

The Call

Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of the Upper Valley

Spring 2016
March - May

In This Issue

Minister's Message.....	1-2
President's Message.....	3
Membership News.....	3
Board Report.....	4
Religious Education News & Views.....	5-6
Book & Music Sale.....	7
Adult Programs.....	8
Garden News.....	9
Earth Day/ Earth Hour Events.....	10
Library News, Book Review.....	11
Meetinghouse History, Camerata.....	12
Spiritual Practices & Readings.....	13
Sermon Excerpts.....	14-15
Partner Church.....	16
Ways to Get Involved.....	17-18
About UUCUV/ Contacts.....	19

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**

Embodying Our Mission and Vision

Rev. Patience Stoddard

The first line of UUCUV's mission begins: *We strive to be a joyful, inclusive congregation...* . Recently after a service, I approached a couple of first time visitors and asked them if they would tell me their first impressions of this congregation. One person responded "Joyful" and the other "Warmth. I've rarely met such a warm and friendly group of people." This is not the first time I have heard such descriptions from first time visitors, nor do I think it will be the last. One has only to enter the new sanctuary on a Sunday morning to begin to feel the energy and enthusiasm. Some of this is undoubtedly because we are still basking in the glow of the still-new sanctuary and Meetinghouse, but some of it is the quality of connectedness and confidence in this community. This of course will ebb and flow over time and will require your on-going awareness and willingness to address problems to assure that *There is no loss of current spirit* and that *someone joining in 2020 feels the same peace, comfort, warmth, love that I do.* [from Hopes And Dreams written during the first service in the new building on Dec. 6th service.]

It has been only three years since this congregation voted on a formal vision statement and many of the things mentioned are already a part of the life of this faith community. Let me mention a few...

We unite to provide diverse gatherings with music, ceremony, dialogue, and joy in support of each other's spiritual well-being. There is now a mid-week meditation held regularly every other Tuesday, eight Wheel of the Year celebrations, and soon a return of monthly Sacred Sings. We have had several after-service discussions and workshops attended by over 20 people and are planning to have more. Chalice Circles have begun again under the leadership of Sparrow Alden CRE with two new trained facilitators and hopefully more will come into being over time.

We unite to provide and maintain an active program of religious education for adults and children. Just since the first of the year, we have expanded from two RE classes to four, with the help of our talented professional teacher, Miss Sheena, two teens leading activities

(continued on page 2)

Embodying Our Mission and Vision

(Continued from page 1)

and discussions, Sparrow's class, and an OWL class for teens with two trained facilitators and two in training. One Saturday in February there was a movie night for children and their parents as well as a sleepover in church. (I'm told that sleeping on the radiant heated floor is warm and cozy.) Along with planned book discussions, lunch conversations on UUism for new people, and "Parents as Resident Theologians" monthly discussions, there are many opportunities to connect and grow.

These educational events along with activities that will provide fellowship, be intergenerational, and serve the wider community, such as the Indian Dinner to learn about and raise support for our sister church in Mukhap India, the resurgence of the famous Soup-athon, LISTEN dinners, and our weekly food collection, mean the Meetinghouse is full of activity these days. Some of this has been made possible only by the considerable work, money and solidarity that has led to the accomplishment of a 20-year goal toward building a sanctuary and increasing our membership. As I write this I am struck by how many of the goals expressed in the 2013 Statement of Vision have been realized.

Long held goals are being lived out in our building and congregation, but there is more to be done. Next year we need to put some of our attention to *fulfilling our commitment to be environmentally responsible and to be a Welcoming Congregation*. The Green Sanctuary and Welcoming Congregation certifications expire after a time and I think we should complete the renewal process as soon as we can. This year we will celebrate our first Trans Day of Visibility and offer an open forum on understanding trans identity following the March 20th service. In April and May we will be looking more deeply at the phenomenon of Climate Change through services, guest speakers and discussions. More and more it is my hope that we will open our doors to the wider community and widen our sphere of dialogue as we strive to live out the call *to be a positive influence in the world*.

It is an exciting time to be the minister of this

dynamic and strengthening community. I want to congratulate you on giving form and life to your vision and encourage you to continue to envision and re-envision your calling *to nurture spiritual and intellectual growth for everyone while encouraging lives of service and integrity and to be a positive influence in the world*.

With love, gratitude and excitement,

A Home

by Frank Gould, December 2015

*The new structure is up;
the doors are open
to all who enter.
Can a structure be home
just by calling it
a sanctuary, or other name?*

*The web that circles in the room
is knotted together
by all those people
who call this space
a sanctuary, simply safe.*

*Safe place to call home;
all those people
who suffer the faith
of coming into a space
predetermined, refuge,
a sanctuary, honored,
respected, privileged;
into the community
of all; welcoming all
into the community
of life time, a preserve,
a sanctuary to calm life.*

*All welcome in our home.
Is it our time to reach out,
gather in those left behind,
dropped into life's pockets,
denied steps on granite stiles?
A sanctuary, freedom haven.*

President's Message

Cappy Nunlist

It has been my pleasure over the past four years to witness the emergence of new life in this congregation. The joy and excitement are palpable. Little miracles keep happening – shelves get installed, chairs get stacked and floors cleaned, boxes get emptied, pianos come and go, meals get delivered to shut-ins, soup-athons resume, and newcomers find their way to us and are embraced.

Not only has our community grown in spirit, but equally gratifying to me, individuals have emerged as if from cocoons into full-fledged butterflies. Those who thought they had no ability to lead have become leaders. People who were afraid to speak up have found their voices. Those who saw the world one way have grown to see that the world has many ways of being viewed. Those who saw the glass as always half empty have come to view the glass as half full – and in viewing it that way have come to see that sometimes it appears even fuller than that. Those who have been afraid to reveal themselves have found a safe place to open their hearts.

It has been a joy to be a part of the process that resulted in this beautiful space for us to be together and to see us as a congregation fill that space with love. But I think it has been even more satisfying to me to watch individuals gain the confidence and trust, supported by this community, to spread their wings and fly.

Stewardship Drive

Please give generously to the Stewardship Drive. And I encourage you all to bring those open hearts and new-found voices to the Annual Meeting to be held after the service on Sunday, June 5th. Your financial commitment and the decisions we make at the meeting will determine where and how far we will be able to go in the coming year. Let's keep spreading the glow!

New Members

The Ruests are honored to be new members of this wonderful congregation and are looking forward to getting to know all of you! Paul and Mandy grew up in the Upper Valley and plan to raise almost-4-year-old Griffin here as well. Paul works for the postal service and Mandy is a licensed psychotherapist in private practice. During a career detour several years ago, Mandy also earned an MBA in Sustainability, and while she isn't specifically using it professionally, she and her family value eating and living as sustainably as possible. They enjoy creating art, playing games, reading, and acting like whatever animal is necessary for the moment. In late October, they moved from Canaan to Plainfield, NH and have been settling in nicely. While in Canaan they attended the Plymouth UU Fellowship, but decided to transfer closer to their new home once they planned to move. Paul and Mandy have eclectic religious and spiritual backgrounds and

came to UUCUV in search of a loving community to nurture spiritual growth for themselves and Griffin. They are looking forward to Religious Education, the OWL program, yummy food, making new lifelong friends, inner peace, and achieving intergalactic oneness!

Izaia Coylewright is currently a sophomore at Hanover High School. She enjoys playing volleyball, stage managing her school play, hanging out with friends, and working at the Lebanon Senior Center. She is very excited to be a member at the UU church and cannot wait for the many more fun times.

Congratulations to Nick Warren on passing his qualifying exams for his PhD in mid-January!

Board Report

Bess Schmidt, Board Secretary

This winter the board has continued to coordinate various tasks related to the new building. A celebration to honor those who worked on our church is planned for a Sunday afternoon in early spring. The board is also working on a project to recognize donors to the Capital Campaign Fund, to be completed by the spring Dedication ceremony and based on suggestions from the congregation.

In January, the board authorized spending from the Growth and Development Fund for two unbudgeted expenses. First, due to the steady increase in children's attendance, two additional religious education teachers were hired to teach the elementary aged students. Second, the board chose to fund the Restorative Circles workshop at which Sarah Whitcomb introduced a conflict resolution method based on deep listening.

Also in January, the board met for a special meeting to continue discussion of congregational bylaws. A draft has now been completed which will be presented to the congregation for review and feedback, with the hopes of adoption by this year's annual meeting.

A new facilities use policy has been approved and is being implemented immediately, as numerous outside groups have expressed interest in using our building for their events. The policy establishes one events manager in the congregation to coordinate all building use requests and establishes a fee schedule, which may be reduced or waived for certain groups. The policy is available at the Meetinghouse. Cappy Nunlist is currently serving as the events manager.

The preliminary budget for the 2016-2017 fiscal year includes increased spending in several categories, in particular a mortgage payment which we will take on this spring. Additionally, we hope to increase spending in core services such as religious education and Sunday services to meet the needs of our growing and thriving congregation. This budget will be revised based on the results of the annual stewardship drive.

The board meets this spring on the third Thursday evening of the month. Meetings are held in the Meetinghouse library and are open to the congregation. Check the calendar for schedule changes. Minutes of

Annual Canvass/Stewardship Campaign



Rev. Jane Rzepka wrote the following about church pledge drives:

1. In our church the every-member canvass has nothing at all to do with:

guilt, ministerial services rendered, a person's church attendance, power, personal profit, the personality of the asker. (I originally included 'heaven' on this list, but who am I to say ...maybe a big pledge does get you into heaven)*

* Though Universalism says you'll get there anyway someday(PS)

2. ...We support the church because in matters of religion, anyway, we like the word "liberal." We believe in the promotion of kindness, reflection, and good works, Unitarian Universalist style. We give because we know that in small ways and big, our church takes a stand for the good, and we are happy to support it.

Shared by Patience

Religious Education News & Views



Parenting for Values

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE

“How do we live our UU values as a family in a world which doesn’t support those values?” A good question. Probably the most important religious parenting question. Our parents’ discussion group posed it, then planned to chew on it and meet again - and then we got busy with the move, unpacking, and shiny new programming. The question still stands. In fact, I’ve been asked this question twice more in different ways by two other families since then.

When the ethical thing to do is the easy thing to do, no one notices. Shall I go become a criminal mastermind? Too much effort, too little satisfaction for me personally. It’s no big deal at all to make that ethical choice.

Shall I drive out of my way to buy local? Shall I deny myself what everyone else is eating because it doesn’t match my family’s ethics? Shall I tell my peers that “joke” was hurtful to others? It’s much harder to make that ethical choice when it costs effort or acceptance, particularly for kids.

The first lesson comes straight from Lonnie Larrow on the occasion of her family buying a fuel-efficient car that couldn’t take all her kids’ friends to the movies. “Well, then, we’re going to celebrate this choice and be proud of our family,” she said, and off they went, lifting each other up for caring for the earth. I heartily agree - it’s all about identity formation. We are the family with the hybrid car. We are a vegetarian family.

As I sat putting these thoughts on virtual paper, Lonnie herself came up the stairs and had a quick chat about families choosing to come to church. “With all we’ve been reading about resilience,” she said, “it still comes down to eating dinner together.”

Yes, indeed. Identity. Who are my people? The ones I eat with. Be together as a family. Talk about what your family stands for. Come to church together. Talk about what our congregation stands for. Serve

LISTEN dinner together. We are the ones who do this thing, make this choice, live this way. Who are we?

This is the church of the open mind.

This is the church of the loving heart

This is the church of the helping hands.

Living our values when others reject those values? Just plain hard work. We comfort our kids who have been teased while not allowing them to speak the same way to others. We kiss the hurt feelings. We role-play standing up and speaking up with our kids until we can all do it clearly and politely.

Then we come to church and hang out with the other children and parents who don’t tolerate unkindness. We fill our well of reserves by folks who know how hard it is. We lean a little on the wisdom of parents who’ve raised fabulous young adults.

I get to preach on April 17th on the topic of faith development, when I’ll have more to say on how these principles - identity and resilience - look at different ages. Until then, good luck -

Peace,

Sparrow

Thank you, OWL Leaders, for giving up a lovely Saturday for a training event with much discussion, caring, and brain power!

Thank you to Leah Goat and Jen Stanhope for fabulous assistance creating the RE Supply Closet.

Unpacking the RE Office

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE

Last April, Lori Fortini guided our packing according to a few simple questions: Is this needed? Will it add beauty and enhance our space? Will it take up space that could be used for something else?

In the last two months, my unpacking has been guided by different questions: What is this? What does it go with? What on earth was I thinking? Imagine my delight when I found a box labeled, in my own handwriting, “Sparrow, this is the box you are looking for.”

In seriousness, unpacking and setting up the office for our RE program has been an exercise in re-imagining the scope of our programming. We have a Mem-

bership Bin! A Chalice Circle shelf! Well, 12 inches of shelf. There’s a whole filing cabinet devoted to OWL, a box of books to give away to small children, and a solid work table for making Spirit Play supplies.

I may have put my personal stamp on the appearance of the RE office, but it is our shared office for our whole congregational programming, from Nursery prep to stashing journals for a Memoir group. Come upstairs. I’ll show you the curtain Bobbie Kendall made, the craft supplies that Leah Goat sorted, and the precious copy of *Miss Twiggley’s Tree* that I hope Olive and Polly can rescue. We have a lot to do - and our office is ready.

Parenting Lessons

Bobbie Kendall

I have a young friend who is a talented knitter and seamstress, hardworking office administrator, Mommy of a preschooler and a baby. She threw a great birthday party for her 4-year-old daughter on a shoestring budget using lots of creativity. Her daughter had asked for a mermaid party. Her own mother, the grandmother, offered to host the party at her home so she could watch her granddaughter’s fun. My friend prepared crepe paper streamers taped up as twisting seaweed, lines of grapes on kabob-skewers looking like bubbles, nibbles, games, and she made an adorable blue-green skirt with a mermaid-shaped tail for her daughter to wear.

So much fun! As the Mommy posted some photos on line for us friends to enjoy, her writing took on a sheepish tone. She suddenly felt a little embarrassed at having made such a fuss about a party that her little girl might never remember. But the party memories are only one small part of what happened that day. I wrote her a note reminding her about all the important lessons she had reinforced for her little girl:

- Birthdays are important
- Her opinion counted. Really counted.
- She is special.
- It is important to Mommy for her to have fun, be special, have some of the things she wants.
- Celebrating with family is very important.
- She is worthy of being the center of attention.
- How to appropriately handle being the center of attention.
- Imagination isn’t just for kids.
- Imagination is FUN!
- She is loved and cherished.

This young mother didn’t go over budget, she didn’t go overboard. Grandma got to be part of the action. A little girl got the creative, cool, fun birthday party she asked for - and implicit lessons that she will never forget.

Ways & Means: Soupathons!



Mardy High, Lori Fortini, and Suzanne Simon at the Soupathon in February--part of the crew. We would have a picture of Kathy Christie, but she was working so hard that she didn't stay in one place long enough!



Annual Book & Music Sale Coming April 2nd!

The annual Book & Music Sale will take place on Saturday, April 2nd from 8 AM until 1 PM. Volunteers are needed to sort and sell, and donations are needed! Helpers are needed at the Meetinghouse on the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday prior to the sale from 4 to 8 PM (March 30, 31, April 1) to receive your book & music donations. Please, NO encyclopedias, textbooks, magazines (unless vintage and collectible), or cassette tapes. We do accept CD's and DVD's. Donations of vinyl LP record albums especially classic Rock are encouraged.

For further information or to volunteer to help with this fun, annual event contact Rich Greenlee (tel: 802-436-1150 or via e-mail: Hartlandvt@aol.com).

Adult Groups for Lifelong Learning

“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.

“Parents as Resident Theologians” Continues

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

Chalice Circles

Sparrow F. Alden

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.

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

News from the Garden

Leah Goat

Shrubs: This spring we'll be planting a hedge to screen our parking lot from Route 5 (at Norwich's request). We'll use a variety of native shrubs which should grow to 5-6 feet tall and will provide flowers for pollinators, berries and shelter for birds and other creatures (hopefully not too much browse for the deer), and fall color to please our eyes. We'll also plant a few shrubs around our main entry.

Flowers: We'll be planting a cottage garden of mixed perennials and annuals in the big bed in front of the church. It will include plants that are either native or that were available to New England gardeners at the time our farmhouse was built--examples are double white 'Festiva maxima' peonies, a hybrid of Chinese and European peonies that came to this country in the mid-19th century, also the deep blue bearded iris 'Germanica' that followed the Silk Road to Rome and became widespread in England (as the 'flower-de-luce'), Europe, and later New England and was beloved by Van Gogh. As the soil warms this spring, watch the Blast for a requests for perennials that we don't already have sources for.

Edibles: The bed along the south side of the sanctuary will contain period edibles--including, we hope, Abenaki flint corn, Connecticut Field pumpkins, and meandering nasturtiums from Thomas Jefferson's gardens at Monticello. We'll also be planting plum trees and grafting stock apple trees that should allow us to keep the genetics of our two historic apple trees going through the 21st century. A fenced blueberry and strawberry garden for the children may come this year or next.

Gardeners: Watch the Weekly Blast for garden work day(s) this spring. Please e-mail me if you'd like to be put on a core list of gardeners who can help with starting plants, transplanting, watering, and/or weeding: leahgoat@comcast.net. And thanks to Valkyrie Alden, Larry Litten, Ginger Wallis, Katherine Kitowski, Colin High, Andrew Garthwaite, Judy Reeve, and our landscaper Jim LaMontagne for their

help with planning our landscape.

Wish list: At the top of our wish list are some old rough-cut stone fence posts to separate our parking area from the front hedge.

Thank you all for the opportunity to research and plan our gardens--it is one of winter's great delights!



*The ground so bare, so beaten by winter
Suddenly sends up delicate green,
Then blue, then yellow and red, then white:
Secrets it was saving for us,
Wealth we didn't know we had.
Who could believe in weary March
That the dun slop, bitten meadow,
And here by the house, border and bed
Would ever again be what they could be:
Flame, flame, wonderful, wordless—*

*Oh, but their stillness, the standing plants,
Oh, but their coolness, the burning blossoms,
Oh, but the miracle from nowhere,
Light out of darkness, gold out of poverty,
Blessing beyond any thinkable dream.*

~Mark Van Doren

Earth Day Guest Speaker April 24th

Claudia Kern

On April 24th we will have the privilege of hosting guest speaker Beth Sawin, Co-Director of Climate Interactive.

In an interconnected world, problems are connected, but so are solutions. In an era when problems seem huge and daunting, when time is very short, and when budgets and resources are limited, one of our biggest untapped resources is multisolving – the ability to envision and implement solutions that solve several problems at the same time. Beth will share concrete examples of multisolving from around the world and talk about the personal habits of thought and attitude we can all cultivate to be better multisolvers.

A biologist with a Ph.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Beth trained in system dynamics and sustainability with Donella Meadows and worked at Sustainability Institute, the research institute founded by Meadows, for 13 years.

Now her work increasingly focuses on Multisolving, helping people find solutions that reduce greenhouse

gas emissions while producing multiple benefits in health, justice, equity, resilience and well-being. She writes and speaks on this topic to local, national, and international audiences, and recently was present for the Paris climate talks.

In 2014 she was invited to participate in the Council on the Uncertain Human Future, a continuing dialogue on issues of climate change and sustainability among a select group of humanities scholars, writers, artists and climate scientists.

Beth's work also focuses on capacity building – helping leaders achieve bigger impact. She has trained and mentored global sustainability leaders in the Donella Meadows Fellows Program, and provided systems thinking training to both Ashoka and Dalai Lama Fellows in recent years.

Beth lives in Hartland, Vermont and is a member of Cobb Hill Co-Housing along with her husband, Phil Rice, and their two daughters.



If you are thinking about a great way to spend the evening of March 19th, the World Wildlife Fund has a challenge for you. They have created “Earth Hour,” Saturday, March 19, 2016, 8:30 PM- 9:30 PM. “Earth Hour” is an hour or more for you to turn off all electricity at your house and think about how we can protect the Earth. It is a great opportunity to give back to our planet. Many countries, organizations, companies,

schools and individual people have joined. Here are some ideas you can do during Earth Hour:

1. Host a dinner party.
2. Have a bonfire.
3. Play some of your favorite games by candlelight.
4. Go for a walk outside.
5. Go star gazing.
6. Drawing and seeing what you can do in the dark.
7. Tell scary stories.
8. Play flash light tag.
9. Make moon water. (ask Claudia about this!)
10. Find some money around the house and donate it to your favorite charity.

Be creative...

Will you take the challenge? Join by signing-up at earthhour.wwf.org.uk

Sources: <https://www.earthhour.org>
earthhour.wwf.org.uk

Neeta Shain

The UUCUV Library is Ready for You!

Olive MacGregor

You may now check out items and return anything that you took out before the library was dismantled. Don't forget to register before checking out items for the first time. Directions are in the library. Margo Nutt will resume writing her book reviews, and we hope to start processing new acquisitions soon.

During construction, the library books and supplies were kept at the homes of Margo Nutt and Doug and Olive MacGregor. Now they are back in the new library space. Frank and Polly Gould transported the books and shelves in their van. Don and Karen Watson stored the shelves in their basement and sanded and painted them. Dave Nierenberg figured out how to arrange the shelves, cut some shelves to size, and built and installed the bookcases. He was able to use many of the shelves from the old building. Margo Nutt, Polly Gould, and Olive and Doug MacGregor put the books back on the shelves in order. We are still organizing the supplies. Thank you to all!

Olive MacGregor, Library Committee Chair;

Polly Gould and Margo Nutt, Members



Thank you, Dave Nierenberg, for bookshelves and bulletin boards and all the little finish details you have spent hours and hours on to help make this beautiful home perfect.

Book Review

By Margo Nutt



The Other Islam: Sufism and the Road to Global Harmony, **by Stephen Schwartz**

A propos of the recent excellent talk by Rev. M'Ellen Kennedy at the UUCUV, "What I Love About Islam," I thought this book would be of particular interest.

Many Americans today identify Islam with hatred of the West. *The Other Islam* transforms this image and opens the way to finding common ground. Sufism is a blend of the mystical and rational tendencies within Islam. A reforming movement against the increasing worldliness of Muslim society, it focuses on Islam's spiritual dimension. Described as "Islam of the Heart," Sufism has attracted adherents among both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, as well as Jews, Christians, Hindus, and Buddhists. If the average American knows anything about Sufism, it may be because of reading the poems of Rumi, or seeing the so-called "whirling dervishes."

Islam, as the history of Sufism reveals, has from the start attempted to foster pluralism in its midst. It has benefited from and inspired both Jewish and Christian mysticism, and it has influenced and inspired some of the best writers in the West including the Transcendentalists in America.

In *The Other Islam*, Stephen Schwartz traces the origins and history of Sufism, elucidates its teachings, and illustrates its links to other religions. Schwartz, a journalist and convert to Islam, offers Sufism, the mystical branch of Islam, as an aid to the United States' efforts to fight Islamic extremism.

A Chapter in Our Meetinghouse History

Deb Berryman

Several Sundays ago, we were visited by Deb Berryman, who said that she and her husband had owned the property in the 1970s, when it was a motel. We asked her to write an account of her time living in what became the UUCUV Meetinghouse. (The church bought the property in 1996.) Here is her description:

In 1973, my husband, Howard Berryman, and I purchased the house and property with fourteen acres of land that is now the UU Church. We moved to Norwich from Tewksbury, Massachusetts, but I had grown up in Woodstock, and we always wanted to move to Vermont.

The property was known as the Rolling Hill Motel, with half the land in Norwich and half in Hartford. This purchase included a six-unit motel parallel to Route 5, four small cabins and a carriage house with two rentals. There also was a small apartment on the second floor of the main house. The entire place was very run down and in need of much cleanup, renovation and redecorating. It was all in pretty discouraging condition, but my husband was optimistic about its prospects.

There was an old Glenwood stove in the kitchen with kerosene burner for heat on one side and burners (for

cooking) and an oven on the other. The floor was not level, and the linoleum was worn, dirty and rippled. The sink was cracked and stained. The tin ceiling hadn't been painted in years. The basement had a dirt floor with wooden planks put down to get across the water, and it emitted a musty smell.

The large room across the front of the house became our bedroom. It had four long windows. The upstairs apartment was rented to a family of five. They had two bedrooms, a small bath and kitchen, and living room across the front of the house.

Eventually we made the house our home. We tried to run the motel, but after fall tourist season decided rental apartments were more practical.

As much as I protested our buying the property and moving there, it turned out to be the best decision we ever made. My parents lived close by, the schools were good, and we had a supportive church and community. I sold the property in 1982 after my husband's death. I am sure he would be as happy as I am to see what wonderful improvements your congregation has made.

Camerata New England Hosted by UUCUV

Camerata New England has a new home at the UUCUV. All of the ensemble's Upper Valley concerts will be 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. The group looks forward to performing here for a long time to come. Their Steinway grand piano has been moved to our sanctuary and is being used for our own Sunday Services as well. Camerata NE's first concert at UUCUV will be Piano Quartets on Sunday, April 24, 2016 at 3 pm. Tickets are available at www.cameratanewengland.org



Spiritual Practices and Readings

shared by Rev. Patience Stoddard

A Few Simple Prayers:

Walk with Us, by Howard Thurmond

Walk with us
as we wrestle to find a way to reveal
Thy life and Thy spirit and Thy mind
O, God, that we may be true to the light.



A UU Grace, by Mary Ann Masterson

As sun and water have transformed
the seed into this fruit.
As the miller and the baker transformed
the grain into this bread.
So may we transform this food
into health and beauty and strength
So we may work and play and serve
one another.
As we contemplate the transforming miracle
of life.
Let us give thanks for this food
and all these loving faces.

Thank You, by Garrison Keillor

Thank you, dear God, for this good life
And forgive us if we do not love it enough.

Women's Prayer, by Jim Riley

Our Mother, who art the earth,
Holy be thy name.
The garden come—where all are one
And all is face to face.
Give us this day, the grace we need;
Like mountains capped with snow,
Cascading down and circling 'round
Your family here below.

Spring Housecleaning of the Spirit

By Richard S. Gilbert

In the quiet of this promising hour of spring,
May we purge ourselves of coldness of spirit,
that warm spring breezes may thaw our souls;

May the debris of wrongs, unforgiven be gathered and
discarded, so we can start anew;

May slowness of spirit, frozen by cold,
be quickened to every fresh possibility;

May the song that has lingered too long in our lungs be
inspired by twittering bird choruses;

May the grime of mistakes made be rinsed from our
minds with the springtime waters
of self-forgiveness;

May the dust of the exhausting journey
be wiped from the furniture of our lives
so that it gleams again;

May we muster the strength to do our own spring
cleaning of the spirit.

Excerpts from Patience's Recent Services

Excerpt of reading from the service "Refusing To Live In The House Of Fear"

In many, often very subtle ways fear victimizes and controls us. ...It not seldom appears as a cruel tyrant who takes possession of us and forces us to live in his house. In fact most of us people of the 20th (now 21st) century live in the house of fear most of the time. It has become an obvious dwelling place, an acceptable basis on which to make our decisions and plan our lives.

But why are we so terribly afraid? ... Would there be so much fear if it was not useful to somebody? ...A huge network of anxious questions surrounds us and begins to guide many, if not most, of our daily decisions. Clearly those who can pose these fearful questions which bind us within have true power over us.... Once we accept these questions as our own, and are convinced that we must find answers to them, we become more and more settled in the house of fear.

Fearful questions never lead to love-filled answers ...Thus fear engenders fear. Fear never gives birth to love.

From *In the Lord's House*, by Henri Nouwen, 1986

Reading from service on "Creating a Listening Community"

In genuine community there are no sides. It is not always easy, but by the time members reach community, they have learned how to give up cliques and factions. They have learned how to listen to each other and how not to reject each other.

Sometimes consensus in community is reached with miraculous rapidity. But at other times it is arrived at only after lengthy struggle. Just because it is a safe place does not mean community is a place without conflict. It is, however, a place where conflict can be resolved without aggression and emotional damage, but instead with care and wisdom as well as grace.

For genuine community is:

A place that is both safe and challenging, a place where we are asked to be our true selves, to let go of the shields that we wear for protection, and be open to each other and to a higher power greater than ourselves.

A place where we can become skilled at listening and understanding,

A place where we learn to respect each others' gifts and accept each other's limitations,

A place where we can celebrate our differences and bind each other's wounds,

A place where we are committed to a struggling together rather than against each other.

A place where we can learn how to leave the house of fear and dwell together in the house of love.

Adapted by Patience from book *The Different Drum* M. Scott Peck

Excerpts from Patience's Recent Services

From the sermon "Talking about Dying"

I've been reading the book *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande. Writing from his surgeon's point of view but using the words and experiences from patients and family members, Gawande tells us what we already know. That care for the very old and the dying tends to focus on the wrong things:

- on prolonging life rather than enhancing its quality,
- on keeping people safe rather than trying to preserve their independence,
- on fighting death and dying rather than to learning to accept it or even perhaps welcome it.

Gawande encourages us to talk – to talk with our doctors, our friends and most importantly our loved ones about the way in which we hope to meet our own end of life, about who will be making those decisions when we can not, about when to intervene to try to extend life and when to not intervene.

It isn't easy – this speaking of our own dying. It isn't easy because many of us are afraid of dying, afraid of the imagined pain, afraid of our utter vulnerability, afraid of what might be next or what isn't. Even if we have come to terms with our own ending, it is hard to know how best to talk to those we love about it – to find the right opportunity to bring it up, an opportunity that often doesn't seem to come.

It isn't easy as a son or daughter or close friend either. It isn't easy because we come to depend on those around us, not only for care and occasional support but for knowing who we are, for grounding us in the past and accompanying us on that unknown path into the future. And often we depend on those who know us best for our sense of identity, our sense of value. When they are gone, who will we be...no longer a daughter or a partner, no longer a caregiver or a confidant.

It isn't easy but it is important. It is important so that we and those we love can live up to the end, to ensure that our way of dying has something to do with our way of living, with the values, the relationships, the integrity which are central to who we are as unique individuals.

We may not be able to control when we die or how we die, but we do have some control over how we approach our dying. As we prepare to die, we can choose to dwell in the house of love rather than in the house of fear.

Most of us, if we are honest, have some fear around death and dying. It is a mystery and it can be hard work this final letting go.

Yet there is another reality, there is often the possibility of a good death. As a Hospice chaplain I witnessed the growth that can happen at the end of life --the possibilities of forgiveness, of profound appreciation for others, for oneself, and for the gift of life. I witnessed many conversations that transformed and healed relationships, the felt-sense of the welcoming presence of those who had gone before, a growing perception of the larger reality of which we are a part - from which we came and to which we will return. I saw that one can go gently into that good night and that what remains is love and a deep sense of peace.

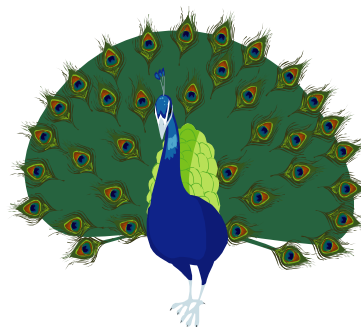
Partner Church News

Indian Dinner a Great Success!

Many thanks to Karen Watson, Jean and Melanie Howe, Suzanne Simon, Jane Sachs, and Libby Vesilind who cooked up a storm with Polly Gould and Claudia Kern to prepare and serve our annual Indian Dinner. On January 29th, forty-seven people joined together to eat a tasty meal, celebrate that UUCUV is now sponsoring nine students from Mukhap, view some slides from Mukhap, and partake in a quiz about our Partnership. Each table gave a try at answering the questions on the following Quiz. How will you do? If you want to study up a bit before taking the quiz, you might enjoy reading the short history of the Unitarians in India that is posted under Social Action/Partner Church at uucuv.org.

Partner Church Quiz

1. In which state of India is Mukhap located?
2. What language is spoken by our friends in Mukhap?
3. What is the meaning of the word Khublei?
4. What are the main resources of the village of Mukhap?
5. Who was Hissor Singh?
6. What world record does the village of Cherrapunjee hold?
7. What is the majority religion in the state?
8. What is unique about the social structure of families in Mukhap?



Answers to Quiz:

1. Meghalaya, 2. Khasi, 3. Go with God, 4. Rice and Timber, 5. Founder of Unitarianism in Meghalaya, 6. Highest annual rainfall in the world, 7. Christianity, 8. Matrilineal

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 Coordinator Mary Shain or Board Liaison Bess Schmidt. 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 already been assigned to a team, but are also willing to be put on a "on-call list" if there is a need on a particular day, please let Mary Shain know: jimandmaryshain@gmail.com

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@valley.net. The more willing hands we have listed for various needs, the better we can take care of each other when those needs arise.

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.

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.

New this year--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.

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! *It is always open to new people.*

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.

(continued on page 18)

Just bring some ingredient(s) to add to a pot luck salad. Peppers? Sunflower seeds? Lettuce? Cukes? Tomatoes? Bread? Salad dressing? Not a lot. Just enough.

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

Once we are fed, and others have arrived, we move to the living room and take time for brief check-ins to share how our lives are going. Here, and throughout the evening, the right to reticence will be honored and

confidentiality respected. We then have a discussion generated from suggestions from the group. The evening generally includes a good belly laugh, and though we don't try to resolve each other's problems they seem lightened by sharing.

We will break up by 8:30.

Please email Sally for directions to her home.

Sally Page baciquail@comcast.net

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 the Pods for the Pulpit Craft Fair earnings and 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

polly1gould@yahoo.com

Interfaith Power & Light

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

mhigh22@gmail.com

chigh@rsginc.com

Board of Directors

Cappy Nunlist, President
Frank Gould, Vice President
Kathy Christie, Treasurer
Bess Schmidt, Secretary
Anne Alford, Member-at-Large
Jean Howe, 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*, *Barbara Clapp*, *Paul Schmidt*
Partner Church: *Polly Gould*, *Claudia Kern*
Sunday Services: *Paul Schmidt*
Sunday Teams: *Mary Shain*, *Bess Schmidt*
Ways and Means: *Lori Fortini*

About the UUCUV



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

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

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

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

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).

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

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

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

CARES AND CONCERNS: With cares and concerns, please contact the Caring Circle Coordinator 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.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

The submissions deadline for the Summer issue is May 15.
Please send your submissions to Rachel: office@uucuv.org

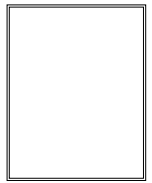
"WEEKLY BLAST" DEADLINE:

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

Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of the Upper Valley

PO Box 1110

Norwich, VT 05055



Dates to Remember:

**March 27- Easter potluck after
service**

April 2 --Book & Music Sale

**April 24--Earth Day Guest
Speaker**

UUCUV March - May

UUCUV Phone: (802) 649-8828

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

E-mail: office@uucuv.org

Spring Issue 2016

