “Stillness”

Sparrow Alden and Claudia Kern

Please join us for a time of centering and contemplation as we find a space to breathe in peace and seek our own personal still points via silence, music, breath work, ritual, and thoughtful readings.

December 8 “Unitarian Universalist Faith Perspectives: Liberal Christianity”

Rev. Patience Stoddard

While many of us know that Unitarianism and Universalism both grew out of the Christian tradition, which roots of that long tradition have nurtured our liberal faith? And, although many of us may not consider ourselves Christian, what truths may still speak to us and help guide us on our way?

December 15 “Changing Traditions, Changing Lives” –a collaborative service

Rev. Patience Stoddard and others

At this midpoint between Thanksgiving and Christmas, we'll share our stories of how our family traditions have changed or may need to change as our lives change, and also honor what we hope will stay the same.

December 20 “Celebrating the Solstice: Welcome Yule!”

Rev. Patience Stoddard and Sparrow Alden

Please welcome the darkness, chant with us, and listen to a story of love and mystery. We celebrate the turning Wheel of the Year with neo-pagan ritual, song, energy work, and open hearts.

December 22 “Mary’s Gift”

Rev. Patience Stoddard

To me, the beauty and simplicity of the Nativity Story can have universal appeal and meaning. This Sunday before Christmas we will focus our attention on Mary – her humanity, her faith, and her call for justice and equality.

December 24 Christmas Eve

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE

4:30 PM Christmas Pageant

Join us for our pageant full of songs and the story of Jesus' birth. We have plenty of animal ears, crowns, and shepherd crooks to go around.



6:00 PM Candlelight Service

Readings from the Gospel of Luke and the singing of carols, concluding with our candlelight ritual.

December 29 “Breath and Poem”

Ed Greenlee

Celebrate the end of 2013 and the coming of the New Year with this reflective service of meditation and poetry. Members of the congregation are encouraged to participate in the service and share haiku or other short poems that they have written or that they find inspirational. Copies of classical as well as contemporary haiku will also be available during the service for those who would like to participate. The service will include periods of silent meditation as well as remarks on the use of haiku as a spiritual practice. The service will be led by Ed Greenlee, First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia.

President's Message

Cappy Nunlist

What fabulous energy was generated at the “Pathways to the Future” retreat – not to mention the plethora of visionary-but-concrete ideas. Our wonderful staff has coalated all of the paper products of our meeting and organized the contents into specific areas for us to work on. The Board has created two new “task forces” to accomplish discrete tasks. The first is to gather all the documentation, surveys, etc. regarding our property that have already been done to prevent duplication of those past efforts as we move forward. Specifically, we are trying to establish precisely what areas are available for us to build on and whether any potential problems or restrictions exist. We are anticipating that the group report will be available for the board to review at our January meeting. Based on that report, we will then decide the next steps to be taken. If anyone has documents or information from previous efforts, please inform Colin High, Kathy McKee-Stern or Gerry Tolman, who have agreed to serve on this task force.

Second, we have authorized a 3-person task force to prepare a list of all congregational community service and social action activities in which we are currently engaged, to canvass members for activities in which they are individually involved, and to draft a plan to communicate this information to our community. The Board will also review this report at its January meeting.

With all of our good news, we received the sad news that Marty Shaw and Jamie Gibson will be leaving us in mid-December to move to Brattleboro to be closer to Marty's son. Although we wish them all the best, we will miss them terribly. We are thankful that Bonnie Kawecky stepped up to take Marty's place as chair of the Sunday Services Committee until the annual meeting.

Growth means change. And change means both great joy and great sadness. Change is life.

“December”

*A little girl is singing for the faithful to come ye
 Joyful and triumphant, a song she loves,
 And also the partridge in a pear tree
 And the golden rings and the turtle doves.
 In the dark streets, red lights and green and blue
 Where the faithful live, some joyful, some troubled,
 Enduring the cold and also the flu,
 Taking the garbage out and keeping the sidewalk shoveled.
 Not much triumph going on here—and yet
 There is much we do not understand.
 And my hopes and fears are met
 In this small singer holding onto my hand.
 Onward we go, faithfully, into the dark
 And are there angels hovering overhead? Hark.*

~ Gary Johnson

Holiday Basket Program

Once again the Holiday Season is fast coming upon us - a time for rejoicing and giving. The Hartford-Norwich Holiday Basket Program is a local, all-volunteer non-profit whose mission is helping less-fortunate children right in our neighborhoods enjoy a nice Christmas. They supply 3 clothing and 3 gifts (or gift cards to teens) to each child, plus a food card to each family and senior on their list. Seniors also receive a fruit basket! Everyone they give to has been referred by various service organization, schools, and churches in our town.

To find out how to sponsor a child, to volunteer, or to donate, go to www.HolidayBasketsVT.org or call Pat at (802) 478-1110. Donations can be made through the web site or mailed to H-NHBH, PO Box 4051, White River Junction, VT, 05001.

Message from Our Minister

Rev. Patience Stoddard

Over the past few weeks 16 members and friends of the congregation and I have been talking about how to understand and successfully navigate the transitions in our lives. William Bridges, the author of the book *Transitions* delineates three phases of transitions – endings, beginnings, and the often uncomfortable in-between which he calls the “neutral zone.” He believes that all of these stages are inextricably connected, yet have their own potential gifts and challenges.

Over the past several months I have seen evidence of each of these stages in the life of this congregation as well as in the individual lives of its members.

On a congregational level, there are many signs of new beginnings – from the still on-going work on fixing up the Meeting House and the clear and achievable goals and plans which emerged from the Path to the Future process to the new friends and visitors who are adding their insights and energy to this community.

However even as we celebrate these new beginnings, we are aware of the reality of past and future endings – those former members no longer with us and those current members who are moving away or no longer able to be as active as in the past.

And we recognize that even as we celebrate coming home to the Meeting House, there is the acknowledgement that this is only temporary. As we look around at the full-to-overflowing space on Sundays, we are already needing to talk about what is next and prepare for more change as we plan for the future. As Cappy reminds us in her column, “Life is change.”

It seems to me that major holidays are acute reminders of this reality. As we gather with our families we can be painfully aware of the beloved faces no longer at the table. Traditions which once seemed so “right” may no longer fit the new realities of our families or our lives. Seemingly simple decisions as to what recipe to use or who sits at the head of the table can become complicated as our roles and relationships change.

As we move through these times of change and transition, may we be gentle with ourselves and trust in the cycles of beginnings and ending that shape our lives.

*Within the circles of our lives
we dance the circles of the years,
the circles of the seasons
within the circles of the years,
the cycles of the moon
within the circles of the seasons,
the circles of our reasons
within the cycles of the moon.*

*Again, again we come and go,
changed, changing. Hands
join, unjoin in love and fear,
grief and joy. The circles turn,
each giving into each, into all.*

~Wendell Berry

Speakers for Dec. 15

Rev. Patience would like a few speakers for the December 15th collaborative Sunday service. The focus of the service is on changing lives and changing traditions. Do you have a mini-story or some thoughts about how your rituals around holiday time, Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Hanukkah have changed or stayed the same? If you would like to share, please call or email Patience.

Patience's Office Schedule

Wednesdays 9:30 AM - 6:30 PM

Thursdays 10 AM - 6 PM

minister@uucuv.org

(802) 649-8828 office

(603) 313 1169 cell if urgent

Religious Education News

Dear Friends,

Happy Holidays! May this spiritual community be a peaceful place for you to find respite this month. Sunday, December 8th after church I am planning on a Family Frivolity. Bring your lunches and we will either go sledding, explore the Spirit in Nature Trail, or make some "small-person-can-make" gifts for the holidays. It's time to drink hot cider and maybe exchange a few words of adult conversation!

Junior Youth - let's have some fun and treats! Saturday, December 7th, 2-5 PM, it's a cookie-painting adventure hosted by the Shains at the Meeting House. Everyone from 6th through 8th grade is welcome.

On Christmas Eve, please join us in celebration!

At 4:30 PM, we will have our pageant full of songs and the story of Jesus' birth. We have plenty of animal ears,

crowns, and shepherd crooks to go around. It is entirely appropriate to wear your pajamas to this service in preparation for your long winter's nap.



Then linger for a few cookies or coffee, wish one another the joys of this magical night, and greet those folks who are arriving for the 6 PM service!

The Candlelight Service will be held at 6 PM with readings from the Gospel of Luke, all the tender carols, and concluding with our candlelight ritual.

May the snow and grace fall softly on you and your family this season of light.

*Peace,
Sparrow*

Knitters! You are needed!



© Sara Elizabeth Kellner

December 14, 2013, our neighbor High Horses will be hosting a fundraiser. You can help by knitting a hobby horse head. White River Yarns has several kits you can pick up and knit and return by Dec. 2nd. The yarn and

pattern are in the kit. No finishing is required; you just will knit the basic head shape and add the mane. If you have scrap yarn and would like to make one without the kit and just bring it in, the pattern can be found here:

http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=001bmfTkdsA88sts-1uASR3ov2QNmMlFgm6yvHP3zGvzhNNXGiFQnVUmCo2yYzCiEOyHMmz32PUtmhokndaveoVMYZ_x9pdadtU0UQAIoqBvHP6U9DPd9KGZU780P7XY-W12b5J9WwPhhgD7UaRhaE5qJ5mQvAJ_Gxnun

They are adorable and we will be helping a great organization.

"New UU" Class

Patience and Sparrow plan to hold a "New UU" group on Wednesdays, December 4 and 11 from 6PM to 8PM at the Meeting House. This gathering explores our own spiritual growth over our lives and the development of Unitarian Universalism over centuries. We'll talk theology, seven principles, the unique character of the UUCUV, and the meaning of membership. If you've been visiting and would like to learn more in a focused way with fun people - or if you feel the need for a refresher! - please come. Register simply by calling 802-649-8828 and leaving a message. We are planning to hold this class again on Sunday afternoons in February, so those who may be gone or who don't drive at night have another opportunity!



Sunday Services Committee News

We will meet on December 5 to plan Sunday services. We are adding a second meeting on the 19th to discuss crowding on Sunday mornings and to begin to think about the role of services in general in the life of the congregation. We are trying something different on the first Sunday this month. Let us know what you think. We are also looking for a few of you who are willing to share your story on December 15. Check out the details for these services in this newsletter and let Patience or me know if you would like to speak on the 15th.

In November we welcomed new members to our committee, Paul Schmidt and Terry Rosenmeier. We are very glad they joined us since Marty Shaw is probably moving in December and my house goes on the market early in 2014. Also attending were Margaret Robinson, who joined us this fall, and three members of staff, Patience, Sparrow and Linda. We would welcome other members. We usually meet the first or second Thursday of the month around 5.

Bonnie Kawecki

Guest Speaker Ed Greenlee (Dec. 29)

Ed Greenlee is a member of the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia. He is currently head of the church's Worship Ministry Team and a member of the search committee for an interim minister. Formerly he was a member of the Board of Trustees and President of the Congregation. Ed is Associate Director for Public Services at the law library of the University of Pennsylvania Law School and an adjunct professor of law. He is currently enrolled in the Unitarian Universalist Studies Certificate Program at Starr King School for the Ministry. Ed has graduate degrees in law, anthropology, information studies, and liberal arts with a focus on religious studies. In 2011, Palgrave McMillan published *Whose God Rules?: Is the United States a Secular Nation or a Theolegal Democracy?*, a book on church and state issues that Ed co-edited with the Reverend Nathan C. Walker, Senior Minister at First Unitarian.

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 Cappy Nunlist at cappy.nunlist@gmail.com. This is a good way to meet people and have a lot of fun --and help the congregation as well. If you have been assigned to a team, but are willing to be put on a "call" list if there is a need on a particular day, please let Cappy know. Some teams are a little "thin" in numbers!

Random Acts of Stewardship

One of the ways in which we can nurture one another is with appreciation and gratitude. Here is a place to say thank you for the large or small acts that sometimes go unsung. Good stewardship cultivates gratitude!

Our gratitude to Mary Layton for cleaning the basement and Dave Nierenberg for completing the drainage around the foundation.

Thank you to Catherine Kutter for covering for Sparrow on Nov. 10!

Marty Shaw and Jamie Gibson have had an enormous impact on our congregation in ways big and small, and they will leave a big hole when they leave us this December to move to Brattleboro. We thank them for ALL of their stewardship--we will miss them tremendously.

Have you spotted a random act of Stewardship? Send your entries for "random acts" to office@uucuv.org, and it will appear in next month's CALL.

Membership News

New Members: Edward Shulkin and Linda Marie Mauriello

After spending over 40 years of summers at his camp on Mascoma Lake while raising his three stepsons, Ed has decided to make his permanent home here in New Hampshire. Linda hails from New York State where she grew up as one of six kids, but then, after graduating from Ithaca College, went on to make a life in theater by pounding the pavement of NYC.

Linda married and moved back to Westchester County (a northern suburb of Manhattan), where most of her siblings and parents still lived, to raise her one daughter, Rebecca Marie Zuckerman. At that time, in order to stay home more, Linda became a singing and acting coach for over 20 years. She and her small family joined the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northern Westchester where

eventually Linda became assistant choir director, and Rebecca did her Coming of Age. Rebecca graduated from Cornell University in 2011, went on to work as a Lab Tech Assistant, and is now applying to Medical schools. Linda hopes that her new friends at UUCUV will get to meet her lovely daughter someday soon.

Now that Linda and Ed have joined their lives together, thereby creating an amazing extended family, they are extremely excited to be embarking on the construction of a solid home on Mascoma Lake in place of the camp. They will be equally splitting their time between summer/autumn in New Hampshire and winter/spring in Lauderdale by the Sea, keeping them always in view of nature's beauty.

"NEW UU" CLASSES TO BE OFFERED IN DECEMBER [AND AGAIN FEBRUARY]

please see description on page 4

Note from Member Suzanne Semmes

I continue to serve as a community minister in Santa Cruz Co., California, working as a weekend hospice chaplain. I also work nights on-call at the local hospital, and have a private practice in counseling and grief support. Once a month, I take the service at Pescadero Community Church, working in rotation with other ministers in this lovely building, the oldest place of continuous worship in San Mateo County. This is a rich and fulfilling community ministry to which you so graciously ordained me in May 2008. My warmest greetings and blessings to each one of you accompanies this note! May you continue to grow in the blessing of your beloved community.

Sincerely and with love,

Rev. Suzanne Semmes

Cares & Concerns

Ruth Chodak is at Elmswood Center in Claremont recovering from a couple falls. You may call her at (603) 287-5030. Cards may be sent to her at Elmwood Center, 290 Hanover St., Claremont, NH 03743.

Eva Smith is at Genesis Lebanon Center after breaking some bones in a fall. The address is 24 Old Etna Road, Lebanon, NH 03766. Please email or call Patience to see when she is ready for visitors.

Arnold Shields is at Grafton County Nursing Home, Woodsville; (603) 787-6971 (Call first to be sure the timing is good, etc.) Phil Kern will keep informal track of visitors, and could tell you when he may have been long neglected. Phil and Claudia hope to visit him at least once a month. Phil Kern (603) 795-4930

Marjorie Hybels is currently at Brookside Nursing Home. If you have a few minutes in all your errands to stop by at Brookside in Wilder (very near the Meeting House), she would like nothing better than to hear about the church, hold hands, and enjoy your company.

Library News

In November the Library Committee cataloged the following three books:

The Courage for Peace: Creating Harmony for Ourselves and the World, by Louise Diamond

Promise Ahead: A Vision of Hope and Action for Humanity's Future, by Duane Elgin (for the Sustainability Collection)

America's Prophet: How the Story of Moses Shaped America, by Bruce S. Feiler

At Patience's suggestion, we are changing several books to the UU Collection and putting blue dots on them.

Olive MacGregor, Library Committee Chair

Women's Group Thursday, Dec.19, 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 not choosing 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.

Sally Page

Elder Luncheon

Tuesday, Dec. 17, 12:30 PM

You are invited to join us for lunch provided at the Meeting House. This is a regular monthly get-together for all who consider themselves elders to share their experiences and needs. Please call Babette with your RSVP. Her phone is (603) 727-9663 and her email is schussbh@gmail.com.

Book Review



By Margo Nutt

America's Prophet, by Bruce Feiler

In *America's Prophet*, Feiler looks at Moses and the essential role the prophet has played in our nation's history and development.

The American appropriation of Moses begins with the Puritans. They viewed King James as Pharaoh, themselves as the Children of Israel, and the New World as the Promised Land. But if the sailing of the Mayflower was their exodus, the signing of the Mayflower Compact was their Sinai. Moses was not only a liberator, he was a lawgiver.

Moses-like, George Washington, for example, both led his people out of British tyranny and into constitutional responsibility. Franklin and Jefferson proposed that Moses appear on the U.S. seal. Washington and Lincoln were called his incarnations. Even the comic book Superman story has Mosaic qualities, as Feiler asserts that "many of its principal themes are drawn from the Hebrew Bible, and its backstory is taken almost point by point from Moses."

A journalist rather than a historian, Feiler approaches his subject using the same formula he has employed in previous books: physical walks through historic sites and interviews with experts. Feiler is a popularizer, and readers interested in an entertaining treatment of a theme in U.S. history will enjoy this book.

Partner Church News

Our annual Partner Church Indian Dinner was a great success. We had 33 guests and collected \$445 in donations which will cover the cost of the ingredients for the dinner and our congregational student sponsorship.

The Meeting House walkway was lined with Diwali lamps and inside guests basked in the glow of candles, lanterns and tiny lights. Many thanks to Polly Gould and Jean Howe for cooking, to the Shain Family for, as always, helping to set up and clean up and for providing the dessert; and to Karen Kluge and Terry Rosenmeier for a delicious apricot chutney.

Several guests at the dinner showed an interest in sponsoring new students. If you would like to do so, please contact Claudia Kern or Polly Gould. If you picked up a brochure to sign up, please be aware that you should return that form to us at UUCUV rather than sending it directly to the Partner Church Council. We manage all UUCUV student sponsorships from here.

In news from Meghalaya, our student Rangdajied reports that he successfully passed his exams for this college term. Congratulations, Rangdajied.

Claudia Kern



Church Events Calendar

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

www.uucuv.org

About the UUCUV

Board of Directors

Cappy Nunlist, President
Bill Brawley, Vice President
Karen Kluge, Secretary
Lucy Taylor, Treasurer
Anne Alford, Member-at-Large
Dan Mendelsohn, Member-at-Large
Jamie Gibson, Member-at-Large

Staff

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

Committee Chairs

Finance: Mark Laser
Investment: Peter Christie
Library: Olive MacGregor
Partner Church: Polly Gould
Sunday Services: Marty Shaw
Ways and Means: Lori Fortini



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.

We, the UUCUV unite to encourage each other's spiritual growth, to maintain an active program of religious education for all ages, to provide fellowship, and to serve the wider community. We are committed to being a community that considers the environmental consequences of our actions and we actively welcome LGBT individuals and families. As a congregation we endeavor to be a force for social justice, peace and sustainability in society and the world. We welcome all who share our mission to join us in this journey.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS:

The Call newsletter deadline is December 15, for the January issue.

Please send your submissions to Rachel at office@uucuv.org

If you have a meeting later in the month, please contact Rachel about whether your news can be fit into the newsletter or saved for weekly email blasts.

SUNDAY SERVICES: Services are held at the Meeting House at 10 a.m. Childcare is usually available. Religious Education is provided during the school year months.

MINISTER: You may contact Rev. Patience Stoddard at (603) 313-1169 (cell), (603) 756-9260 (home), or minister@uucuv.org.

TO CONTACT THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Call Sparrow F. S. Alden at (603) 359-8426, or e-mail her at education@uucuv.org

MEETING HOUSE: Located at 320 Route 5 South in Norwich opposite The Family Place, the Greek Revival farmhouse contains our offices and meeting spaces. Administrative office hours at the Meeting House are Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9-12, unless otherwise posted.

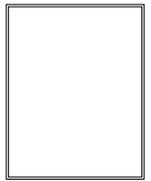
CARES AND CONCERNS: With cares and concerns, please contact Rev. Patience Stoddard or Sparrow Alden (contact information above).

NEWSLETTER: The Call, our monthly e-newsletter, is available upon request. Contact the office at (802) 649-8828, or e-mail office@uucuv.org with the usual details, including a phone number. Hard copies are available at the Meeting House.

Unitarian-Universalist Congregation
of the Upper Valley

PO Box 1110

Norwich, VT 05055



We are

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



New Member Bios

UUCUV Phone: (802) 649-8828

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

E-mail: office@uucuv.org

December Services

