

# The Call

Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
of the Upper Valley

Spring 2019  
March - May

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## Sunday Services 10 AM

*Sermon topics may be found on our website, [www.uucuv.org](http://www.uucuv.org), as well as in the Sunday Order of Service.*

**We are**

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

## What Is an Installation, and Why Are We Doing One?

*Rev. Jan Hutslar*

On Sunday, May 19 at 5pm, we will have an installation ceremony. This is a ritual that publicly installs a called minister in their congregation.

It is a public declaration of our commitment to journey together as a Unitarian Universalist congregation and minister, guided by our principles, our mission and our vision. Teamed together to take on the good and important work of religious community.

Other ministers, of our faith and other denominations, will participate--demonstrating the connections of this church and minister to wider affiliations within the community and beyond.

The service will include a sermon from one of my favorite preachers, lovely music, a charge to the minister and one to the congregation--reminding us of our commitment to each other and this faith.

A reception will follow under tents in the Meetinghouse backyard with food and drink. All are welcome and encouraged to participate in this ceremony.

I am the luckiest minister in the Universe to have landed here at UUCUV with you. I am thrilled to declare and celebrate our shared journey together during this installation service.

With much gratitude,  
Rev. Jan Hutslar



## President's Message

Lori Fortini

We are on the home stretch of the church year already. I find it hard to believe, but we have less than three months before the Annual Meeting – please mark your calendars for Sunday, June 2. Because there are a lot of moving parts, I wanted to be sure that new people know what to expect and where to find important information (and to remind our long-time members too).

This is a time when the work of the church seems to speed up. The Board looks back on what we have been able to accomplish and what still needs to be done. We begin to look ahead to next year and prepare our budget for 2019-20 based on our priorities and goals to keep moving us forward. The Nominating Committee will also be preparing a new Leadership Slate and all of our Committees and Teams will write summaries of their work for our Annual Report as well.

The UUCUV is governed by our Bylaws and we run our Annual Meeting similar to a Vermont Town Meeting. We will put out a “warning” of the meeting 30 days prior with the agenda and you will receive the budget and slate with the notice or at least 14 days before the meeting. The work of the church has obvious differences from the work of a town because we look at the spiritual health of our community as well as the infrastructure and finance, which makes our work more complicated in some respect. Therefore, we are aware of how important it is to communicate with everyone in our congregation.

As our community is growing, we need to be careful that information is shared in a number of ways to reach everyone. Gone are the days when we could send our newsletter, post something on the bulletin board, and share it with everyone by word of mouth and have just about everyone on the same page.

Communication is complicated when we are spread out in many different towns in Vermont and New Hampshire; some people only get to Sunday services, some people do not have reliable email, and others have so much coming at them that it is hard to know

what to respond to and what to delete and let go. In addition, many new people may not even be aware of how information about the congregation is shared and where to look.

Although you may not think about how the UUCUV runs and you may trust that the Board is on top of everything, you play an important role in our church governance and it is important that you have the information you need to feel informed. The Board wants to keep your trust by having our work be known and understood.

**Save the Date:  
Annual Meeting  
June 2**



Hopefully you have seen the Board agendas before each meeting, and the approved minutes after the meetings that we put in the blast and on the bulletin board in the lobby. (The minutes are approved in the next month's meeting so that is why the minutes seem to be a month behind.) We summarize our work in the Call as well.

The first agenda item at every Board meeting is an open time for community members to come and bring questions or concerns to the Board. The intent is to open our meetings with time for people to ask for clarification about a board decision or to share a new idea that they want the Board to consider. We want to be sure that people know they are welcome to attend the Board meetings at any time. Our meetings are open to everyone.

We try to keep the community informed about initiatives we are taking and the discussions we have that shape our decisions. But we can't respond to what we don't hear. If you hear people asking about where a decision came from or talking about concerns, please direct them back to the Board so that we can,

*(continued on page 3)*

## Board Report

*Maureen McNulty, Board Secretary*



Sometimes the role of a Board is to usher in sweeping changes to an organization. Other times, its role is to support the ongoing work of the organization. In this year of transition, our role has been more of the latter, taking a back seat to observe and support the committees and teams already in place while managing the mundane tasks of finances and budget and reviewing our policies and procedures.

We worked with the Building and Grounds committee, encouraging them to formalize procedures and recruit new volunteers. So far, the committee has been working admirably to stay on top of the considerable task of maintaining our property. We supported the newly formed Friends of Music as they crafted an ambitious schedule of superb musical events. And we supported the Partner Church team as they threw themselves into preparing for their pilgrimage to India. We considered possible repercussions then elected to approve having UUCUV lend support to the refugee housing provided by Frank and Polly Gould and overseen by the United Valley Interfaith Project (UVIP). We also approved the proposal of the Green Sanctuary Committee to form a Carbon Footprint Task Force to survey the congregation and perform an energy audit of the sanctuary so we can have a better understanding of the carbon footprint made by UUCUV. This pilot project will serve as a model that many might follow to ascertain their own carbon footprint.

We have been keeping an eye on our budget, approving small expenditures not specifically noted in this year's budget – like a recording device to augment our fantastic new sound system - and making preliminary plans for next year's budget. We have also been overseeing the preservation of our capital endowment. We met with our financial advisory team and came up with a plan for investing our capital in conservatively managed, sustainable, socially responsible funds that reflect our values as Unitarian Universalists. We have also discussed more forward thinking plans for future budgets, like transitioning toward using the Ways & Means proceeds exclusively for donating to outside causes. We are not there yet – we need to use some of these proceeds to cover our operating budget – but it

is a goal we can strive for as we enter this year's pledge drive.

We have been rounding up delegates to represent UUCUV at various conferences: the NE Regional Conference, the General Assembly in Spokane, WA, the VTR-Quebec coalition; and sent representatives to the United Valley Interfaith Project.

Rather than a particularly vision-changing quarter, there has been satisfaction in creating a stable organization that can move forward in good health.

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## President's Message Cont'd

hopefully, provide clarification or take action if something needs to be addressed.

I hope this helps you know where to look for information about the workings of the church. This year we have a lot to celebrate as we complete our first year with Jan. Now that we have settled in a bit, we are ready to take on new challenges and create our new vision. It is exciting work and we need everyone's ideas and dreams.

Please plan to attend our Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 2. We will have a community potluck after the service and then start the meeting. Childcare will be provided. Everyone is invited to attend the meeting and participate in the discussions; however, only members are allowed to vote. Also, please note that we do not have provisions for absentee ballots. If you are not able to attend, you may send your thoughts and opinions to the Board and they will be read at the meeting.

We hope that you find all the information you need so that you feel prepared to come to the meeting ready to add your voice to the discussions and to help us set our direction for next year and into the future.

With deep gratitude,  
lori

## **Spring cleaning? If you're weeding out your books and music, we're looking for donations to our Book and Music Sale.**

Donations of books and music will be received at the Meetinghouse on Wednesday, March 27 and Thursday, March 28, between 4:00-8:00PM, plus Friday, March 29 between 4:00 and 7:00 PM. Please, no encyclopedias, textbooks, magazines, Harlequin romances or out-dated computer books. We do take DVDs, audiobooks on CDs and music CDs, but please no cassettes or videotapes. Donations of vinyl LP record albums are accepted, especially Classic Rock and Jazz.

If you aren't able to bring donations on any of those dates, let Margo Nutt or Rich Greenlee know and we will try to work out another arrangement.

The sale is on Saturday, March 30 from 8AM to 2PM. Please come and buy someone else's treasures at bargain prices!

# BOOK & MUSIC



**Saturday, March 30th  
at the UUCUV**

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of  
the Upper Valley**

**320 Route 5 South, Norwich, VT**

**8 AM - 2 PM**

**Come to our Annual Sale of Books,  
Record Albums, CD's and DVDs!**

**\*\*\*\*\***

**Tax-Deductible Donations Needed & Accepted**

**Wednesday - Thursday 3/27 & 3/28 from 4 - 8 PM, Friday  
3/29 from 4 to 7 PM**



## Children's Faith Formation: All We Did Was Play!

Did you get to vote on what you played? Did you get to speak your mind before the vote? Did you take turns? Did you follow rules? Did you negotiate a new rule? Did you share the equipment? Did you share the cleanup?

Did you try being bossy as an effective leadership strategy? Did you get to watch someone use humor and encouragement and have more success? Were you kind? Did someone help you think of new ways to be kind? Did you stand up for yourself? Did you compromise? Did you take a new perspective?

How about in the opening circle, the one that happens every week, were you the one to offer chalice lighting words? Did you wait patiently while someone else practiced finding the words to express what the chalice is to them?

In joys and concerns, did you get to speak the truth, good or bad, and find acceptance? Did you listen kindly to your friends in the circle with you? Did you try a new yoga pose during body prayer?

When you reviewed your classroom covenant, what was your example this week of living your covenant out in the world? What examples did other kids have? Do you want to try that? Did your group work on staying within your covenant today? How did you feel about that? If it was uncomfortable, how did you find the courage to keep talking until the group worked it out? Was it easier to talk or listen?

What did you hear in the discussion? What did you share? Do you feel like the class had an easy time or a difficult time with the topic?

Did you get outdoors? Did you look at big things or small things? Did you get to talk to a tree? Did you sit and breathe with your tree for a while? What was that like? What other beings communicate with or depend on your tree? Did you wear your belt pouch with the first aid kit and the hand lens? What did you use your hand lens to see?

How did your group manage snack? Did you make sure that kids with food disciplines and allergies got something they would find tasty? How did your classmates make sure that the snacks were distributed fairly? Is that something you'd like to do at home?

Which kids were really fun to play with? What do they do that makes them so fun? Is that something you'd like to try doing? What would you play if we invited them over?

All you did was play today? I'm so glad.



### How to Stay Informed!

Please read your weekly email blasts for important up-to-date news!

If you do not already receive these and wish to be added to the list, email Rachel at [office@uucuv.org](mailto: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](http://www.uucuv.org)



## Religious Education Roundtable Visions

To help prepare for the budget-planning season, some primary stakeholders of our children's program gathered this winter to brainstorm programming advances for next year: grandparents, parents, Board members. Not only did wonderful ideas flow, the energy to plan and implement them did, too.

Foremost, the folks at the table did a quick self-survey (and one cell phone call to a friend) and determined that we have a full roster of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders next year whose families enthusiastically support their kids doing the Our Whole Lives course for their age group. The course is 27 sessions long and represents a significant investment of time and care from the leaders and guardians: this course is the centerpiece of the UUA's extraordinary sexuality education curriculum, supporting our inclusivity and passionate affirmation of the worth and dignity of all persons.

I summarized the January workshop I attended and found a number of parents affirm through their own research and "field observations" that integrated body-mind activities such as yoga or tai chi help to calm and synchronize everyone's neurological system in times of stress or anxiety. Such activities can re-interpret

looming stressors as past events for learning, reducing anxiety. We had a lively discussion about how great it would be to integrate one of these movement modalities into the children's program... and how now we all wanted to be children in the program!

Have you seen the UU World articles lately on a Chalice Camp model of children's faith formation? There is something valuable to be gained in such an immersion approach to religious ed. While the challenges would be many to a rural congregation like ours, Laura Barrett offered a very intriguing - and possible! - idea. There are days off from school like Martin Luther King, Junior Day which parents' work does not always offer as a day off from work. What if Chalice Camp happened one day at a time? Partially staffed by volunteers, devoted to the study of the values we celebrate on those days, this could be a multi-age learning and activity opportunity that deepens congregational and family faithful justice efforts.

Each of these great ideas, of course, comes with staffing, planning, materials, and implementation needs. As you consider your own relationship with the UUCUV during budget season, know that these are the stars we are reaching for.



### Love Flash Mobs

On Sunday, February 24, Jan spoke of blogger, author Glennon Doyle and her love flash mobs. Here is the link to her latest love flash mob, if you want to learn more.

<https://momastery.com/blog/2018/05/29/emergency-love-flash-mob-for-the-children/>



## In Memoriam: Eva Smith

Eva Smith died at home on Monday, February 18. Eva was 97 and fiercely independent throughout her life. She was a participant of the Living with Limits group and a beloved member of the Women's Group. Eva will be sorely missed!

The UUCUV held a service to celebrate her life on Saturday, March 2nd.

For Eva's Remembrance go to: <https://www.vnews.com/eva-smith-obit-vn-022119-23642670>

### From Mary Oliver ...

"When it's over, I want to say: all my life I was a bride married to amazement. I was the bridegroom, taking the world into my arms. When it is over, I don't want to wonder if I have made of my life something particular, and real. I don't want to find myself sighing and frightened, or full of argument. I don't want to end up simply having visited this world." *Written 18 June 2013*

## Restorative Circles - Large and Small

*Sparrow F. Alden*

Do you find yourself having trouble communicating in a particular situation? Maybe you have not worked in this group before, maybe your classmate makes different assumptions from yours, maybe someone's grudge has held you back from participating with your full energy.

A family might need a Restorative Circle to get past a rough spot. A committee might need a Restorative Circle to smooth the road between time-tested methods and innovation. A couple of neighbors might need a Circle to get back into right relationship.

Calling for a Circle signifies a desire to fix a communication issue and move forward. The Restorative Circle slows down the communication process and

deliberately takes the vital steps which everyday conversations skip:

- Here's what I heard you say...
- Did I get that right?

To find out more and decide whether a Circle can help you, please contact Rev. Jan or any one of us. We would love to head off a problem before it does damage - we would feel very privileged to help heal old, deep, complicated hurts as well.

*With thanks and love from Grace Alden, Babette Hansen, Claudia Kern, Dan Mendelsohn, Judy Munger, Cassie Murphy, Cappy Nunlist, Suzanne Simon, and Sparrow Alden*

## Meet Some of Our New Members!



*Margo Nutt*

### **Jenny Albee**

Jenny is excited to join this Faith Community for several reasons. She has seen the focus on service to others in the UUCUV, she appreciates the inclusion of every person no matter their age or member status, and feels that this place welcomes all Seekers. Jenny says, "This is a wonderful landing place to help my son and me find our way in Faith." She is proud to become a member and be an RE Teacher.

### **Laura Barrett**

Laura has lived in the Upper Valley for just over 10 years, and has been in Lebanon, NH that whole time. She started coming to UUCUV last summer with her children, in large part, because she wanted the support of a community in helping them learn the values she aspires to live out. Laura grew up in New Jersey and was raised in a wonderful Methodist church where she sang and played handbells in the church's choirs. She enjoys being part of a community of like-minded people. Laura works as a librarian at Dartmouth, and she is on the board of the Lebanon Public Libraries. She is also a tap dancer and folk dancer.

### **Julie Bonette**

Julie grew up in Southern New Jersey just outside of Philadelphia. She studied journalism and international affairs at Northeastern University, after which she worked at a public relations firm specializing in K-12 education for several years. In 2017, she moved to New Hampshire to work in Dartmouth College's Office of Communications. She's also working towards a Master's degree in creative writing at Dartmouth. She lives in Hanover with her boyfriend, dog, and cat. She loves to travel (favorite trips include Australia/New Zealand and Greece). She is a lifelong Unitarian Universalist, having previously been a member of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Cherry Hill, where

she served on several committees, including Leadership and Nominating Committee, Search Committee, and Auction Committee. She is excited to have found a spiritual home in the Upper Valley.

### **Don Kantor**

Don Kantor was born Catholic in the Chicago suburb of Brookfield. His beliefs flowed to the Congregational Church in Lyme. His wife of 28 years died from ovarian cancer in 2004. He says his faith also died at that time. He met his now husband, Frank, a loving, kind Presbyterian man. They found UUCUV through a dear and kind friend, Rich Greenlee. They are so indebted to him. Some may recall, Don worked at, then owned, Roberts Flowers of Hanover for 32 years. Don and Frank are happy here.

### **Frank Kier**

Frank Kier was a long-time Presbyterian and Director of Christian Education back in Jamestown, New York (birthplace of Lucille Ball and Roger Tory Peterson). He spent 38 years in the field of early child education, teaching Kindergarten and First Grade for two generations. He was a long-time student earning advanced degrees in the field of education, and finished his working years as a staff development specialist and educational consultant, retiring in June of 2003. Frank was married for 43 years and with his wife, raised 4 children. He met Donald Kantor on line in 2012 and relocated to New Hampshire. The two were married in 2014, and recently moved from Cornish NH to West Lebanon. Rich Greenlee introduced them to UUCUV and they are thankful for being so warmly welcomed into this community of faith.

*(continued p. 9)*



**(New Members cont'd)**

**Kerry Skiffington**

Kerry moved here from the Champlain Valley almost two years ago. Her two children are grown, out of college, and on their own now, so she accepted a job here and began a whole new set of adventures. She likes learning languages and is currently studying Korean. Kerry plays ukulele and sings with Revels North in Spring & Summer. Her dad would say she is a renaissance man as she has done stand-up comedy, hypnotherapy, is a published writer and has been a college professor.

**Rosemary (Rosie) Stevens**

The third of four siblings, her family was originally from Michigan. The family moved to Martinsburg, West Virginia, which is located in the Eastern Panhandle of the state, when Rosie was seven. They left behind their entire extended family.

Her mother became active in the Catholic Church in Martinsburg, serving as both organist and church secretary. In retrospect, Rosie believes that she was looking for community, since the nuclear family was isolated from grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Rosie's father was the first to leave the Catholic Church, and the rest of the family eventually followed. There was just too much they could not accept in the rigid, patriarchal doctrine.

Rosie first signed the book to become a Unitarian Universalist in 1994, in Hagerstown, Maryland, where most of the general population had never heard of UUs. When her daughter started college in 1996, Rosie started attending seminary, while continuing to teach school full-time. Four years later, she ran out of steam and money, so she concentrated once again on teaching middle school science. She completed 30 years of teaching, retired, and moved to the Upper Valley to live near her daughter and son-in-law.

She now works part-time at the Montshire Museum of Science. In her free time she dances, walks, hikes, supports live music, and communicates with her mother and siblings. She loves living in the Upper Valley and says that finding the beloved community of the UUCUV is the one dimension that was missing from her life!

**Rev. Jan Hutslar**

This congregation is central to Jan's life and she wants to stand fully IN it.

She chooses to be a part of this group of people here, claiming this congregation as her spiritual home, putting her membership where her heart already resides.

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**Coming this Summer - Stories of Hope**



“Stories of Hope” will be the theme of our summer services. We look forward to hearing the voices of individuals in our congregation along with members of the larger community.

Do you have a story of when you have experienced hope? How has hope gotten you through a tough time? What gives you hope now? Where do you find hope in a specific challenge our world is facing today – climate change? racism? mental health issues? loss of biodiversity? loss of community? How do you cultivate hope in your own life – spiritual practice? service? time in nature?

If you would like to speak on the subject of Hope this summer, either as part of a group of speakers or on your own, a Worship Associate will be available to help you as much or as little as you wish with every aspect of the Sunday service. You can help make this an inspiring summer of worship together. If you are interested, please e-mail Cappy Nunlist ([cappy.nunlist@gmail.com](mailto:cappy.nunlist@gmail.com)) with your preference of dates.

## Upcoming UUCUV Friends of Music Concerts

### Kibling Hill Trio

**Friday, April 19. 7:30 p.m.**

Come enjoy an evening of traditional music and song from Ireland and beyond with the trio Kibling Hill. Local musicians Rachel Clark, Rob DeMarco, and George White are all veterans of the VT/New England folk music scene and have recently combined to bring you new favorites on fiddle, wooden flute, guitar and vocals.

The suggested donation is \$15, advance or at the door. However, any amount of donation is acceptable, including zero. We want anyone who would enjoy this concert to attend. Money concerns should not keep anyone away! Tickets online: <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4069275>

### Garnet Rogers and Friends

**Sunday, May 5. 4:30 p.m.**

Garnet Rogers is a major talent of our time. His powerful, smooth baritone gives voice to the vocabulary of the heart. He is joined by two friends who are rising stars.

Crys Matthews blends Americana, folk, jazz, blues, bluegrass and funk into bold, complex songs of life, love, and justice.

Natalia Zukerman is a singer songwriter and story teller with the phrasing of a jazz-blues singer and a phenomenal talent on anything with strings. \$ 20 in advance or \$25 at the door. Tickets online: <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4072134>

### A Fine Bromance

**Saturday, June 15. 8 p.m.**

Here is a link to a review of the performance in St. Louis. It includes relevant information about the show.

<http://cabaretszenes.org/2018/07/16/bob-wetzel-craig-becker-a-fine-bromance/>

Bob Wetzel is an Upper Valley resident. The show consists of Bob and his life-long friend Craig Becker talking and singing about their 55-year friendship. It will be a heartwarming and enjoyable evening.

\$20 in advance or at the door. Tickets online: <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4084620>

### Laurel Mendelsohn

**Sunday, May 26. 3 p.m.**

Laurel will perform a vocal recital of classical music, accompanied by local pianist Henry Danaher. Laurel is the daughter of UUCUV members Dan Mendelsohn and Nancy Menton. She is in a voice major at Keene State College, NH. She is bringing her junior year recital to the UUCUV! FREE.





# Library News

Olive MacGregor

## New Books in the Library

J Fic Adams, Karen - *I Am a Warrior Goddess*  
(about children and self-esteem)

362.292 Alcoholics Anonymous - *The Story of How  
Many Thousands of Men and Women Have Recovered  
from Alcoholism*

362.392 *How Al-Anon Works for Families and  
Friends of Alcoholics*

297 Armstrong, Karen - *Islam: A Short History*

220.6 Buehrens, John - *Understanding the Bible:  
an Introduction for Skeptics, Seekers, and Religious  
Liberals (Including an extra copy for the UU col-  
lection. Buehrens was president of the UUA from  
1993-2001)*

*Library Committee: Olive MacGregor, Chair, Polly  
Gould and Margo Nutt*



## Book Review

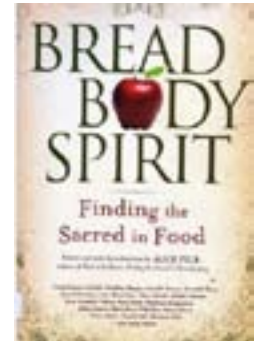
Margo Nutt

### *Bread Body Spirit: Finding the Sacred in Food*

Edited by Aalice Peck

Alice Peck says, “I gathered an intention-ally eclectic group of writings that explore the ways food and how we approach it—from growing it, preparing it, serving it, eating it and sharing it—had the possibility to bring us closer to all that is holy.”

Contributors include Wendell Berry, Jane Goodall, Thich Nhat Hanh, Barbara Kingsolver, Mary Oliver, Grace Paley, Helen Nearing, and many others.



This is a book that will make you hungry. You’ll be hungry for the rich curried vegetable soup in the chapter entitled *The Parable of the Squash*, and you’ll be hungry to take a new, more meaningful look at the meals you serve and eat. The book invites the reader to cook and eat with intentionality. Perhaps Mary Beth Crain says it best in her chapter (*Food and God: Cooking as a Spiritual Calling*), “When food is prepared with love and joy, with the pure motive of nourishing others, it becomes a blessing for all concerned.”

**Nana**

*by Julie Bonette*

She was the best grandma.  
First, you'd see her smile,

with a poof of black hair,  
and always with grandpa.

She was sunny joy, while  
she gave us love and care.

Then, her airway in strife.  
Mom called, upset. I knew.

Never imagined life  
without Nana. Miss you.

**Wanderlust**

*by Julie Bonette*

Welcome your wanderlust.  
Absorb all of Athens.  
Nourish the Netherlands.  
Drive to Denmark; devour the Dominican.  
Experience Earth's edges in Ecuador and  
England.  
Research restaurants in a thousand-mile  
range.  
Learn in your leisure on Long Island.  
Unite with the urbanness of Austin.  
Soak up the Spanish sun and sand.  
Trek, tour, and traverse the terrain.

With wanderlust, the world is yours to gain.

**Another Direction**

*by Rev. Sandra Fees*

The moment comes  
when a choice arises.  
A holy moment.  
A decision must be made.  
Do I remain as I am  
or do I risk inching, leaping,  
flowing in another direction?  
Do I risk what I think  
I already know and already am?  
Do I forfeit my security  
for the possibility that a simple shift  
may alter the course of my life,  
even perhaps the life of another?  
I long to let go of all that restrains me  
so that I might pursue the impossible  
and surmount the insurmountable:  
to let go of anger,  
to let go of the need to be in control,  
to forgive a friend,  
to forgive myself,  
to refuse what thwarts my spirit,  
to refuse what limits my mind,  
to surrender to what will come,  
to surrender to this holy moment  
I have let slip away for too long.

# The Pilgrimage to India

*Claudia Kern and our India Pilgrims*



Our Minister, four members of our congregation, Mandy Ruest, Ellen Phillips, Laura Mitchell, Maureen McNulty, and one youth, Liz Freeman traveled to India between January 27 and February 10 of this year. The main goal of their pilgrimage was to visit our Partner Church in Mukhap in the state of Meghalaya during the closing celebration of their 125th anniversary. For five days they were hosted in the Mukhap home of Leiki Suchiang and her husband Confirm. They spent their days coming to know the people and the world of our Unitarian partners. Afterwards, they saw a few of Meghalaya's natural wonders including famous waterfalls and living bridges and were hosted for an evening meal by leaders of the Unitarian Union of Northeast India, including Khlor Mukim, Nangroi Sutting, and D Barishisha Mukhim. Leaving Meghalaya, they flew, on a crystal clear day parallel to the towering Himalayas toward Delhi and then to the city of Ahmedabad in the state of Gujarat.



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## India Pilgrimage Cont'd

There they were met by Mahesh Upadhyaya and his wife Meena Patel who hosted and guided them through an amazing experience for their final days in India.

Between these six pilgrims there are hundreds of moments to be shared with you, no doubt many hundreds of photos; and deep, transformative moments that will reveal themselves to our community over time. On Sunday March 24th the pilgrims will present the Sunday Service, and at a date later in April, they will host an evening of slides and Indian Chai tea. Watch for details about these not -to- be-missed events!

Each pilgrim has written a few words and chosen a meaningful photo or two below:



### ELLEN PHILLIPS

The first lesson from our trip that I have been able to digest is about friendship. I am forever changed knowing that I have friends on the other side of the world. Our hosts in Mukhap were a young family who took us in and attended to our every need, and we needed a lot! Leiki and Confirm were incredible caretakers and hosts, and their family and community surrounded us with warmth and love from the minute we arrived. I will hold them in my heart always, and I intend to honor and develop this relationship for the rest of my life. This visit has opened a new place in my heart that I never knew existed. Partnership is truly a perfect word for what we share and what we will continue to grow because we, all on both sides, have the honor to enrich each other's lives for decades to come.

The lesson of friendship also extended to the friendship that was developed among the pilgrims. I knew when we started this trip

and entered into the planning phase that I was part of a group of strong and intelligent women, but I had the privilege over the two weeks that we were in India to experience their true colors, and they were beautiful. We all cared for each other through tough times and relished each other's strengths in good times. I look forward to knowing these women for the rest of our lives and growing in community with them.

My hope is to share this feeling of world friendship with the UUCUV community and find more new places in my heart that I didn't know were there. Friendship has a new meaning for me and though I may not fully understand it at this moment I look forward to gaining deeper understanding as I go. I cannot thank the UUCUV community enough for all of your support and I cannot explain how much this has enriched my life, my worldview and spirituality but I look forward to talking through it with the community that made it possible.



## India Pilgrimage Cont'd



### MANDY RUEST

India was an amazing trip of dualities for me. Each experience was amazing and awful at the same time. Just as in life, we take the good and the bad and cherish it all.

Before leaving, I was so excited to go, yet so sad to be leaving behind my son, Griffin. In Mumbai, we stayed at a resort that was absolutely beautiful, but also frequently smelled like sewage.

In Mukhap, I felt the most warmth and love from all the people we met. Despite the language barriers, our hearts connected, and often I felt moved to tears. We were really in India, celebrating with our new friends, at their ceremonies all dressed up in our regal saris. On one

hand, all of that was amazing, yet on the other, it was also really long and boring and very cold in the evenings.

Throughout the trip, I practiced a lot of meditation, breathing and using our mantra: “relax into the discomfort”. It helped me to stay present and find beauty when I was tired and uncomfortable. After a rejuvenating visit to the forest, I felt more grounded and still, like the banyan tree in this photo.

I walked by all the litter and chose to see beauty. By the time we got to Ahmedabad, I had gotten used to waiting and to riding for long periods of time. I took this selfie in the backseat with Jan and Mahesh during one such long drive.



I learned to expect the unexpected: vibrant colors, a begging woman trying to get into the car, camels, litter, elephants, children pushing their wares, peacocks, traffic, monkeys, the unbelievable generosity of our hosts, the way we were treated like celebrities wherever we went, and the deep well of love I felt with all our new friends.

I am eternally grateful to our congregation and my family for helping make this trip possible. It was life changing! I feel like the relationships we started are meaningful and will be long-lasting into the future of our partnership.

## India Pilgrimage Cont'd



### MAUREEN MCNULTY

The most profound experience I had in India was holding the hands and touching the cheeks of an old woman who has been called untouchable her entire life, experiencing the love and acceptance flowing through our eyes, one being to another, for one moment acknowledging the worth and dignity we share.



Our pilgrimage was defined by such moments of forming relationships. We met literally thousands of people, and formed hundreds of relationships, some transitory, some hopefully the beginning of a long friendship. We opened ourselves up to the mighty welcome we received and met the gaze, exchanged halting greetings in unfamiliar languages, shook hands, took photos, shared tea and whole elaborate dinners, and eventually embraced and said farewell. Hopefully somewhere, with someone, our touch or our attention made a difference.

*The Pilgrim's host, Leiki Suchiang, saying goodbye.*



## India Pilgrimage Cont'd



### LIZ FREEMAN, Age 14

The culture in India was very different from what I expected. I thought India would be like the other developing countries that I have visited, and in some ways it was but in others it was not. I was impressed by how people got around by camels and it was interesting that the cows just roamed around the city and people came out to feed them.



I was also impressed with the living bridge. The people took the roots of two trees and wrapped them around each other and they grew into each other to make a bridge so they could cross the river. It was just a creek when we walked across it, but I could see that it must be a raging river in the rainy season.



I liked making friends with our host's daughter, Eihun. Our ages were very different – she is four – and we don't speak the same language but we found ways to communicate. I also liked meeting all the people and being the center of attention. After I got used to being stared at, I was fine with it.

I found that people were more free in talking about God. They weren't ashamed to talk about being children of God. I thought it was important to accept that and be willing to follow.

## India Pilgrimage Cont'd



### LAURA MITCHELL

I find I am having a hard time putting into words my experience of India. It was one of the most amazing and profound experiences of my life and yet, as I write this less than two weeks after our return, it almost feels like it was all a dream. The thing that stays with me the most is the contrast of how exotic and yet somehow familiar it all was. I saw so much of my daughter Iris in Eihun, our hosts' four-year-old! Family is universal. I was also pleasantly surprised at how similar the spiritual beliefs of our Mukhap friends are to ours, though I did chuckle a bit reciting the Lord's Prayer for the first time in probably decades.



Beyond these perhaps obvious or superficial similarities, there was something achingly familiar and powerful about some of the places we visited, most notably the Garden of the Caves and the Living Root Bridge in Meghalaya, and the step well in Ahmedabad. These places positively tingled with energy, and I felt as if I knew them. Perhaps my energy has been there before; perhaps I was touching the great UU (Universal Unknown). I don't know. I can't know. But I know that I fell in love, with the places, with the people, with the idea of India, and I left a piece of myself there.



## India Pilgrimage Cont'd



*Rev. Jan Hutslar speaking to 2000 Unitarians at the annual meeting of the Unitarian Union of Northeast India.*



*Rangdajied Lapasam holding the quilted banner designed by Laura Mitchell and made by Darsie Riccio as our gift to the Mukhap Unitarian Church on the occasion of their 125th Anniversary.*

### REV. JAN HUTLSAR

India reminds me of the totality of experiences that life contains. So much color, sound, scent; so much poverty, striving, rigidity. The beauty of an Indian woman in a bright flowing sari and the sadness of her begging with her infant.

The trip was full of surprises—the depth of connection and love we felt in our host village in such a short time. The rice paddies, the banana trees, the elephants working like oxen in the forest.

Thank you all, UUCUV, for being there with us in our hearts. It was comforting to know you were.

And thank you for supporting and facilitating a life-changing experience of connection and opening.

I am reminded of Pema Chodron's words: We must make friends with the gloriousness and wretchedness of life.

So may we.

*You, darkness, of whom I am born --*

*I love you more than the flame  
that limits the world  
to the circle it illumines  
and excludes all the rest.*

*But the dark embraces everything:  
shapes and shadows, creatures and me,  
people and nations -- just as they are.*

*It lets me imagine  
a great presence stirring beside me.*

*I believe in the night.*

Rainer Maria Rilke,  
translated by Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy

# More Opportunities for Involvement

## Sunday Hospitality 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 Suzanne Simon [knitrmom@gmail.com](mailto:knitrmom@gmail.com). 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 Lori Fortini at [LA14E@outlook.com](mailto:LA14E@outlook.com). (Lori organizes the monthly coordinators). The more willing hands we have listed for various needs, the better we can take care of each other when those needs arise.

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

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdUPXHZ1EYvWrgv4h0exU145fgD\\_1YThhrc5Q3wcaENTxP8nA/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdUPXHZ1EYvWrgv4h0exU145fgD_1YThhrc5Q3wcaENTxP8nA/viewform)

## Sunday Music & Readings

The Sunday Services committee is always looking for people to share special music, suggest readings or themes, or offer to lead or take part in a service. They are very interested in adding other voices, speakers and musical diversity to the services. Contact: Cappy Nunlist [cappy.nunlist@gmail.com](mailto:cappy.nunlist@gmail.com)

## Sing in the Choir

The UUCUV choir sings September through June. We rehearse at a once-a-month potluck and on Sunday mornings 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 Jennifer Yocom (subbing for Linda currently) via [office@uucuv.org](mailto:office@uucuv.org) if you would like to sing with the choir.

**Open Choir Sundays.** Starting at 9:00 am on certain Sundays, with whomever shows up, we will warm up and 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.



## Bell Choir

A new addition to the music program in 2018, the Bell Choir participates in worship services several times a year. Anyone with interest, the ability to read music, and a commitment to regular attendance is welcome. Rehearsals are generally weekly. Contact Jane Sachs ([jsachsnh@gmail.com](mailto:jsachsnh@gmail.com)) or Jo Shute ([joshute2@gmail.com](mailto:joshute2@gmail.com)).

## 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. [education@uucuv.org](mailto:education@uucuv.org)

### “Living Fully with Limits” Group

How does one live fully and happily despite having to adjust to limits on our activities and abilities? This is a lay-led 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.

### Women’s Group

The Women’s Group gathers at Sally Page’s (visit the church website or contact Sally for directions) on the fourth Monday 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](mailto:baciquail@comcast.net)



### 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 60 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 (Suzanne) at 603-643-7494 or send an email to [knitrmom@gmail.com](mailto: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*

### 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. 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](mailto:claudia.anne.kern@gmail.com)

[polly1gould@yahoo.com](mailto:polly1gould@yahoo.com)

## Board of Directors

Lori Fortini, President  
Allan Wieman, Vice President  
Mugs Johnston, Treasurer  
Maureen McNulty, Secretary  
Bob Riccio, Member-at-Large  
Laura Mitchell, Member-at-Large  
Judy Munger, Member-at-Large

## Staff

The Rev. Jan Hutslar, Minister  
Sparrow F. Alden, CRE--  
Credentialed Religious Educator  
Linda Hoover, Music Director  
Jennifer Yocom, Accompanist  
Rachel Clark, Office Administrator

## Committee/ Task Force Chairs

Caring Circle Coordinator (Overall):  
Lori Fortini  
Committee on Ministry: Leah Goat,  
Mandy Ruest, Joani Nierenberg  
Green Sanctuary: Nick Warren  
Hospitality Teams: Suzanne Simon  
Library: Olive MacGregor  
Newsletter Help Team: Margo Nutt,  
Mardy High  
Nominating Committee: Suzanne  
Simon, Cappy Nunlist, Margaret  
Robinson  
Partner Church: Polly Gould,  
Claudia Kern  
Social Justice: Suellen Aptman,  
Laura Mitchell  
Sunday Services: Cappy Nunlist  
Ways and Means: Lori Fortini

## WEEKLY EMAIL NEWS

### DEADLINE:

Send news items to Rachel by  
end of Tuesday  
at office@uucuv.org

**SUMMER CALL DEADLINE  
WILL BE IN MID-MAY**

# 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.

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**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:** Rev. Jan Hutslar is best reached by email at minister@uucuv.org or by her cell phone (315) 714-9287. You may also leave a message at the church office phone (802) 649-8828, which the administrator checks Tuesday through Friday mornings.

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

**MUSIC DIRECTOR:** Linda Hoover at music@uucuv.org (on leave currently)

**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.

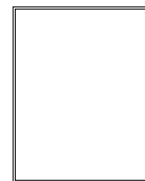
**CARES AND CONCERNS:** With cares and concerns, please contact the Caring Circle Coordinator of the month (listed in our weekly email news) and/or the Rev. Jan Hutslar or Sparrow Alden (contact information above).

**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 at the Meetinghouse for those who need them.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
of the Upper Valley

PO Box 1110

Norwich, VT 05055



## **UUCUV**

***UUCUV Phone: (802) 649-8828***

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

***E-mail: [office@uucuv.org](mailto:office@uucuv.org)***

## **Spring Issue 2019**

