

The Call



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

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Upper Valley -Different People, Different Beliefs, One Faith /December 2012

President's Message

By Cappy Nunlist

I was inspired by Barnaby Feder's sermon on November 4 to think about my own elevator speech. It came out something like this:

-I believe that science will never have all the answers and I am glad that there will always be mystery. But nonetheless we must keep trying to find the answers.

-I believe in the sacred – or maybe the divine. I do not know exactly what this is but it makes me cry when I see little children dance.

-I believe that all humans have the potential at birth to live lives that are worthy – and we have an obligation to live up to that potential.

-I believe in being kind because it is good for my soul as much as it is good for those souls who are the recipients of kindness.

-I believe that problems cannot be resolved without honesty – and honesty is often hard.

-I believe that there are a few bad people, but that most of us are simply trying to do the best we can. And that's OK - but we should always try to do better.

-I believe in gratitude. In spite of all that is evil, misguided, and ugly, I am surrounded by beauty and goodness and love. I am blessed with life.

-I believe that the human race will continue to exist – until it doesn't; that the planet will continue to revolve and evolve – until it explodes; and god only knows what will happen to the universe. It is what it is and it's all pretty amazing.

-I believe in the right to continue to grow and change and as I change so will my elevator speech.

I understand that others in our faith community do not share my individual beliefs. But I trust and believe that you will continue to hold my hand and heart as I continue on my unfinished journey toward an understanding of the world – as I will do for you as you continue on your journey. The essence of UUism is not individuality, but the existence of a compassionate community with the strength to embrace diversity of thought and to understand that diversity as a gift to all. Won't you share your "elevator speech" with us so we may both learn from you and support you on your path?

A Month of Sundays

December 2.....Gifting

Ginger Wallis

Gifting is a gentle art. Yet there are struggles around gifting. Ginger Wallis will share thoughts on struggles, memorable gifts, and alternative approaches, along with pearls of wisdom she learned from others that she interviewed on this topic.

December 9Nurturing Spirituality

Nancy Pelligrini

Joan Chittister writes "if we are ever going to regain peace in our own souls...we have to recover silence. Without it, the prophetic vision of a world at peace will surely die." Amid the noise and busyness of our lives, how can we find a time for silence and a time for peace? We will examine how spiritual practices provide grounding for social justice work and encourage fellowship in our congregations.

December 16.....TBA

Richard Kellaway, Stowe UU

December 23.....Make a Joyful Noise

Sparrow F. Alden

This service of holiday music, both sacred and secular, will include reflections from some congregants on which pieces make their hearts sing! The Music is the message, so come prepared to sing along and be lifted up by our instrumentalists and choir.



(continued on page 2)

Exciting News!

By Cappy Nunlist

The congregation of the Lebanon United Methodist Church has voted unanimously to invite us to share their sanctuary. We still need to work out the details and until that happens, we cannot be certain that all will go accordingly. However, I am most optimistic and didn't want to wait any longer to share our plans. The Board decided at its last meeting, if all worked out, that we would celebrate the new year by beginning services at the LMC on January 6th. After a great deal of discussion during which we tried to anticipate the needs of every constituency from the youngest to the oldest, we decided to start services at 5:00 p.m. to be followed by an informal pot luck for those who would like more time to socialize and share Sunday dinner with others. The building will be available beginning at 4:00 p.m. for choir and set-up –and we can stay as long as we wish.

We are excited about being in a place with a spiritual ambiance so well suited to our worship, social and RE needs. We recognize that this is a tremendous change in both location and time of service which may not be convenient for some. However, we hope that you will approach this experiment with an open mind and an open heart. We plan to have a congregational meeting on January 27th after the service to receive your input on whether you want to continue in this place and/or at this time.

We are well aware of the difficulty that some of our members have driving at night. We hope to have rides for everyone lined up before the services begin in January. If you are willing to coordinate this effort – or to be a driver, please let me know either by phone (603) 448-2494 or by email (cappy.nunlist@gmail.com).

Month of Sundays Cont'd

December 24...Christmas Eve Services Held at the Meeting House

Sparrow F. Alden

4:30 PM: A Christmas Eve Pageant. All are welcome to this child-centered service - particularly in your animal jammies or angel wings!



Everyone participates in telling and singing the Christmas Story in a joyful, flexible, and welcoming manner. Coffee and light refreshments will follow.

6:00 PM: A Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. We will make sacred our time together by sharing the Bible story of Jesus' birth. Please join us for quiet carols and a candlelit blessing. Coffee and light refreshments will *precede* the service.

December 30.....Poetically Apt Held at the Meeting House

Sparrow F. Alden

Please bring your own favorite poetry to the service today. We'll read aloud and consider the poetry in our lives, possibly even take up pen and paper for a few minutes. Neither childcare nor religious ed for children will be available this morning.

Sunday Services Committee Thanks You

The Sunday Services Committee continues to be grateful for the combined efforts that have kept our Sunday morning services interesting and nourishing for the mind and spirit. We have been blessed with lovely and loving internal support from our staff and members and friends, who have delivered homilies, participated in services, provided music, and helped with setting up our space. And we have been blessed with wonderful external support from ministers and lay speakers who have generously come and spoken at our services.

Once again, our committee extends heartfelt thanks to the many folks who contribute to our Sunday morning gatherings. As always, please contact us with ideas, concerns, and inspirations!

--Marty Shaw, Chair, Sunday Services Committee

Sunday School News



Dear Friends,

What is the central idea of the holiday seasons for you? That which you hold closest in your heart?

And what are the touches that make that idea really deepen for you?

That's my Yule gift to you, a reminder of your *own* holiday center. Hold on to that and let the rest fall by the wayside. I believe we're all committed to a peaceful holiday season, and I wish you the loveliest one ever.

This year, the Alden family will be focused on "unwrapping" - I'm excited to find what treasures are inside as we keep shedding layers of expectations, miscommunications, old habits, and facade. We have some great holiday traditions, and I look forward to our Solstice bonfire, Yule celebration and our annual tradition of sharing Christmas Eve with our UUCUV family.

*Peace,
Sparrow*



December 9th at Noon at the Meeting House:

Kids will have giftmaking and wrapping stations to help them with mellow holiday preparations!

Hot beverages and good discussion for parents simultaneously: what worked in the autumn season of Sunday School? What are our dreams for the winter season? Contribute to our ongoing discussion of religious education and get support for ourselves as our children's spiritual guides.

Interested in pursuing our study of *The Hobbit* further?

Check out the Winter/Spring on-line courses at Mythgard Institute for credit or audit!

<http://www.mythgard.org/academics/spring-2013-courses/>

Sparrow will be taking "Tolkien's World of Middle Earth" and would love to see you in class. "The Story of The Hobbit" will run concurrently, taught by The Tolkien Professor himself! Both will be excellent ways to examine the depths and breadth of this well-loved author and his fully realized world.

Stewardship Committee Update

It Was Good to Be with One Another

By Claudia Kern and Suzanne Simon,
Stewardship Co-Chairs

Bouquets of colorful leaves and pens made a festive scene for the November Stewardship Potluck. The theme for this especially delicious potluck was “It is good to be with one another,” and, indeed it was!

This year the Stewardship Committee is hoping to broaden our thinking about what Stewardship means, so after food and general fellowship, each table was asked to spend a few minutes chatting and note-taking on their paper tablecloth. Each table was customized with one of these questions:

- What do you think stewardship means?**
- What is stewardship besides fundraising?**
- What connections do you see between community and stewardship?**
- How do we nourish our connections with one another?**
- What might it look like to be stewards of our congregation all year round?**

Here is a summary of responses:

- Practice mindfulness about and within our community.
- Take care of each other. Nurture individuals and groups with effort, time, our dollars, and our smiles.
- Challenge one another so we can continue to grow.
- Hospitality and together-time = stewardship.
- One of our greatest resources is our relationships with one another. Stewardship actively tends and expresses those relationships.
- Stewardship is the intention to participate in and tend a community. Intention = care= stewardship.
- Stewards are proactive in the care of their physical resources, i.e., our Meeting House and our land.
- Good stewardship insures that there is a Unitarian-Universalist presence in the Upper Valley that actively expresses our mission.

- As good stewards we nourish ourselves through music, through rotating chores, and by bringing in everything clean – including our Spirits, our Upscale items, our rummage- and leaving everything clean.

The Stewardship Committee invites you to spend some time with these questions and responses. How might a broader sense of stewardship deepen and enrich your life in our congregation?

Random Acts of Stewardship

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

Gratitude to Lucy Taylor for noting what needed doing and replacing the kitchen light bulb and the batteries on the smoke detectors.

Gratitude to Sally Page for new boxes for tablecloths and kitchen towels.

Gratitude to the mysterious kitchen cleaners and to whoever left behind Miss Mousie to remind us!

Gratitude to Elaine Backus, Eva Smith, Babette Hansen, Margaret Robinson, Ruth Chodak, Olive MacGregor, Kathy Christie and other elves for making UUCUV a creative presence at the Five Churches Holiday Bazaar.

Gratitude to Joani Nierenberg who works quietly and efficiently behind the scenes to keep track of pledge payments and sends us reminders.

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

**“It Is Not How Much We Give,
But How Much Love We Put In The Giving”**

**After-Church Potluck & Food Collection for The Haven Pantry
December 2, UUCUV Meeting House, 11:45 AM**

Come join us for good food and warm friendship as we center ourselves for the holiday season.
Mother Teresa said:

*It is not how much we do,
but how much love
we put in the doing.
It is not how much we give,
but how much love we put in the giving.*



May these wise words guide our spirits in this season and in the life of our congregation every day of the year.

Along with your potluck contribution, please help to spread our love to the larger Upper Valley community by bringing along a donation of canned or packaged food for the shelves at The Haven.

Hosted by the Stewardship Committee, Claudia Kern and Suzanne Simon, Co-Chairs

Coffee Hour

Many thanks to all the people who have kept us fed during Coffee Hour!!

If anyone has an idea for different foods we could serve at Coffee Hour, please let me know. I can arrange plates and plastic spoons or forks.

If anyone hasn't contributed food in awhile, it would be much appreciated if you would sign up on the sheet on the table at Coffee Hour.

Thanks

Babette Hansen



Church Events Calendar

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

www.uucuv.org



**Partner Church
Indian Dinner**

**Friday, January 11
Save the date!**

Library Update

By Olive MacGregor, Library Committee Chair

This month the library committee catalogued and processed one book, *Confluence: A River, the Environment, Politics, and the Fate of All Humanity*, by Nathaniel Tripp. We were happy to receive a hymnal, *Singing the Living Tradition*, for congregational use from Normajane Wittner and B.J. Michelsen. Thank you so much! We stamped it with the UUCUV stamp and put a gift plate in it before adding it to the rest of the hymnals at Marion Cross School. Margo Nutt reviewed one of the library books, and Polly Gould got cataloging information for a book on meditation. I have started collecting books for the annual book sale.

**The next Call newsletter deadline will be
December 14, for the January issue.
Please send your submissions to
Rachel at office@uucuv.org**

Book Review



By Margo Nutt

**In the Midst of Winter:
Selections from the Literature of Mourning**
Edited by Mary Jane Moffat

The author, a poet and widow herself, has chosen works both contemporary and ancient, covering every kind of loss and phase of mourning.

In his sensitive collection, loss finds a voice in poetry, fiction, letters, and diaries of the world's great writers. Here are James Agee, recording the shock of his father's death; William Shakespeare, making poetry of Cleopatra's grief; Biblical wisdom from the Book of Lamentations; the psychological acuity of Marcel Proust; as well as poetry from classical first century Chinese Mei Sheng to more contemporary poets Anne Sexton and Edna St. Vincent Millay.

It is simply and intelligently organized into sections that approximate the stages of grief. This thoughtful collection can provide solace to help get you through the very personal and yet universal experience of adjusting to the death of a loved one. It also can be a resource for readings to be used at a memorial service or funeral.

Transition Team Update

By Joan Nierenberg

A Congregational meeting was called by the Board and the Transition Team for October 28, following the Sunday Service. About 30 members of the Congregation met to vote on the Covenant that had been drafted by the Transition Team (using the input from all the focus groups that met last year). Unfortunately, none of us had the wisdom to check the by-laws before the meeting was called! We discovered, too late, that according to our by-laws such a meeting needed to be posted 21 days in advance, which hadn't happened. So those attending the October 28th meeting agreed that we would consider an affirmative vote to be a binding promise for all who were present, and that a formal congregational vote on the Covenant would happen at a later date, when the draft Mission and Vision statements are presented for consideration.

The following is the Covenant agreed to by those present on October 28. (After much wonderful discussion among those attending, we decided that the complete Covenant will be redrafted and ready for a Congregational vote sometime after the holidays, along with the Vision and Mission).

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

Happy Holidays from your Transition Team!

Mugs Johnston, Joani Nierenberg, BJ Shabel, and Paul Schmidt

And a special thanks to Libby Vesilind, Rich Greenlee, and Kevin Brown who contributed so much to the Transition Team last year.

Caroling on Christmas Morning!

Once again this year we will be visiting Brookside and Hanover Terrace Nursing Homes on Christmas morning to visit with residents, sing carols, and share holiday cards and greetings with them. The tentative schedule is to meet at Brookside at 10:00 AM and at Hanover Terrace at 11:00 AM but please confirm with Rich Greenlee (802-436-1150 or Hartlandvt@aol.com). Car pooling from the meeting-house may be arranged. Thanks!



Elder Luncheon

Life is a Journey--Beginning to End

**December 18, 12:30pm
at the Meeting House**

This is a regular luncheon on third Tuesdays to talk about what needs exist for those of us who spend our later years living in the Upper Valley. Let us come together to share lunch and discuss what brings us and others joy as well as concerns. The fun is in the interesting conversation and fellowship. We never know where the talk will take us!

Bring your own brown bag lunch. Beverage and dessert will be provided. Please let Elaine Backus know if you are planning to attend. (802) 763-2476

Membership Committee Update

The Membership Committee really needs a few new people! We number only three right now, and we need help to share our simple tasks. We have fun because what we do is

- **greet people on Sunday mornings and make sure newcomers feel welcomed,**
- **get to know everyone in our congregation, help them make friends with people and find ways to get involved that align with their interests,**
- **hold newcomer dinners with a program designed to inform new folks about Unitarian Universalism and how our own congregation works,**
- **hold New Member Sundays where the congregation welcomes those who choose to sign our membership book,**
- **keep track of comings and goings in order to help the Board clarify our "official" membership count once a year.**

If you are someone looking for a way to help the UUCUV in this exciting transition time, The Membership Committee would be a great place to give your energy, and the need is great! Please contact Kathy Christie at 603-448-1737 or kchristie5@comcast.net. You can make a big difference with a small effort.

Cares and Concerns Update

By Elaine Backus, Cares and Concerns Committee Chair

REMEMBER:

- Rev. Lee, who is not up to visitors, but would love to hear from you. You may send cards to her home address: 171 Campbell Rd., Bethel, VT 05032.
- Marjorie Hybels at Brookside Nursing Home, who would welcome visitors, cards and notes.
- Arnold Shields, who is living at Grafton County Nursing Home in Haverill, with notes, cards, visits or calls to (603) 787-6971

Remember with your thoughts and prayers those in our midst who have had recent problems. Urgent needs will be on our message board at Sunday Worship.

Five-Church Bazaar

They said it couldn't be done! But, WE DID IT! Yes, while this has seemed to be our least favorite fundraiser, we finally did it by making over \$400.

But, I'm more excited because of the age range of people contributing to this fundraiser--10-90 years.

THANKS TO ALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO BUILT A SUCCESS!

As is usual, we had a couple of super heroines in Eva Smith and Margaret Robinson. Special thanks to both of you for hanging in with me all of the way.

And, I can't begin to tell you how happy we were (Eva Smith, Mary Layton and Elaine) to see Jenny and Babette arrive at closing to back everything into my car. (Eva, Mary and I were tired by then.)

Thanks and Blessings to all,

Elaine Backus



Partner Church Letter

October 31, 2012

Dear Polly and all our friends of UUCUV,

My apologies for not emailing you for a long time, as I have busy Schedule this time and also could not check the mail daily. Anyway hope everyone is doing good as the same to us here.

As usual, on the 18th of September we had Anniversary celebration in all the Unitarian Church of North East India. As I have mentioned earlier the preparation for this great day began since August where we had some home visiting; services were held in the church as well. Various programs were set up. The Sunday School Examination was conducted on the 2nd and 9th of September. Youth wing organised their special services on the 16th of September. An essay competition was conducted by the youth wing on the topic: "Stand on your own feet" and the prizes were distributed to the winners. On 18th September, for the whole day we had services started from 7 a.m. where we had Children service. Gifts were distributed to regular Children who attend the morning service (i.e every Sunday 7 a.m.) At 10:30 we had another service. In this service prizes were given to more than 100 children participated in Sunday School and appeared the examination conducted by the Sunday School Teachers. Choir was sang by the Sunday School Children. We had two speakers in this service.

The next service was held at 1:30 p.m. and this was a common service. Rev Sowat Laloo, in-charge minister of our Church, and another speaker preached the sermons in this service. Choir was given by the youths. After the service was over, we had light refreshment. At 5:30 p.m. we had torch Procession participated by hundreds believers and friends; then they came back to church building to have Thanksgiving service. This service began with lighting the candles to remember the great leaders of Unitarian religion in North East India, Babu Hajom Kissor Singh Nongbri, Rev David Edwards Lapasam, the Founder of Unitarian Church Mukhap, and some of the leaders of our Church. They were no more but their soul are still alive and because of their contribution towards God's work, we are like what we are now. This day came to an end with hope and joy and remind us to devote more our time towards God' s work.

Now harvesting period is on. The farmers are busy to collect the paddy from their fields. Of course we had bad season this time due to heavy rain lasting for more than one month. Anyway hope we will be all right by God's Grace.

We are really feel sorry what is happening to you, Rev Lee Devoe. Always have faith in yourself that you can win it; don't lose hope. The Unitarian Church Mukhap send best wishes for you to get a speedy recovery and return back to your work.

We are really get impress to your Project for strengthen the Sunday service. We will talk about them in our church. This is a great idea to motivate the church members. If it is possible, kindly send the Photos regarding these .

Just to remind you that the congregation of Unitarian Union N.E. (Women wing) will in our church on the 15th and 16th Dec. 2012. We cordially invite you to be present with us.

I am sending various Photos taken at the 125th Anniversary celebration of Unitarian Church Mukhap.

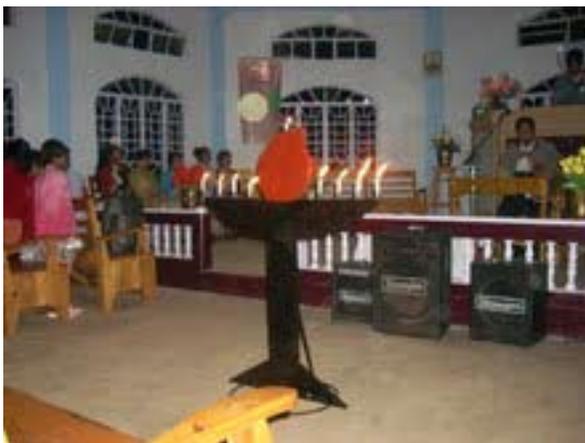
Let me pen down for today and share again our new ideas and experiences in the next email. God bless you all.

Khublei

Hehbok Sonroy Shadap

Partner Church Photos

125th Anniversary Celebration of the Unitarian Church Mukhap



About the UUCUV

Board of Directors

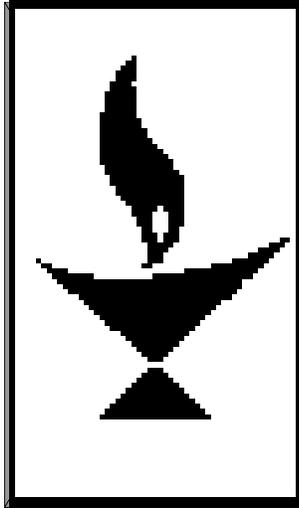
Cappy Nunlist, President
Bill Brawley, Vice President
Christine McDonough, Secretary
Lucy Taylor, Treasurer
Karen Kluge, Member-at-Large
Dan Mendelsohn, Member-at-Large
Jamie Gibson, Member-at-Large

Staff

The Rev. Lee Devoe, Interim Minister
Sparrow F. Alden,
Credentialed Religious Educator
Linda Hoover, Choir Director
Rachel Clark, Office Admin.

UUCUV Committee Chairs

Cares & Concerns: open
Communications: Bill Brawley
Finance: Mark Laser
Hospitality: Babette Hansen
Investment: Peter Christie
Leadership Development:
Lori Fortini
Librarian: Olive MacGregor
Meeting House: Colin High
Membership: Kathy Christie
Partner Church: Polly Gould
Stewardship Canvass: Claudia Kern
and Suzanne Simon
Sunday Services: Marty Shaw
Ways and Means: Lori Fortini



OUR MISSION: The UUCUV is a liberal religious community that:

- Welcomes and supports all who search for meaning and truth.
- Celebrates and respects life in all its diversity.
- Nurtures honesty, love, and freedom in people of all ages.
- Fosters spiritual growth and promotes compassionate social action; and
- Expresses Unitarian Universalist ideals, views and heritage to the community at large.

The UUCUV is a part of the Unitarian Universalist Association. The UUA is a religious organization that combines two traditions: the Universalists, organized in 1793, and the Unitarians, organized in 1825. The two denominations merged in 1961, but both trace their roots back hundreds of years, to the Unitarian view of the unity (as opposed to trinity) of God, and the Universalist belief that everyone is eligible for heaven and salvation.

SUNDAY SERVICES: Services are held at the Marion Cross School in Norwich, VT, at 10 a.m.. every Sunday from September through mid June. (Look for the sign at the school's driveway on the right as you enter Norwich on Main Street.)

MINISTER: Rev. Lee Devoe is on an extended sick leave. We look forward to welcoming her back in March, 2013.

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

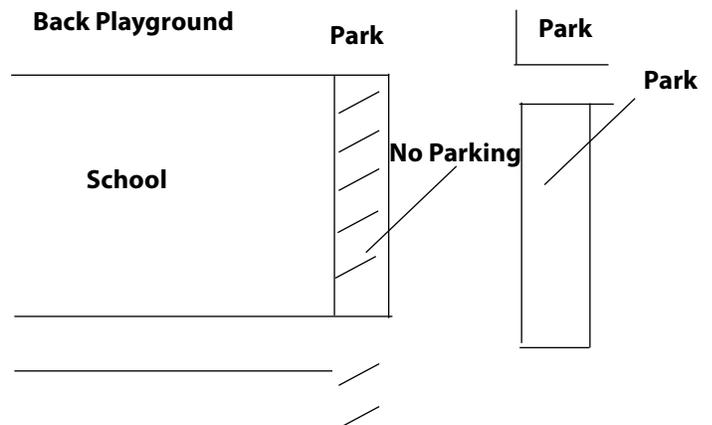
MEETING HOUSE: Located on Route 5 South in Norwich opposite The Family Place, the Greek Revival farmhouse contains our offices and meeting spaces. Office hours at the Meeting House are Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9-12, unless otherwise posted.

CARES AND CONCERNS: With cares and concerns, please call the office and Rachel will find the appropriate contact.

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

Parking at Marion Cross School

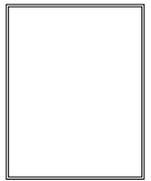
Because we are not able to establish official HANDICAPPED and VISITOR PARKING, we need to create temporary spaces for every Sunday service at the Marion Cross School. Those of you who are able, please park in the back parking lot. Please consider the 10 spaces nearest the sidewalk to the lobby reserved for visitors and those who cannot easily walk the distance to the school entrance. PLEASE KEEP FIRE LANE CLEAR! Whenever necessary, drivers can always drive up to the entrance to drop off passengers.



Unitarian-Universalist Congregation
of the Upper Valley

PO Box 1110

Norwich, VT 05055



We are

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



January Sunday Services in Lebanon, NH

UUCUV Phone: (802) 649-8828

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

E-mail: office@uucuv.org

Potluck December 2

