

The Call

Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of the Upper Valley

Summer 2016
June- August

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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**

Minister's Message

Rev. Patience Stoddard

It has been a truly wonderful year with an extraordinary amount of work accomplished. The Building Dedication service was a fitting tribute to the fulfillment of a decades long vision to have a beautiful sanctuary in which to have our services and share with the wider community. There has been significant growth in both membership numbers and positive energy over these past months. Another tribute to the work of strengthening and deepening the life of this congregation was the Annual Meeting which passed several important agenda items with open and productive discussion of issues and unanimous votes.

As was mentioned in the Dedication Service, while this chapter in the life of the congregation is closing another is just beginning. Here are a few of my thoughts on possible priorities for next year.

- Explore new ways of furthering our mission and creating positive social change within the wider community including deepening partnerships with other organizations and congregations.
- Continue to improve and increase programming for members and friends, from expanding Chalice Circles to short and longer-term discussion groups to movie nights and joint recreational activities.
- Do planning and discernment work around ministry—both assessing the timing and need for a full-time minister and clarity about good ways to minister collectively to the wider community.
- Increase level of participation of members and friends in the RE program and in Sunday services.
- Continue to update and implement policies and procedures, including considering and deciding upon a facilitative process to help people follow the spirit of the covenant and find new, productive ways to practice conflict resolution and improve communication.

Looking forward to our next year together!

Highlights from the UUCUV Annual Meeting June 5, 2016

Bess Schmidt and Patience Stoddard

PODS Recipients

UUCUV policy states that the board will suggest organizations to receive the proceeds from the PODS fundraiser. The board solicited suggestions from the congregation and following a discussion the recipients chosen for next year were WISE, the Family Place and the Good Neighbor clinics. We will continue to collect food and money for the Haven weekly.

Approval of 2016-2017 Budget

Income - So far this year \$127,210 has been raised in pledges with a median pledge of ~\$1000. This is a substantial increase from last year, when we had \$104,160 in pledges at this time. This year's proposed budget also includes \$4000 as an estimate of rental income. A transfer of ~\$8700 from the Growth and Development fund was required to balance the budget. We call on this fund in periods of growth. The actual amount transferred is determined at the end of the fiscal year.

Expenses- Several important changes have been made from last year's budget. The budget includes a cost of living raise for the minister, the music director and the office administrator. There is a significant increase in Lifespan Religious Education and Membership Coordination, as Sparrow's hours are increased from half-time to three-quarter-time. There is an increase in the Sunday Services budget, in order to invite more speakers and host educational workshops and forums.

We also are beginning payments on a 15-year mortgage in the amount of \$150,000 at 4% interest (for the first five years). Projected costs for the construction and landscaping (including the paving of the parking lot) is expected to be \$170,000 more than we raised in pledges in grants. This leaves ~\$20,000 shortfall, which will need to be met by December 2017 in order

to repay the bridge loans to members of our congregation. Kathy invites those who have not yet contributed to the Capital Campaign or would like to donate more to speak with her.

The budget was passed unanimously by secret ballot.

Vote on Revised Bylaws

Two congregational meetings had already been held to discuss and revise the bylaws. After a review, discussion, and slight changes, the new By-laws were approved unanimously by secret ballot.

Elections

The Nominating Committee's slate of proposed new Board Members and Nominating Committee members was approved unanimously.

Expressions of Gratitude

Patience was recognized for the 2015 Westwood Grant that she was awarded last fall in recognition of her hard work that has helped to revitalize UUCUV. Then a circle was formed and Cappy led the congregation in expressing gratitude to each other for all the work that had been done this past year and continues.



Lessons Learned over the Past Few Years

Rev. Patience Stoddard

Cappy Nunlist and Patience Stoddard gave part of the keynote address this spring at the UUA Northern New England District annual meeting about the success UUCUV has had these past couple years in achieving its goals. In May, they then shared their reflections with the congregation in a sermon. Here are some of the lessons learned to which they pointed. Can you think of some others?

1. Ask members and friends to share their dreams for their congregation, but also ask what they are willing to do now to help achieve those dreams. It is crucial to involve the whole congregation in setting long-term goals and it is equally important to then set clear, achievable short-term goals that lead in the direction of those dreams.

2. Create systems that make serving the congregation fun and rewarding. Setting clear goals for volunteers and then giving them the authority to decide how to do what is asked increases initiative and develops leadership skills.

3. Practice collaborative leadership, from ministry to fundraising to community service. Here the work of ministry is shared among staff and between staff, lay leaders and teams. Many hands not only make light work, but they also make it lot more fun ...and successful.

4. Have high expectations. Membership carries with it responsibilities – financial support, participation to the extent you are able, and the willingness to live in covenant and work through problems with others.

5. Don't be afraid to try new things, take risks, even fail. When something's not working, try something else. If there's no room for failure, there's little room for progress.

6. Create an environment that is safe and welcoming: listen to each other, respect other viewpoints, and don't sweat the small stuff.

We have fostered the building of trust by creating lots of opportunities for people to get to know each other, work together, and learn from each other, as well as by setting boundaries and finding the courage to hold people accountable for their actions.

7. Finally, whenever possible have fun. Laughter is a spiritual practice.



“The best thing for being sad,” replied Merlin, beginning to puff and blow, “is to learn something. That’s the only thing that never fails. ... Learn why the world wags and what wags it. That is the only thing which the mind can never exhaust, never alienate, never be tortured by, never fear or distrust, and never dream of regretting. Learning is the only thing for you. Look what a lot of things there are to learn.”

~T.H. White, *The Once and Future King*

Building Dedication Day, June 12



*Photos by Molly Drummond.
Many, many more will surely be
made into an album to celebrate
this special day.*



From Our Incoming Board Co-President Saying Yes!

Bill Brawley

When we were working on the Meetinghouse project, Joani and I sometimes wondered aloud: How would this new building change us as a congregation?

We heard an insightful answer during the recent dedication ceremony. As the Rev. Paul Sawyer, minister to the Hartland UU congregation, told us the project had changed us simply by the fact that we had agreed as a congregation to move ahead with it.

We moved from “maybe” and “can’t” to “yes” and “definitely.” In so doing, we committed ourselves to a bold statement, an intentional and very public act of faith in the future of liberal religion in the Upper Valley. We dreamed it, and we did it. We moved from a run-down, funky smelling farmhouse with improvised offices and a too-small meeting room into a brand-new sanctuary brilliantly integrated with a renovated jewel of Greek Revival architecture. It’s a space that we can all be proud to inhabit and to pass on to future generations.

A similar shift is happening with the personality of the membership itself: Now that we have been unbound from the physical limits of our previous space,

how will this new mindset manifest itself in our work together as a beloved community?

We can already see the change in so many ways: in the eager work of the welcoming and hospitality teams, in the nascent efforts to rededicate ourselves to our basic principles as a Green and a Welcoming Congregation, in welcoming new members and friends and remembering through their eyes the fundamental principles that first attracted us to this faith and this community. We’ve been liberated from the need to borrow or rent space for many of our community activities. No longer do we have to worry about how many appliances are plugged into the kitchen power strips! Our choir said it best during the dedication ceremony: Say Yes! Say Yes!

One thing the building project taught us about this community is that if we set expectations, they will consistently be exceeded. We expect great things to happen with this new home base. We look forward to working with your new board to sustain this Meetinghouse as a platform that enables great things to happen.

Board Members 2016-17

Co-Presidents--Bill Brawley and Joani Nierenberg

Treasurer--Mugs Johnston

Secretary--Maureen McNulty

Members-at-Large--Jeremy Coylewright, Bob Riccio,
Mary Sayward

Thank you for all of your wonderful support over the past four years through bad times and good - mostly good! I look forward to an exciting future under the caring and capable leadership of Joani and Bill.

~Cappy Nunlist

Religious Education News & Views



Every Sunday is Children's Sunday

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE

As I write this article in the quiet of the Meeting-house, I hear the last echoes of "De Colores" wafting up from the Sanctuary. This morning, we celebrated a special UU treat called Children's Sunday.

Abigail and Bronson Alcott articulated a radical nineteenth century philosophy that UU religious education has embraced: children deserve an education that affirms their worth and dignity and meets them where they are. Mr. Alcott wrote with much higher register, of course, but his treatises boil down to that. Children's Sunday allows the congregation to show respect to the kids as learners and fellow UUs and gives the children a chance to practice public speaking and take pride in their work.

This year we sang - and a half-dozen people danced in the aisles! This year we looked at the map the Elementary class has developed - and then over a dozen people took a walk through the Spirit in Nature path to see for themselves the places marked for animal signs and trees who seem to be friends. We practiced voting by choosing celebratory words to display outdoors; we promoted peace and understanding by writing letters (and making pictures) for our friends in Mukhap, India.

Our curriculum during this year of travel and transition has been to reinforce Unitarian Universalist identity in every class, with every exploration. A special thanks to the Cool Cats Class who led the chalice lighting to remind us that even at four years old, the rituals we perform shape our identity and values.

But it's more than once a year. Every Sunday, kids learn to greet grown ups, to shake hands, to find a page in the hymnal. Every Sunday we open with Worship Time by sharing chalice, music, and story. Every Sunday we embody social justice by collecting food for our neighbors at The Haven. Then we all have Learning Time - some people get to hear a sermon, others get to make birdhouses, still others get to explore stories of Buddha or the Great Bear Spirit. We come back together

er as a whole congregation at Fellowship Time to hear from one another what we learned and encourage one another on the path.

Explicitly, we ask about faith traditions and how to find and articulate our values and hopes and discoveries. We wonder about global friendships and music and first aid.

Implicitly, there is only one question: Shall we be kind to one another?

This old aphorism guides me:

The only thing we do is religious education.

The only thing we teach is Unitarian Universalism.

The congregation is the curriculum.

To this I add:

Every Sunday is Children's Sunday.



Summer Sundays for Kids: Grubs and Gardening!

In accord with our seventh principle, kids are going outdoors to work in their vegetable garden this summer. Miss Sheena, our certified schoolteacher, has developed a curriculum for a multi-age group which will touch on UU identity, the goodness of working in the Earth, and compassionately helping our neighbors by growing things that can be eaten and shared with The Haven.

Children should arrive at church in appropriate outdoor clothing with their own sunscreen and bug repellent as needed. Water bottles are a good idea, too! Once the garden is cared for, there could be forays into the woods or wetlands as well.

At the end of each summer Sundays, all parents should check their kids for bugs or bites.

Why I Honor the Old Gods

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE

Someone told a story. From that story, some frightened person drew courage, faced fear, did good. I have found plenty of excellent stories out there from a hundred different cultures; I have drawn courage from them.

My brain likes statistics, my sense of humor likes puns. My visceral sense of the rightness of exactly the apt word, image, plot twist, lesson, or ritual likes the old stories of old gods. I hear them told in my father's voice. I feel myself wrapped in the hope and despair and humanity that also held my ever-so-great ancestors.

With the rituals of the changing year, I touch reminders of foundational ideas which I have incorporated into my understanding of place. On the eve of

August - on July 31st - I will celebrate the spirit's journey into the Heroic World, the place where old stories come true. If you can join me at the UUCUV at 6 PM, I would love to dance with you in the early evening on our cool grass lawn and sing softly with our ancestors.

If you can't make it that night, then celebrate at home with fresh corn for dinner - thank the plant for its gift of sunlight, thank our world for the Hero's Journey of growth, sacrifice, and miraculous re-birth. Blessed Be.

Thank you, Graham and Indy, for making great bookcases in the Rainbow Classroom!

Summer Schedules

Patience's Summer Schedule

Please note: Patience prefers to receive calls or emails for acute pastoral needs when on vacation at home. When away, only emails may reach her.

Vacation at home: June 26- July 2

Vacation away: July 3-10

In office on Tuesday July 12; Planning Retreat with Sparrow Wednesday and Thursday July 13-14.

Preaching on Sunday July 17

Vacation at home: July 18-21

Vacation away July 22-Aug 7

Working from home: Aug. 8-14 (encourage calls and emails)

Vacation away: Aug. 14-19

Back to regular schedule at UUCUV August 20th and Preach on August 21st

Off Labor Day weekend for wedding in Wisconsin

Sparrow's Summer Schedule

Sparrow will take her vacation from June 20th to July 12th, then return to work on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays. She plans to work from home about half the time during the summer, so please reach her through

education@uucuv.org.

Office Hours

Rachel will be working Tuesday through Friday 10-1 as usual unless otherwise posted. She will be away August 15-26.



New Members



On April 10, 2016, the UUCUV welcomed nine new members: Ayesha Al-Humaidhi, Bill Clauson, Carmen Fletcher, Jackie and Paul Gordon, Carrie Landry, Laura Moberg, Tedd Osgood and Ellen Phillips. Here are brief bios, and/or statements of faith, from some of our new members. The rest may appear in a future issue of *The Call*.

Margo Nutt

Late breaking news: we have another four new members! Sandy Zubkoff, Sue Schiller, Annie Rossier and Blake McNeill. We hope to include their bios in the next issue as well.

Ayeshah Al-Humaidhi

I was raised in Kuwait and moved to the Upper Valley in 2015. I am a loving wife and the mother of two beautiful children. My passion for animal welfare has brought me to my current position as Executive Director of the Upper Valley Humane Society.

Carrie Landry

Hi UUCUV friends! You may have seen me on Sundays at church, helping out with hospitality and participating in Chalice Circles. Since my first visit in December, I knew this was the church I wanted to join.

I was raised as a UU in an old sea captain's church on Cape Cod, and so being a UU has definitely formed a lot of who I am. My current spiritual interests include Buddhism (and the Christian parallels), Native American culture, Mindfulness and Energy work. My social justice passions include working to eliminate classism.

I can't wait to meet each and every one of you and get to know you.

Bill Clauson

I'm a retired attorney. Currently I provide free advice to good people in need. I live in Lebanon. Mary Layton invited me to the UUCUV. I enjoyed the service and have regularly returned.

Jackie and Paul Gordon

We became members of the Upper Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation because we wanted to share a spiri-

tual life with individuals who were seekers of truth, rather than become members of a church that requires assent to a set of doctrines that state absolute and fundamental beliefs. We believe in love, peace, and compassion.

Carmen Fletcher

I was born into a military family and moved a great deal. I came to the Upper Valley in 1974 and worked at Dartmouth College and the medical school for several years. In 1984, I enrolled in Smith College and studied theater and art. Following graduation I moved to New York City. I attended Fordham University and received a Masters in Social Work degree and worked with homeless mentally ill clients and mentally ill substance abusers. After returning to the Upper Valley in 1996, I worked at DHMC for 8 years. I am retired now and enjoy painting, cooking, traveling. I am very happy to have joined the UU community and hope I can be a helpful addition.

Laura Moberg

I grew up in America, moving every 3 years (military father), finally finishing up in California (Pomona College). I expatriated to Sweden in 1980, jokingly saying I was a political refugee from Ronald Reagan. No coincidence it has taken 35 years and Bernie to bring me back! In the interim, my Swedish husband, four children and I have lived in Greece, Denmark and Japan as expats as well. The Upper Valley feels like it could become home given my love of nature, hiking, organic gardening (short season in Sweden!) and thoughtful and friendly people I have found here. I was raised in the Lutheran faith then embraced the Scandinavian pagan tradition after moving to Sweden, with Buddhist teachings and Taoist practice following thereafter. My unerring intuition guided me to UUCUV literally my first Sunday on American soil a little over a year ago and I knew I had found my local spiritual home. I still travel regularly back to Sweden to care for my daughter with cystic fibrosis and see old clients (I'm a natural and energy medicine practitioner), but delight in growing in this vibrant community, connecting more deeply in a Chalice Circle and looking forward to how I can share and contribute.

...Stay tuned for more bios to come!

Norwich Five-Church Rummage Sale 2016

Sale Hours, at Tracy Hall:

Friday July 8--11am to 9pm

Saturday July 9--9am to 2pm,

½ price sale 2 to 5pm

Sunday July 10th--bag sale 10am-1pm.

The Norwich Five Church Rummage Sale is coming up on July 8th to 10th. For over sixty-eight years the Rummage Sale has been offered to continue the practice of Yankee frugality and sustainability. It allows items that are sitting unused to be re-circulated in the community and the reasonable prices also are a great help to low-income families. Proceeds benefit the programs at five Norwich churches.

Early Donations

Early donations are now being accepted for the Five Church Rummage Sale. Storage and pick up service is available. Please call Linda Cook at (802) 649-2825 or (603) 208-7847 for more information.

Regular Donations

Donations are received the week before the Rummage Sale. With the following exceptions, we will accept all items in good working condition. The exceptions are large appliances, articles made from particle-board, mattresses, organs, pianos, televisions, computers, monitors, paint, tires, skis and printers.

Hours of donation are Monday July 4th through Wednesday July 6th, 9am to 7pm and Thursday July 7th, 9am to 5pm. Items may be dropped off at Tracy Hall during donation hours. Please do not drop items off after hours.

Rummage Sale Volunteer Opportunities:

- Set up Saturday, July 2nd
- Intake of Donations: July 4-6, 9am- 7pm, and July 7, 9am- 5pm
- During the Sale
- Clean up: Sunday, July 10th, 1pm to 3pm

Please contact Mary Layton:

marydlayton@gmail.com, (802) 738-2033 (cell), or (802) 649-1973 (landline).



Summer Services

Paul Schmidt

The approaching summer provides us a chance to share our reflections through lay-led services. This year we are excited to present a variety of topics, including current issues such as immigration, reflections on the fourth UU principle of the democratic process, refugees, restorative justice, and more. Some of the services will offer a reading a couple weeks before the talk, and a discussion afterward in the library. Please take advantage of these interactive opportunities to engage more deeply with an issue that interests you. The summer services conclude with an area gathering of UU congregations in Barnard, VT, where we will be joined by the congregations from South Strafford, Hartland, Woodstock and Barnard. The final summer week is the annual picnic, held this year at our own Meetinghouse.

June 26 -- Ayesah Al-Humaidhi (“What Compassion Has Taught Me: Lessons from a Muslim Life in Animal Protection”)

July 3 -- Evangeline Monroe (immigration)

July 10 -- Julie Puttgen (refugees)

July 17 -- Patience Stoddard

July 24 -- Sparrow Alden

July 31 -- Bess, Paul and Peter Schmidt (voting)

Aug 7 -- Simon Dennis

Aug 14 -- Molly Drummond (and Bill Brawley?) (restorative justice)

Aug 21 -- Patience Stoddard

Aug 28 -- Barnard UU area church gathering -- Patience

Sept 4 (Labor Day Weekend) -- picnic



Save the date!

Sunday, Sept. 18

(begins with lunch at 11:30 and over at 3:00)

“Path to the Future Part 2”

**A meeting facilitated by Jim Gruber aimed at
planning our next three years!**

Adult Groups

“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.

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.

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 baciquail@comcast.net

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

Library News

Olive MacGregor

The library is now up and running! The children's books are in the same room. Committee members have met several times and have processed nineteen books. We will be doing more. Feel free to check out items, and make sure your registration information is up to date. Also, please return any items that you had when the library was in storage.

“Summer Music” by May Sarton

Summer is all a green air—
From the brilliant lawn, sopranos
Through murmuring hedges
Accompanied by some poplars;
In fields of wheat, surprises;
Through faraway pastures, flows
To the horizon's blues
In slow decrescendos.

Summer is all a green sound—
Rippling in the foreground
To that soft applause,
The foam of Queen Anne's lace.
Green, green in the ear
Is all we care to hear—
Until a field suddenly flashes
The singing with so sharp
A yellow that it crashes
Loud cymbals in the ear,
Minor has turned to major
As summer, lulling and so mild,
Goes golden-buttercup-wild.

Book Review

By Margo Nutt



Becoming Nicole by Amy Ellis Nutt

[Full disclosure, Amy is my late husband's niece. She is a Pulitzer Prize-winning science reporter at the Washington Post.]

Wayne and Kelly Maines are typical middle class American family. In 1997 they adopt identical twin boys shortly after birth. Wyatt and Jonas were welcomed with all the love that a couple could offer. From early childhood, Wyatt identified as a girl, wanting to wear girls' clothes, drew pictures of himself as a girl with long hair, and liked to play with dolls.

This is a touching, sensitive, and caring story of the journey of a young woman growing up and her remarkable family. While the author includes substantial medical research on transgender people, she never lets the technical details get in the way of the story of Nicole, her identical twin brother Jonas, and her supportive parents as they come to terms with Nicole's gender dysphoria and the discrimination that they all faced.

The reader comes away with a working knowledge of how gender develops in individuals, how genetics and epigenetics play a role, social and political changes that affect how transgender individuals are viewed, and an intimate look at not only a transgender child and how she felt growing up, but how it affected the family.

Becoming Nicole is not only a wonderful and important book about one individual and one family -- it is an important book about acceptance and love, support, understanding and equality for every individual.

Spiritual Practices and Readings

shared by Rev. Patience Stoddard

Note from Patience: *When I was first in the ministry, many UU congregations took the summer off - taking a break from meetings and from regular Sunday services. When this practice was questioned by my fellow Christian ministers, I'd respond that the earth itself is a cathedral and being in nature a form of worship. While nonetheless I am glad that UUCUV continues to have Sunday services throughout the summer (the lay and guest services are often inspiring and always meaningful), this in no way diminishes the power of nature to nurture the soul. Here are a few quotes and readings to remind us of this spiritual practice.*

“It is a wholesome and necessary thing for us to turn again to the earth and in the contemplation of her beauties to know the sense of wonder and humility.”

~Rachel Carson

“For our spiritual lives begin and end in the refreshment of the sea and the earth, the mountains and the skies, the flowers and the sunshine. Our ecstasy or standing outside of ourselves is so real in nature that we truly come to believe what is the fact: that we are the sea, we are a part of the stars; we are of the earth.”

~Matthew Fox

The Slow Explosion of the Rose

In iceberg, stone,
In sheep upon a hill.
In everything that swims
And all that grows.
The mechanics of the daffodil.
The slow explosion of the rose!

~Porter M. Chaffee, Humbolt UU Fellowship

Peacham, Vermont

The forest is my cathedral,
the thrushes its choir,
the Wood, the Hermit, the Veery...
each singing her part.
Coyotes howl their lament,
Loons shout their hosannas,
the beavers join me in the congregation of all beings
and we see God.

Jesus showed his god-self to three men
transfigured, they said.

So, too did God come to me...

Transfigured

In a green bug, in the butterfly,
In the jack-in-the-pulpit, in the sapsucker.
So too did God come to me.

Camp Rosier, Maine

Watching a praying mantis conquer a blade of grass,
A grasshopper feeds on a geranium leaf,
A spider builds its web between the chair and the table

God everywhere I look.

~from a UU newsletter

Excerpts of “A Prayer for Summer” by Henry David Thoreau

I wish to begin this summer well,
To do something in it worthy of it and me; to transcend
my daily routine and that of my townspeople;
To have my immortality now, in the quality of my daily
life...
May I gird myself to be a hunter of the beautiful so nothing
escapes me.

Spiritual Practices and Readings

shared by Rev. Patience Stoddard

Excerpts from the Pope Francis's Encyclical on Climate Change

Humanity has entered a new era in which our technological prowess has brought us to a crossroads. We are the beneficiaries of two centuries of enormous waves of change: steam engines, railways, the telegraph, electricity, automobiles, airplanes, chemical industries, modern medicine, information technology, and more recently, the digital revolution, robotics, biotechnologies, and nanotechnologies. It is right to rejoice in these advances and to be excited by the immense possibilities which they continue to open up before us, for "science and technology are wonderful products of God-given human creativity."

Yet it must also be recognized that these...and many other abilities which we have acquired, have given us tremendous power. More precisely, they have given those with knowledge, and especially the economic resources to use them, an impressive dominance over the whole of humanity and the entire world.

The fact is that "contemporary man has not been trained to use power well," because our immense technological development has not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience.

Once we lose our humility, and become enthralled with the possibility of limitless mastery over everything, we inevitably end up harming society and the environment.

The Earth Charter asked us to leave behind a period of self-destruction and make a new start but we have not as yet developed the universal awareness needed to achieve this. Here I would echo that courageous challenge: "As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning...Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life."

A Prayer for Our Earth

by Pope Francis

All-powerful God,
You are present
in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace,
that we may live as brothers and sisters,
harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned
and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world
and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty,
not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts of those
who look only for gain at the expense
of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover
the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature as we journey
toward your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray,
in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

Partner Church News

Claudia Kern



After a long while, we are so happy to have received news from our Partner Church. Rangdajied Lapasam is our contact with the church in Mukhap. Rangdajied is the student whom we as a congregation have supported through high school and three years of college. He has just completed his college work and is beginning a course in house wiring. He writes:

Hi! Mam and to all the Unitarian Universalist i hope that you were Fine by the Blessing of God.

I apologise to You that i am late to sent to you a letter because now am going for a short term training in 3month of House Wiring here in Jowai at BOSCO PNAR INSTITUTE. So now am very busy i dont even have time to go to my village in every Sunday. But this last sunday i came home and i collect this photo of our fencing and our ceiling. With the Blessing of God we had finish of our constructing the ceiling in church and with wonderful Bless that we have get a grant from our MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly) for constructing the fencing of our Church compound.

As you can see from his message, the church in Mukhap continues to make their new church home a lovely place. They are a continual inspiration to our congregation. Here are some photos of their latest accomplishments. They, too, have a magnificent ceiling!!



More 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@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.

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.



Game Night

Monthly game nights will resume in the fall. All ages welcome!

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

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

colinjhigh@gmail.com

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*

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 Fall issue is August 15.
Please send your submissions to Rachel: office@uucuv.org

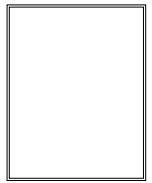
"WEEKLY BLAST" DEADLINE:

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:

**July 8-10 Five Church
Rummage Sale**

July 31 Wheel of the Year

Aug. 28 Joint Service - Barnard

Sept. 4 Picnic at UUCUV

UUCUV June-August

UUCUV Phone: (802) 649-8828

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

E-mail: office@uucuv.org

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