

The Call

Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of the Upper Valley

Autumn 2016
September - November

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Sunday Services 10 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**

How Shall We Grow?

Rev. Patience Stoddard

On September 11th, we will be celebrating our first Water Ingathering Service in our new sanctuary, as well as recognizing the 15th anniversary of the 9/11 event which so shocked and grieved our nation.



Last spring I went to the World Trade Center Memorial in New York City for the first time. In the Museum I saw cups and magnets and posters of a simple tree, dubbed "the survivor tree." I discovered that a month after the devastation some workers noticed a sprig of green poking out through the ashes. It turned out to be the remnants of a pear tree. It was partially burnt and scarred but it was still alive. They dug it up and brought it to the Parks department to see if it could be saved. Years later I stood in front of that same tree marveling at the power of Life.

As we begin a new church year, I've been thinking about these past three years and all the changes that have occurred in the life of this community. When I was first asked to serve as your temporary ¾ minister, this community had been through a number of losses and struggles that had led some to question its ability to survive and to thrive. While these had taken a toll on its shape and energy, there was much health and love here to be nurtured and affirmed. The UUCUV's roots, its core values, were alive and well. Nonetheless some major changes were needed in order for it to thrive.

Like the linden tree that was planted and dedicated when the Meetinghouse was first purchased, some radical actions were needed that would involve some risks and the willingness to let go of that which was no longer aiding its wellbeing. In the case of the linden tree, this involved pruning a limb that had become unhealthy and waiting to see if it could survive. It has survived and is growing again offering its shade and beauty to our home.

What is needed now for the UUCUV to continue to grow? How can we nurture and extend its root system, so that it can remain

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How Shall We Grow?

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strong and supple during the next inevitable storm? What new limbs and branches are needed so that its reach is widened?

These are important questions to ask and I hope that many of you will attend the Path to the Future session to share your ideas and visions. Nonetheless, this is on-going work and these questions will need to be pondered and responded to over and over

again. The UUCUV is a vital community of love and service which has an important role to play in the life of the wider community as well as the lives of those seekers who find their way to our door. How healthy it grows and how much it has to offer over the years ahead is yours to decide and bring to fruition.

Patience

Co-Presidents' Message

Bill Brawley

It's traditional for the UUCUV board to hold a retreat in August, in order to determine goals and create a covenant, a contract that clarifies the expectations between us and friends and as colleagues -- e.g., that we will respond to each other promptly when e-mailed, that we will be fully present when at a meeting, and so forth.

So why have we not yet had our end of summer conclave? Because we are waiting for you! More specifically, we are waiting for Rev. Patience and her husband, Jim Gruber, a professor and former town manager, to lead us through a second Path to the Future event.

The first time we walked the future path was back in October of 2013. The congregation was tired from moving between temporary homes, tired following the illness of our interim minister, tired after a shake-up in membership. Patience and Jim created a brainstorming process that actively engaged a majority of our members and friends in creating a set of strategic themes or goals that everyone could get behind.

You might call it a "crowdsourcing" exercise. By organizing every idea into categories and inviting each person to "vote" for the goals they thought were most important, Jim and Patience were drawing on one of the most radical aspects of Unitarian Universalism: our fundamental commitment to democratic process. The outcome led to our completion of a new Meetinghouse and the rejuvenation of the congregation.

The process, enshrined in the Fifth UU Principle, elevates the classically liberal notion of the individual and respects the choices each person makes in becoming a part of a spiritual community at a congregational level. The congregation, in turn, becomes part of a democratic process at the regional and national levels of the denomination — an association of congregations.

In this model, authority flows from the bottom up, from the people exercising their rights to free speech, religion and association to create community with like-minded individuals. The Path to the Future process gives each voice in the UUCUV the chance to be heard, for common themes and goals to be seen and acted on in a way that everyone can get behind.

Rather than impose its best guess of goals and themes, the board chose instead to delay its annual retreat until September in order to wait for the congregation to determine its goals, and to use those goals as the basis for prioritizing its business for the coming year.

Can you imagine what our government might look like if our political leaders at the state and federal levels embraced similar processes and ideals? In this dreadful election cycle, we can only dream.

Board Report

Summer Board meetings have been full of forward-looking energy! Items discussed include:

- Treasurer's Reports: thank you, Treasury Team Lucy, Joani, Margo, Kathy, and Mugs for the smooth transition! The financial books for the 2015-2016 fiscal year will be finalized by late August or early September.
- Path to the Future Continued on September 18 : Now that we have come this far, what is next?
- Facilities use discussion: which events are charged a fee or a reduced fee? What are the duties of the facility host?
- Clarifying a conflict resolution process going forward.
- Considering giving away the weekly collection. The Hartland UU congregation has done this and found that collection increased substantially, and the process of choosing donation recipients leads to community connection and outreach.
- Participation in the Dartmouth community table display in the fall.
- Congregational input to the board: Joani proposed providing the opportunity for members of the congregation to bring issues to the board at the beginning of each meeting. Said items may or may not be discussed during that meeting, but they will be in the minutes, bringing them to the attention of the board and the entire congregation. The board agenda will be sent out via the blast on the Wednesday prior to the meeting.
- Music and art and other interior and exterior esthetics, including correct use of the microphone.
- Liaisons from the board to each committee and group will keep track of the various committees and receive com-

munication from them without the need for the committee leader to approach the board directly.

Liaisons:

Sunday Services - Bob Riccio

Caring Circle - Joani Nierenberg

Music - Mary Sayward

Library - Mary Sayward

Meetinghouse - Bill Brawley

Ways and Means - Mugs Johnston

Partner Church - Jeremy Coylewright

Hospitality - Joani Nierenberg

R.E. - Maureen McNulty

Communications - Bill Brawley

Small Groups (Chalice, Women's, Living with Limits, etc) - Maureen McNulty

Recertification for Welcoming, Green Sanctuary - Jeremy Coylewright

Membership - Joani Nierenberg

- Advice to the incoming board members included:

--enjoy each other

--remember that everyone is trying to achieve the same goal

--come prepared to meetings

--communication in the congregation should be a priority of the next board

--keep the board diverse

--enforce the board covenant and embrace it as a useful tool

Thank you, Leah Goat, for your endless hours creating and nurturing our beautiful gardens and grounds!



The Path to the Future Continues!

Sunday, September 18th

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 11:30 | Pot Luck Lunch (Patience is bringing lasagna) |
| 12 to 3 | Workshop (simultaneous religious ed and childcare) |

We Need All Hands, All Voices, All Great Ideas!

Three Years Ago:

We established a priority about our physical space... and look what we built!

We established a priority about an engaged community... and look at Hospitality teams!

We established a priority about communication... and look at our fabulous quarterly Call and efficient Weekly Blast!

We established a priority about a new financial paradigm... and look at our Stewardship-campaign-free culture of generosity!

We established a priority about pastoral and lay care... and look at our Caring Circles!

We established a priority about adult learning... and look at our Chalice Circles, forums after guest speakers, and adult ed with Patience

We established a priority about leadership... and look at our Board, old & new!

We have celebrated our triumph and welcomed many new friends into membership!

Time to get up off our well-deserved laurels and ask

NOW WHAT?

Religious Education News & Views

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE



New Hours, New Adventures!

The new fiscal year brings me a great adventure - ten more hours per week in which to help the congregation! While the final form of my new job description will not be settled until after the September 18th Path to the Future workshop and the September 24th Board retreat, we do know a few things already:

- I am experimentally making blog posts on the web site again, as is Bill Brawley, to keep folks abreast of plans and thoughts and news items that might be smaller than a Call article. Bill and I will work together to refine this communication method. One great use for this format is to write out detailed information for RE parents and then in the Weekly Blast simply post a single line urging folks to follow a link. If you need help getting an RSS feed - a tool that will send all new posts to you as email - just ask me or Bill or another tech-savvy person!

- I get to be Staff Liaison to a few congregational groups, such as the Hospitality Teams, the Welcoming Congregation Recertification group, and Membership. The first function of a Staff Liaison is to keep the staff informed of what the group is doing and keep the group informed of relevant staff plans and initiatives. We have what's known as a "pastoral sized congregation," which means that it's a really great idea for the minister to have a working knowledge of all the congregation's activity, even if she can't physically be present at every meeting. This knowledge gives her a complete picture of the congregation as a system, a robust way to measure congregational health. Logistically, of course, if she learns that a particular group would like to increase congregational awareness of an issue, she can add that issue to her ideas for reading groups or other activities she facilitates.

- I'm continuing to expand my lay pastoral care chops as I get to work with families, visit some home-bound folks, and lately meet new people from outside the congregation who are curious about our welcoming and celebration of trans spirit. More than one email has come in over the last three months from

folks trying to be great allies to their trans family members or friends, and it's a real privilege to say, "Yes. There's a congregation where you will be welcome and I'm happy to offer you ideas, reading lists, and support!"

- I get to plan and carry out non-Sunday spiritual experiences such as Midweek Meditations and Wheel of the Year circles and support for Chalice Circles. Many of them are on Tuesdays this fall - check the calendar! Some folks like more than a Sunday sermon, some like a smaller group, some are simply busy on Sundays and like more options.

So, dear friends of the congregation, don't you worry about my expanded hours. They fill up rapidly - and never forget the regular delightful duties such as preparing children's curricula and classrooms! (I really love curriculum planning.) Thank you for the blessing of this extra time. I can't tell you how much it means to me to be able to say, "Wow. You sound like you need some iced coffee and a good chat - I'm happy to spend some time with you."

I plan to be in on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays, with some Tuesday evenings and some Saturday OWL sessions. I'll see you then.

*Peace,
Sparrow*

Thank you, Stern family, for giving us Kathy's beautiful sewing cabinet and machine! Many teaching aids will be created using this!

Thank you, UU Church of Watertown, MA, for generously sharing materials to make Spirit Play stories!

UUCUV and Meriden Congregational Church Join Forces for Junior High Kids!

UU's and our neighbors at the Congregational church 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. These religious opinions don't really make headlines, so we've chosen to be deliberate about delivering the message! 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 own thoughts, 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.

The OWL approach to sexuality includes modules from cradle to grave - and Cappy Nunlist, Grace Alden, Kaitie Chakoian of the Meriden Congregational Church and I will present the Junior High module of OWL this fall. We will discuss bullying, values clarifications, communication techniques, social justice, and the history of consent. Ask me anything about the OWL program! I want every congregant to know why we are passionate about this program. Our OWL students are going to know that they are accepted, protected, and respected as who they are.

Parent Orientation for Junior High OWL will be held Sunday, October 2nd at 5:30 PM in the UUCUV Sanctuary!

Your Child's First Sunday

On your children's first Sunday with us, they might be excited, curious, reluctant, or blasé. Knowing what to expect can help your children feel confident and positive. Here are our guiding principles for getting settled into Religious Education: the parents know best; parents may always stay with their own children.

When you arrive you'll see friendly greeters who will help you get a name badge.

If your child struggles through transitions, get the friendly greeters to hook you up immediately with Sparrow or Miss Sheena. They will give your child a tour of the religious education spaces, introduce the caregivers or relevant religious ed teacher, and let your child get to know the space quietly before the rest of the kids arrive.

10:00 AM: Families begin worship together in the Meeting Room. We'll share a hymn and kids collect food for our good neighbors at The Haven, after which kids leave for child care or religious education.

Religious Education is about an hour of stories, songs, and activities which support learning how to make ethical decisions, identifying with UU values,

and becoming a member of our congregational community.

Parents may let their children leave for RE, may accompany them to the classroom and drop off there, or may stay with them for as long as the child needs.

If the children are age 6 weeks to 3 years, they will get special care! The UUCUV Baby Snugglers are on the job! We ask parents to drop off little ones in person so you can sign your children in, give any instructions, indicate where you will be during the service, and make sure your children's diapers are clean to begin with.

Parents return to pick up your under-8-years children by 15 minutes past the service. Come sit in our goodbye circle!

Please feel reassured: Clean and modest play clothes are appropriate for Religious Education; we occasionally serve vegan snacks; and our program is free for the joining!

Sparrow wants to meet you! Please do hang about as children are being picked up, it will be her pleasure to learn about your family's journey.

Sparrow's First Hints for UU Parents & Grandparents

Hello, Parents & Grandparents!

You are your child's primary religious educator - a wonderful, exciting job! There's a huge body of resources to support you, including myself, Rev. Patience, and your friends at the UUCUV. Here are a few ideas to help you promote your children's spiritual journey and UU identity.

1. Have a chalice in your home which you light at special times. Light it in silence, or with simple words like, "May our flaming chalice inspire us to see clearly." It's easy to make a chalice from found materials (like an overturned flower pot), or to find beautiful ones for sale.

2. Post the Seven Principles in your home. Choose your family's favorite. Make an effort to articulate when you do or see something which reinforces that principle. For example, "Well, we can't fit a crowd of friends into our new hybrid vehicle and take them to the movies with us - and I'm feeling proud that we're doing something difficult out of respect for the interconnected web."

3. Attend church or at-home worship every week. Doing it at home can be very simple -

- light the chalice
- check in with how everyone is feeling, placing stones of joy and concern around the chalice
- read a story book that touches the heart
- discuss the feelings and values of the story, listening respectfully to everyone
- sing your family's favorite uplifting song
- extinguish your chalice and thank everyone for being present

4. Use religious words. Blessing. Spirit. Soul.

5. Respond to Big Questions in a way that promotes discussion and wondering instead of giving a definitive answer.

6. Familiarize yourself with the stages of Spiritual Development, and age-appropriate expectations for your kids.

7. Use worship and reverent behavior any time during the week - there's a wonderful, marvelous world to revere! Reverent behavior varies with age and temperament, of course - you might choose to blow kisses to the full moon.

8. Engage visibly in your own Daily Spiritual Practice, modeling for your children that the spiritual journey is a lifelong joy.

9. Encourage your children to choose a tune from the children's hymn book, *Come Sing a Song With Me*, for their next instrumental piece (this melody-and-chord book draws from both adult hymnals). Sing your family's favorite hymns in the car.

10. Sit down for meals together as often as you can and say Thanks for the meal. You can hold hands and observe silence, or say "Thanks," or find or create the right words for your family - even rotating being the one to speak the blessing.



New Members



Tedd Osgood

Tedd and his wife Dorothy moved to the Upper Valley in 2001, to Kendal at Hanover. Tedd is a birthright Unitarian. Both his maternal grandfather and a paternal great uncle were Unitarian ministers. Dorothy, on the other hand, is the daughter of a Presbyterian minister; and now considers herself a “social UU,” i.e., one who enjoys the gustatory aspects of our denomination.

As an economist, Tedd worked for a number of different employers in the private, public and international sectors. He began his professional career in the US Foreign Service where he enjoyed assignments to the Department of State, the US Consulates General in Düsseldorf, Germany, and Paramaribo, Suriname, a true garden spot on the north-east corner of South America. When assigned back to Washington, DC, Tedd moved over to the staff of the Council of Economic Advisers during the administration of Lyndon Johnson where he looked on with great disappointment as the political and fiscal bounty of the early LBJ years was consumed by the US involvement in Vietnam.

Anxious to go abroad again, Tedd joined a team of economists recruited by Harvard’s Development Advisory Service (DAS). In that capacity Tedd and his family spent three years in Malaysia working with the Economic Planning Unit there. When it was time to return to the US, Tedd secured a position with the World Bank at its headquarters in Washington. This gave rise to frequent travel to West Africa and South Asia (principally Pakistan) over the next decade, while the family (by then including a daughter and two sons) enjoyed a comfortable residence in suburban Maryland. Tedd left the Bank in 1980 to join a new, start-up venture seeking to commercialize solar-powered water pumps for low-lift irrigation in the Third World, a great idea whose time had not yet arrived.

Tedd spent the rest of his working life teaching economics and statistics: first at the University of Lowell

(now part of the U of Massachusetts system), then with an Indiana University project back in Malaysia, and finally as an adjunct at Bentley College.

Sue Schiller

“I grew up in Michigan in the 1940s and ‘50s. It was a safe and happy time. I still get together with many of those friends. In my twenties I moved to New York City and eventually to Vermont.

In 1980, as a single parent, I adopted a little girl from Lisbon, Portugal. So then I was a mom and now am a “Nana” to four small children. Family is very important to me.

I’m also a working artist - a printmaker- and I love my work. [Sue is associated with Two Rivers Printmaking Studio in White River Junction, where you can see her work.]

Although my mother grew up Catholic and my father was Jewish, neither of them continued to practice their religions. My two brothers and I became Presbyterians. As a child and teenager I was active in the church, especially in the choir.

Although I have retained a respect for many religions, for a very long time I have not felt comfortable in, and have not attended, the more traditional Christian services. But I missed the community of a church... the sharing and support of that community. I believe I’ve found it here in the UUCUV.”

Annie Rossier and Blake McNeill

On a sunny summer Saturday, new members Annie Rossier and Blake McNeill married in the UUCUV Meetinghouse. Patience Stoddard and M’ellen Kennedy officiated as Blake lit the chalice to symbolize the foundation of their new home together. Their shared love of horses and the outdoors twinkled in every detail from the gorgeous wildflowers to the images on the program. After a delicious lunch, their guests danced for hours to a local band playing favorites

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which spanned from the 1920s to the 1970s. Annie's and Blake's families got to know each other - and all their friends and relations rolled up their sleeves to move furniture, serve food, clear and wash dishes.

While it may be traditional to introduce new UUCUV members with biographies about profession, travels, and schooling - what may tell us most about these two is that their wedding cake was strawberry shortcake!

In Memoriam Kathy McKee-Stern

This summer we said goodbye to a beloved long-time member, Kathy McKee-Stern. Kathy was known to many of us by her ever-present smile, her willingness to reach out to others, and her wisdom. Her life had been limited these last few years by her back and health conditions, nonetheless if it was possible Kathy would find a way to come to church and attend the Living with Limits group, read book after book, take joy in her children and grandchildren and tend to the needs of others.

That last quality was perhaps the defining quality of her life. A physician who worked for whatever salary was offered (and sometimes for none), she was trained first as a pediatrician and then as an adult and child psychiatrist. She focused her healing

gifts and training on those so often underserved – from troubled youth in a high school in Ohio to the homeless and chronically mentally ill in Springfield VT. Even after her retirement she was always on the lookout for someone in need and willing to help however she could.

We also had a moving memorial Service co-led by Mardy High and Kathy Christie for their sister Barbara Barry from Colorado who died after a long battle with cancer surrounded by the songs and love her family. Our thoughts and prayers go out to them.

Love doesn't die. People do. So, when what's left of me is love, give me away.

(from "Epitaph" by Merrit Malloy)

Special Sundays

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE

Our UUCUV friends and members come from all over the Upper Valley - from Bradford to Brownsville - and beyond, from Colchester, VT to Belchertown, Mass to New London, NH! Sundays are the best days to congregate for many folks (although not all), since it's already part of your regular routine. Patience and Sparrow have a plan to optimize our time together by having a few Special Sundays.

Special Sundays will extend the Sunday experience. It might be something as simple as a sermon-discussion table during coffee with snacks from the culture Patience has preached on. It could be as exciting and involved as the potluck lunch and all-congregation "Path To The Future Continues" workshop already planned for September 18th with child care and a guest facilitator! Keep your eye on the Weekly Blast

and your ears on the Sunday morning announcements.

Here's what we need: in order not to extend the duties asked of the regular Hospitality Teams, we need the folks who stay later on Sunday to all pitch in to take care of their own coffee cups or sweep their bit of floor or whatever needs doing after their own time together. Thanks in advance for saying, "I'll help."

Of course, after church will still be prime opportunity for more formal discussion groups, meetings, and New Friends lunches - just look forward to Special Sundays for everyone as well! If you're looking to schedule a Sunday meeting or gathering, check the calendar on the web site and then communicate with the office to get it on the calendar - and note that breakfast meetings are a particularly delicious way to start the day without running up against other activities!

Circle Suppers - Choose Your Own Adventure!

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE

Step One, think to yourself whether you'd enjoy a meal in the company of a few other UUCUV folks

One A - No thanks, you kind of prefer peace and quiet at home when you can get it.

One B - No, thanks, you have given up eating.

One C - YES!!! Move on to Step Two

Step Two, sign up with Sparrow through education@uucuv.org.

Two A - Say if you prefer a vegetarian group, or if you're observing other dietary restrictions and disciplines.

Two B - Say if you're up for an omnivorous meal

Two C - Say if you're one of those fabulous folks who would enjoy the supper company of children - your own or others.

All may move on to Step Three.

Step Three, receive an invitation - usually a phone call or email - from your host family. You'll get directions and hear what your host will prepare for a main dish and what kind of sides are needed.

Three A - offer to take a homemade side dish

Three B - offer to pick up something at the store

Three C - will no one think of the beverages??!!

All may move on to Step Four

Step Four, prepare or purchase a side dish (or beverage!) to share, and at the appointed time find your way through the Upper Valley to the home of your hosts.

Four A - drive yourself

Four B - share a ride with another guest

Four C - hitch up the huskies!

All may move on the Step Five

Step Five, greet and be greeted, enjoy delicious food and the laughter and company of four to eight other folks.

Five A - Perhaps you've known them a long time.

Five B - Perhaps you've barely met!

Everybody wins!

Repeat steps One through Five as often as you please.

If and only if you would like to host, let Sparrow know that! Hosts will choose their own dates (so that we cover a variety of times of the day and week). Yes, it would be fine to be hosts and use the UUCUV Meetinghouse as the venue, just plan ahead to get on the calendar. That's how to entertain more people than your home can fit!

Simply email education@uucuv.org to ask to join a Circle Supper or to volunteer to host.



Wearing Our Pride

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE

The UUCUV flies the rainbow flag, symbol of pride in and support of those in the congregation and the community who are queer, intersex, lesbian, trans, bi/pansexual, asexual, gay, and every other beautiful, nuanced flavor of gender identity and affectional orientation.

But why do we fly it?

Now that we have dreamed and worked to achieve it, our physical plant really looks like a church - as beautiful on the outside as we have grown to be spiritually. Unfortunately, most prejudices against these diversities began in churches from the long ago days of church control over marriage and sexuality - and that continues to be the case. Much institutionalized

sexual prejudice foments in churches. Every time a certain congregation demonstrates at well-publicized military funerals with placards proclaiming that God hates homosexuals, the people who are stung and gut-punched by this message turn away from every building which looks like a church and every people who look like a congregation. I've talked with an Upper Valley neighbor who says, "Well, of course, the UUs are safe... but I just can't walk into a church." The self-protective instinct to run from churches, entrained by years of unkindness, marginalization, and abuse, is much stronger than any intellectual observation.

So we fly the Pride flag. We try to send a second signal - we're a church which embraces our gay-community members and neighbors.

Before marriage equality was the law of the land, I traveled with my wife through states which did not recognize our marriage. It was scary. What if one of us were injured and unconscious? The other of us would not be allowed to make decisions for our wife of 25 years. I'm grateful for the Supreme Court ruling - but a legal decision does not change hearts and minds, and prejudices are not only found far away geographically. Do same-sex couples visiting or residing in the Upper Valley know they will be respected as a couple? No. There are clergy right here in the Upper Valley who refuse to perform same-sex marriages. Some want to, but know they will be defrocked. Others believe absolutely that it is correct to deny this blessing to same-sex couples.

Some churches fly the rainbow flag and will not marry same-sex couples. Right here in the Upper Valley. "We will tolerate you," they say, "but we won't bless you. We won't marry you. You are less."

Tolerance is not love. Tolerance is not embracing. Tolerance is not enough.

So, we have a second banner. It has rainbow Pride stripes. It declares, unequivocally, "Welcome, Wanted, Cherished, Celebrated." Not "Tolerated" -

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Wearing Our Pride

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“Celebrated”. We affirm, we shout, we sing from the rooftops, “You are awesome! This world is better and more beautiful for having you in it. You are Welcome! Wanted! Cherished! Celebrated!” Our love for diversity springs from our deep environmentalist wellspring; we know that without diversity, our inter-dependent web grows weak.

With the full support of the Board, I hang out that banner for special occasions. (It has a little wrinkle in it, and I’d be grateful for the use of some monofila-

ment fishing line to sew it down firmly to a lightweight frame.) I hang it out because there are churches and presidential candidates and comedians and family members offering slights, emotional paper cuts and even literal curses to real people every day. Good people. Tired, scared people. We, the UUCUV, are going to be the moment of hope in their lives.

We fly the rainbow flag. I sure am proud to work for you all.

Camerata New England Concerts

Camerata New England has their home at the UUCUV. All of the ensemble’s Upper Valley concerts are performed in our sanctuary. The acoustics are superb and there is plenty of seating that can be reconfigured in different ways to accommodate audiences for many types of programming. Their Steinway grand piano lives in our sanctuary and is being used for our own Sunday Services as well.

Concerts:

Saturday, September 3, 2016 * 7 pm

Fall Piano Trios

Buxtehude: Sonata No. 1 in F major, op. 1

Hummel: Piano Trio No. 1 in Eb Major

Arensky: Piano Trio No. 1 in D minor, op. 32

Saturday, April 8, 2017 * 7 pm

Spring Piano Trios

Mozart: Divertimento in B-flat major, K. 254

Faure: Piano Trio in D minor, op. 120

Rachmaninoff: Elegiaque No.1 in G minor

Saturday, May 13, 2017 * 7 pm

Spring Piano Quartets

Brahms: Piano Quartet No. 3 in C minor, Op. 60

Beethoven: Piano Quartet in E-flat major, WoO 36, No. 1

Programs details and tickets are available at

www.cameratanewengland.org



Saturday, October 8, 2016 * 7 pm

Fall Piano Quartets

Mozart: Piano Quartet in G minor, K. 478

R. Schumann: Piano Quartet in E-flat major, op. 47

22nd Annual PODS FOR THE PULPIT Crafts Fair

**TRACY HALL, NORWICH VERMONT
NOVEMBER 25 & 26, 2016 from 10 AM TO 4 PM**

Half of Proceeds from the fair are used to support the congregation's charitable giving, this year supporting WISE, The Family Place and Good Neighbor Clinic. The other half supports the UUCUV. Revenue comes from booth fees and the raffle.

We also do charitable work at the fair. Northern Lights Quilting Guild will be featured on the stage with hand-quilted Christmas stockings as their main focus to raise funds for their guild. Also on stage will be a quilt raffle to benefit SPARK, a community support center located in Lebanon that helps children and adults with special needs through advocacy and program support.

This year we will have a booth benefiting Stacie Mincher's Recovery Fund. Stacie, one of our regular exhibitors, suffered a stroke caused by complications of pituitary tumor surgery in January and is not expected to return to her craft for at least a year. Funds are being raised to support her recovery. Pods will feature her work in a booth run by her family. Stacie is known as "the Zipper Lady" on account of her jewelry made from up-cycled zippers.

Last year's fair raised a record-setting \$10,455. Our goal this year is to stay in double digits! We have very little turnover in artists for the fair, and of the forty-six only four are new. All booth spaces are spoken for.

There are four areas needing congregational help:

Getting the word out

Making soup or desserts for the lunch

Working a shift or two at the fair

Finding a co-chairperson

GETTING THE WORD OUT: Posters go up two weeks before the fair and will be available at the Meeting House, as will post cards in the form of a mini poster. We ask that each member or friend mail or hand cards to at least ten non-UU friends, and help paper the Upper Valley with posters. We also ask that you e-mail non-UU friends telling them about the fair by forwarding an "e-Card" that Rachel will send us two weeks prior to the fair. Word of mouth and electronic means are our best form of publicity.

Margo Nutt coordinates publicity. Thank you Margo.

LUNCH:

A lunch of soup, bread, and dessert is provided for crafts-people and volunteers. This hospitality is greatly appreciated and is one of the things that makes our artisans faithful to the fair. We provide a recipe for Jane Brody's Lentil Brown Rice Soup (known as Crafts Fair Soup!) which is simple and delicious. It can be made ahead and frozen, but is best brought in warm.

Mary Layton is coordinating the lunch. Thank you Mary!

RAFFLE:

In lieu of an admission fee, we have a raffle, which brings in a significant amount of revenue. Lyme artist Matt Brown has once again donated a color woodblock print. Matt's prints are exquisite, and people willingly purchase tickets at the door. We need at least three people on duty to selling raffle tickets throughout out the fair. Filling these time slots is challenging, but we can to it!

Suzanne Simon will coordinate the Raffle. Thank you Suzanne.

WORKING AT THE FAIR:

We will need help in setting up and breaking down the fair, serving lunch, booth sitting while crafters take a break, as well as selling raffle tickets. Sign up sheets will be at the Meeting House, please sign up for the duties of your choice!!

CO-CHAIR:

This person would shadow Sally Page, who has coordinated the fair since its inception. Though Sally has no immediate intention of stepping down, we need to know there is someone in line to step up.





Library News



The UUCUV library is yours to explore. It has books and DVD's that you won't find in your public library. Since the spring, the Library Committee has added almost 40 books, including many for children. Here are some samples:

Armstrong, Karen. Islam: a short history. 297 Arm

Coffin, William Sloane. A passion for the possible: a message to U. S. churches. 261.8 Cof

Gomes, Peter J. The good book: reading the Bible with mind and heart. 220.1 Gom

Lawrence, Mary. Khublei: the story of the Khasi Hills liberal churches. 289.1 Law

Nutt, Amy Ellis. Becoming Nicole: the transformation of an American family. 306.76 Nut

Wexler, Jay. When god isn't green: a world-wide journey to places where religious practice and environmentalism collide. 363.7 Wex

Harriman, Jennie Lou. Together we live, love, play, and learn. J 305.6 Har

Sasso, Sandy Eisenberg. Cain and Abel: finding the fruits of peace. J 222 Sas

Soros, Barbara. Grandmother's song. J Fic Sor

Williams, Betsy. About death. J 155.9 Wil

About God. J 211 Wil

About right and wrong. J 170 Wil

If you have questions or would like a library tour, Just ask one of us.

Library Committee – Olive Macgregor, Margo Nutt, Polly Gould

Book Review

By Margo Nutt

***The Art of Pilgrimage: The Seeker's Guide to Making Travel Sacred*, by Phil Cousineau**

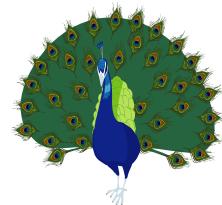
As author and religious scholar Huston Smith says in his preface, "The object of pilgrimage is not rest and recreation – to get away from it all. To set out on a pilgrimage is to throw down a challenge to everyday life. If we truly want to know the secret of soulful travel, we need to believe that there is something sacred waiting to be discovered in virtually every journey."

The idea that travel can restore a sense of passion and wonder is something one might question these days. This book shows us how to observe and listen in a way that opens up a whole new world to explore. So often travel is a chore, just getting from here to there is a pain that we want to get over with as quickly as possible. But even that portion of the journey can open us up to the marvelous. Cousineau teaches listeners how to get the most out of a place or activity by playing its music, reading its literature, etc. before the journey, so that the experience becomes almost spiritual. *The Art of Pilgrimage* isn't just for the 'spiritual traveler.' It's for anyone who wants to get more out of their travel experience. Even business travelers can use this book—they'll be inspired to make even short jaunts meaningful by taking a half day off to visit someplace special, and experiencing it with attention and purpose. The author's collection of anecdotes, quotations, insights, and guideposts reminds readers that a Pilgrimage can happen anytime, any place and can become part of restoring the sacred to our daily lives. Sights can lead to insights and borders lead to breakthroughs.

Partner Church News

Claudia Kern

Greetings sent from Mukhap for our Dedication Day in June 2016:



Dear Friends in Vermont,

We, the members of Unitarian Church Mukhap, as a whole would like to congratulate you for your new church, and we are glad to learn that our Brothers and Sisters in Vermont are going to inaugurate their new church building on 12th June 2016.

We wish that we could be present with you on this most memorable day of your church history, but distance is barrier for us. Anyway, our prayer and blessing will be with you. We know that it was not easy for you to have such a beautiful church. Your dedication, sacrifices, co-operation and endless efforts have left no stone unturned, and at last your dreams have become reality.

We feel sorry that we cannot contribute anything towards your construction, but we always send our aid in the form of affection and prayer. No doubt but language is a great problem for most of us to communicate with you directly but please know that we always treasure your kindness helping hands, and you have always been there whenever we need your help. Here, once again, we would like to say 'THANKS' for what ever you have done for us. We pray that God will shower his blessing upon you all in having good health, prosperity and wisdom; so that you can dedicate more of your time in all spheres, especially toward your congregation.

We hope that the bond of our friendship will get enhanced in the days to come by working together and sharing of our views and ideas so that we can reach the top of our goals.

'WE WISH YOU ALL THE VERY BEST'

THANK YOU.

With best wishes and warm regard.

All the Members of Unitarian Church Mukhap.

Spiritual Practices and Readings

shared by Rev. Patience Stoddard

The Days of Awe: from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur

As another congregational year begins, there is much to learn from the Jewish approach to a new year. The following is excerpted from an article from Quest, published by the UU Congregation of the Larger Fellowship.

The Bible refers to Rosh Hashanah as the day of remembrance of creation—the birthday of all that is. It's a birthday everyone shares—all of us—not only with our ancestors but also with the grass outside and trees and stones and sky and the animals and all their ancestors. Rosh Hashanah is an upbeat holiday with celebration and special foods... [when] people wear new clothes and gather in festive parties of families and friends to welcome the new year.

Rosh Hashanah is followed by the ten “Days of Awe,” so called because they are a time of reckoning, for getting right with oneself, loved ones and the world, making sure we are starting the new year with a clean slate. It's a time for apology. Many people, myself included, call our loved ones and apologize for anything we've done to hurt or wrong them and ask their forgiveness. Even something as slight as an insulting comment can be a wrong that must be addressed.

At the end of the Days of Awe is Yom Kippur, a solemn holiday marked by fasting, mindfulness and worship. This is the day when judgments are made, decisions final. ... Jews speak of being written in the book of life for another year—or not, depending on how things go. And how things go depends on what people themselves do, change, repair, or renew. Remorse alone isn't good enough. Not even confession is enough—action, accepted atonement is required.

...Despite the flaws inherent in each of us, and in this riven world we share, we are all free to start again, and again, and again, to call others to join us, to ask and offer forgiveness, to rejoice in a new year together.

A Time to Turn

by the Rev. Nurya Parish

It's a holy time, this turning of the year.
A faint chill starts to hover in the air.
You think about unpacking your wool sweaters,
then do it. A few leaves change from green to yellow,
and drop gently to the earth.

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 earth
and praise the source of Life,
the breath that gives you breath.



Geese appear high over us, pass, and the sky closes.
Abandon, as in love or sleep,
holds them to their way,
Clear in the ancient faith: what we need is here.
And we pray, not for new earth, or heaven,
But to be quiet in heart, and in eye, clear.
What we need is here.

~ Wendell Berry

Spiritual Practices and Readings

shared by Rev. Patience Stoddard

Meditation for Autumn

by Edward Hays

O sacred season of Autumn, be my teacher,
for I wish to learn the virtue of contentment.

As I gaze upon your full-colored beauty,
I sense all about you
an at-homeness with your amber riches.

You are the season of retirement,
of full barns and harvested fields.

The cycle of growth has ceased,
and the busy work of giving life
is now completed.

I sense in you no regrets:
you've lived a full life.

We live in a society that is ever-restless,
always eager for more mountains to climb,
seeking happiness through more and more
possessions.

As a child of my culture,
I am seldom truly at peace with what I have.
Teach me to take stock of what I have given and
received,
may I know that it's enough,
that my striving can cease
in the abundance of God's grace.

May I know the contentment
that allows the totality of my energies
to come to full flower.

May I know that like you I am rich beyond measure.

As you, O Autumn, take pleasure in your great bounty,
let me also take delight
in the abundance of the simple things in life
which are the true source of joy.

With the golden glow of peaceful contentment
may I truly appreciate this autumn day.



School Prayer

by Diane Ackerman

In the name of the daybreak
and the eyelids of morning
and the wayfaring moon
and the night when it departs,
I swear I will not dishonor
my soul with hatred,
but offer myself humbly
as a guardian of nature,
as a healer of misery,
as a messenger of wonder,
as an architect of peace.

In the name of the sun and its mirrors
and the day that embraces it
and the cloud veils drawn over it
and the uttermost night
and the male and the female
and the plants bursting with seed
and the crowning seasons
of the firefly and the apple,
I will honor all life —
wherever and in whatever form
it may dwell — on Earth my home,
and in the mansions of the stars.

Ongoing Opportunities for Involvement!

Sunday Teams

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 Sparrow (Staff Liaison) at education@uucuv.org and she will pass your information along to appropriate person. 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.

Caring Circle

The Caring Circle is our 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. Each month a different Monthly Coordinator is informed of needs and calls Circle members to see if they can help out. If you would like to be part of the Caring Circle in some way or *have needs that could be met through the Circle*, please email or talk to Patience or Sparrow or email the Caring Circle Coordinator Lori Fortini at LA14E@outlook.com. The more willing hands we have listed for various needs, the better we can take care of each other when those needs arise.

If you'd like to step up to drive someone to an appointment or make a meal or show your caring in similar ways, please fill in the quick questionnaire:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdUPXHZ1EYvWrgv4h0exU145fgD_1YThhrc5Q3wcaENtxP8nA/viewform

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. The choir is open to all who wish to sing

regardless of experience or ability. Contact our Music Director, Linda Hoover if you would like to sing with the choir.

Open Choir Sundays. Starting at 9:00 am on certain Sundays, 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.



Chalice Circles

Chalice Circles are intentional lay-led small groups that deepen and expand the ministry of a congregation. They help build community and provide opportunities for deeper relationships – intimacy — and opportunity for deeper spiritual exploration and search for meaning—ultimacy.

Chalice Circles are both structured and open. The sessions are always confidential. Sharing of the space, attention, and time are respected. Although we all will speak to our own experiences of the topics, we will not try to advise or fix one another. A format guides the process for entering community, introducing and addressing a topic deeply. The topics vary wildly, depending on the will of the group, as do the groups' behavioral covenants.

These circles of trust are facilitated by UUCUVers who have gone through a training session and who are in covenant as a group to support and assist one another as appropriate. If you have questions about joining a chalice circle, please contact Sparrow:

education@uucuv.org.

"Living Fully with Limits"

How does one live fully and happily despite having to adjust to limits on our activities and abilities? Patience is facilitating an open and on-going bi-weekly group for those for whom aging or illness have changed the patterns and choices of daily life. We share readings, personal frustrations, lessons learned, and spiritual practices in our continuing search for personal growth. Announcements of time and place will be found in the Weekly Blast. If you are interested, but haven't yet contacted our minister, Patience, please email her at minister@uucuv.org.

Women's Group

The Women's Group gathers at Sally Page's (visit the church website or contact Sally 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. 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 break up by 8:30.

Sally Page baciqual@comcast.net



Sunday Music & Readings

The Sunday Services committee is always looking for people to share special music, provide accompaniment on Linda's off weeks, suggest readings or themes to Rev. Patience Stoddard, or offer to lead or take part in a service. They are very interested in adding other voices, speakers and musical diversity to our services.

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, serving 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. New members and friends are encouraged to fill out our Activity Survey by getting in touch with Sparrow, who will email you a copy.



How to Stay Informed!

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.

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

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 3:00 p.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



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 a portion of the minister's discretionary fund to help families in need of emergency housing or support. In 2015 the Haven's food shelf served 11,403 people, and the shelter housed 233 people. Our congregation provided 950 pounds of food and personal items and \$2298 this past fiscal year.

Partner Church

Our congregation has a partnership with the Mukhap Unitarian Church in the Khasi Hills of Northeast India. Our two churches communicate regularly and find ways to enrich each other's lives through our common spiritual aims and different heritages. This year members of our congregation are sponsoring seven students in high school (including one supported by our Youth Group) and two in college. Please talk to Claudia Kern or Polly Gould if you are interested in being part of this important on-going endeavor.

claudia.anne.kern@gmail.com

pollylgould@yahoo.com

Coming Soon: A column featuring the social justice work of individual members, who work with so many great organizations!

Board of Directors

*Bill Brawley and Joani Nierenberg,
Co-Presidents*

Mugs Johnston, Treasurer

Maureen McNulty, Secretary

Bob Riccio, Member-at-Large

Mary Sayward, Member-at-Large

Jeremy Coylewright, Member-at-Large

Staff

*The Rev. Patience Stoddard, Minister
Sparrow F. Alden, CRE--*

Credentialed Religious Educator

Linda Hoover, Music Director

Rachel Clark, Office Administrator

Committee/ Task Force Chairs

Caring Circle Coordinator (Overall):

Lori Fortini

Committee on Ministry: Lori Fortini, Phil Kern, Suzanne Simon

Library: Olive MacGregor

Meetinghouse Team: Carl Tracy, Bill Brawley

Newsletter Help Team: Margo Nutt, Mardy High, Claudia Kern

Nominating Committee: Suzanne Simon, Paul Schmidt, Cappy Nunlist

Partner Church: Polly Gould, Claudia Kern

Sunday Services: Paul Schmidt

Sunday Teams: Sparrow at this time

Ways and Means: Lori Fortini

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

The submissions deadline for the Winter issue is November 15.

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

“WEEKLY BLAST” DEADLINE:

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

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 10 AM at the Meetinghouse at 320 Route 5 South, in Norwich, VT. Child care is available. Religious education classes are provided during the service.

MEETINGHOUSE: Our newly-built sanctuary adjoins our original Greek Revival farmhouse that continues to serve as meeting and office space.

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).

CREDENTIALED 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 of the month and/or the Rev. Patience Stoddard or Sparrow Alden (contact information above).

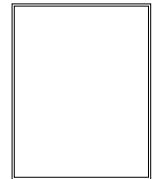
NEWS: To receive our weekly email news “blasts” and/or The Call, our quarterly e-newsletter, email Rachel at the office (above) and ask to be added to our list. Hard copies of The Call are available on Sundays for those who need them.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation

of the Upper Valley

PO Box 1110

Norwich, VT 05055



Some Dates to Remember:

"Path to the Future" Sept. 18

Trans Day of Rem. Nov. 20

Pods Craft Fair Nov. 25-26

**Watch the Weekly Blast for
more!**

UUCUV Sept.-Nov.

UUCUV Phone: (802) 649-8828

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

E-mail: office@uucuv.org

Autumn Issue 2016