

The Call

Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of the Upper Valley

Winter 2018-19
December - February

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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. Jan Hutslar

Recently the story of Frederick (by Leo Lionni) was told in a worship service--the little mouse who brought his own harvest into the family's winter nest.

Frederick collected the rays of the sun, the vibrant colors of summer, and soulful words of magic as his contributions to see them through the darkness of winter.

Yesterday was a dark winter day that began like any other for me: meetings with people-- not sure what would come up and how things would go.

As it turned out, in two separate meetings, as sincere and well-intentioned as I was, I learned that I had managed to cause pain and self-doubt for two different people, who were honest and courageous enough to let me know. I do not take this lightly. It was not my intention. I made mistakes.

My apologies were heartfelt.

Of course, I would prefer to keep my mistakes to myself, to appear consistently wise and capable and without flaw.

But that would be ridiculous. And a disservice to me. And to you.

Of course I will make mistakes and sometimes I will not even notice.

But this is a community where I, we, can show our vulnerable, real, caring and committed selves--sometimes wise, sometimes unaware.

This is a place we can bring our whole selves, where we can learn from our mistakes and still be held in love.

This is a place we ALL can show up broken or shattered or glued together. We will sometimes be strong, confused, capable, weary, open-hearted, barely functioning, ready to take on the world.

We create together a place, an atmosphere that calls us to be our best selves--but that doesn't mean someone else, or some pretend,

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News from the Board

Maureen McNulty, Secretary

After several years of exciting growth and transitions, the UUCUV is finally settling down to a comfortable routine. But that does not mean it is time for repose. The Board is taking this opportunity to improve our infrastructure, enhance support for our initiatives, and review and revise our policies and procedures. We aim to strengthen our organization.

Phil Kinsler approached the Board with a proposal to improve the sound system, which has been rather disruptive and inadequate for some time. After carefully researching several options, he presented a proposal from Tree Ridge Enterprises to engineer and install a custom audio system for our sanctuary. It will provide excellent sound with minimal intervention. It will include speech enhancement, six microphones, a control system and Bose speakers and will incorporate our current Williams system for persons with hearing difficulties. The system will support up to 4 musicians so we may host more elaborate musical arrangements, both at Sunday service and other musical events hosted in the sanctuary. A member has generously underwritten a substantial portion of the cost of this system. The Board has approved funding for the balance of the fee and we should have the system in place for the winter holidays!

After many years of carefully tending our relationship with our partner church in Mukhap, India, Claudia Kern and Polly Gould asked the Board to renew support for the Partner Church initiative and perhaps seek new leadership to ensure the continued success of our partnership. The Mukhap congregation has invited the UUCUV to attend their 125th celebration in February, and Claudia and Polly proposed that we use this opportunity to send a small group to show our support and deepen our relationship with the Mukhap Unitarians. After careful consideration of the effort involved, as well as the energy and enthusiasm such a trip would bring to our partnership, the Board unanimously supported both the partnership and the pilgrimage. Claudia is now working intensely at shepherding her six pilgrims as they plan their voyage.

Reverend Jan has encouraged the Board to ramp up publicity. The Board approved holding an Open House in October, which was attended by a small but enthusiastic audience.

As for policies, we are steadily reviewing our systems and making changes where necessary. We have begun the laborious process of reviewing our Policies and Procedures Manual. We created a Fire Drill Procedure and practiced it after a Sunday service in September. We are encouraging the Building & Grounds committee to create a centralized source of information regarding building maintenance. And we are in the process of reading *Governance & Ministry*, by Dan Hotchkiss. I'm told there will be a pop quiz at the January meeting.

Minister's Message (cont'd)

perfect version of ourselves.

It means we are honest and willing to speak directly and without blame, from our own tender hearts. And listen carefully to each other.

As we head into winter, I am thinking of Frederick and considering how we bring warmth, color and poetry into our lives through this UU community.

I see the love and care offered, the honest and difficult conversations shared-- as rays of sunshine that warm our hearts.

Being radically welcoming, affirming and really seeing each other-- creates a rainbow of color in the winter gray.

There is poetry in our laughter, our tears, our silence, and our raging and singing voices.

So may it be.

With a heart full of gratitude,

Jan

Holiday Blue Vespers
Wednesday December 19, 6 PM

If you would like to take a breath, have some quiet and reflective time in a small group, or if for you this holiday season is more challenging than merry, please join us for this contemplative vespers service.



Caroling at UUCUV Dec. 15

On Saturday, December 15, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. UUCUV will host the Second Annual Community Carol Sing in the UUCUV Sanctuary. All are welcome to come with family and friends to sing songs of the season. It is informal. Participants request specific songs, and the group sings them with gusto, accompanied by piano. There will be music and word sheets for all. During a refreshment break, Jane Sachs and Jo Shute will lead their bell choir in favorites of the season. Please join us for an evening of fellowship and musical fun!

Christmas Eve Services

Monday, December 24

4:30 PM Intergenerational Christmas Pageant
with Sparrow

6:00 PM Candlelight Service

with Rev. Jan Hutslar
(Simple potluck between the services.)



December

By Gary Johnson

A little girl is singing for the faithful to come ye
Joyful and triumphant, a song she loves,
And also the partridge in a pear tree
And the golden rings and the turtle doves.
In the dark streets, red lights and green and blue
Where the faithful live, some joyful, some troubled,
Enduring the cold and also the flu,
Taking the garbage out and keeping the sidewalk shoveled.
Not much triumph going on here—and yet
There is much we do not understand.
And my hopes and fears are met
In this small singer holding onto my hand.
Onward we go, faithfully, into the dark
And are there angels hovering overhead? Hark.

**Come Caroling & Visiting
Nursing Home residents on
Christmas Morning!**

Once again we will be visiting two area nursing homes on Christmas morning to bring good cheer to the residents. You are welcome to bring cards and your singing voice - though no singing ability is required! Song sheets will be provided. We will hand out some holiday cards and stuffed animals.

We will visit Hanover Terrace on Rt. 10 in Hanover at 10 AM, and Genesis - Lebanon Center near Wilson Tire off Rt. 120 in Lebanon at 11 AM. If there is sufficient interest we may form a carpool from the meeting house. Come to one or both!

For more information contact Rich Greenlee:
hartlandvt@aol.com or 802-436-1150.



President's Message

Lori Fortini

Stewardship of our congregation is complicated. Decisions are sometimes made that seem to move things in a direction that feels like it comes out of nowhere or happens quickly - and people may have questions. At these times, communication is critical to making sure that questions and concerns are discussed and there is understanding. That is what being in right relations is all about.

In that spirit of open communication and addressing concerns to allow for greater understanding, I would like to provide a little history and backstory that led up to the re-commitment to our Partner Church in India and the Pilgrimage trip we are supporting.

The UUCUV has had a partnership with the Unitarian Church in Mukhap, India for over 10 years. In those years, through the work of our Partner Church team, individuals and groups of our members and friends, we have supported 16 students and are currently supporting 10 students so they may continue with their educations. As part of our charitable giving, the UUCUV has donated to Mukhap's effort to build their church building. Rev. Bruce Johnson visited the church in India in 2008, and in 2011 we hosted Unitarians from Meghalaya in our homes for a one-week visit.

This has been a long and rewarding partnership. We have proudly proclaimed that we are a Partner Church as part of our identity. In fact, this was highlighted in the congregational record of the UUCUV that our search committee put together for prospective candidates. Rev. Jan noted that it was one of the things she admired about us. Jan has an interest in this effort because of her experiences with Partner Church connections in other congregations where she has served.

However, over the years, the connection was wearing thin. Without the constant and unfailing devotion to this effort by Claudia and Phil Kern, and Polly Gould, the thread would have been broken. They have worked tirelessly for all of these years and - guess what - they are ready to pass the torch. As we look to the

next ten years, Claudia, Phil and Polly were hoping to nurture the new leadership.

In September, members of the Partner Church Team asked the Board to take a more active role. They requested that the Board, on behalf of the congregation, re-commit to our Partner Church effort and support efforts to rebuild a team with new people to carry this initiative into the future. The Board agreed to take on this role.

The Partner Church group organized a September 23 meeting of all sponsors and anyone interested in making a pilgrimage to India. In addition to this event, the Partner Church team hosted a pot luck and general informational meeting open to everyone in the congregation. That Meeting was held on October 21st. Approximately 35 people attended.

At that meeting, Allan Wieman, on behalf of the Board, endorsed and actively called upon the congregation to support the Partner Church Program as part of our Mission. Allan talked about how his and Jo's connection to the Partner Church efforts in their former congregation was life transforming. People were fired up at the meeting especially hearing that the people of Mukhap invited members of our congregation to visit India and participate in their 125th Anniversary of Universalism and members of our congregation were interested in making the trip.

And that is how it came to be that we have 6 Pilgrims planning a trip to India for January/February. We feel this journey could open a new and exciting chapter for our congregation, building a wider understanding of what it means to live in community. The Board is supportive of the fund-raising efforts to make this trip a reality. The hope is that the trip will be financed through grants and donations from outside groups, individuals and from fund raising events, including \$1000 in the Partner Church account raised from past Indian dinners. Our Pilgrims are working very hard to raise the money to finance the trip because, let's face

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President’s Message (cont’d)

it, a trip to India is not really in anyone’s budget. It is exciting to see the support people are giving to this effort.

However, we have also heard some legitimate concerns voiced about the trip. One concern we heard was that we may be able to have a greater impact if we used the donations to sponsor more students. That may, on the surface, be true, but the people in Mukhap have asked us to visit – they did not ask for more money. Our commitment to learn how they live and to bring back strong friendships and lifelong connections means more to them.

Another concern was that this trip is a great impact on our carbon footprint and adds to climate change. This is also a legitimate concern. When we thought about the trip, this point came up. In regards to the carbon emissions, the trip (based on an internet-based carbon emission calculator) will create ~45,000 lbs of carbon emissions to fly five people round trip to India, economy class. In comparison, the UU solar installation sponsored by UUCUV will reduce carbon emissions by over 312,000 lbs. So, it is important to note that, by living out our values, we can both reduce our overall emissions and include important work like

visiting Mukhap.

And, in case there may be a question as to how was it decided on who would go on the trip, please know that the Pilgrims chose to go. The opportunity was open to all and these brave women stepped forward.

On a personal note, I cannot be more excited to have mothers of our RE children - Mandy Ruest, Laura Mitchell, Ellen Philips, Maureen McNulty, with her daughter, Liz Freeman – led by Rev. Jan, be our representatives. What a wonderful statement about where we see our strength and how we want to encourage and foster family involvement in our community.

I hope that this history and backstory provides you with a window into what the Board took into consideration during discussions at our meetings, and that you are able to join us in enthusiastically supporting our commitment to our Partner Church and to our Pilgrims. We believe this trip to India will strengthen our community and provide a transformational experience not only for the people who go to India and our Indian partners, but for our entire congregation as well.

With deep gratitude,

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 and let her know.

Church Calendar

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

www.uucuv.org

Do you like to greet people on Sunday, and look for new faces?

If yes, we would like you to join the Membership Committee.

Please email Mugs at mugs514@gmail.com or talk to one of the team members - Suellen Aptman, Jean Howe, Mugs Johnston, Joani Nierenberg, Bob Riccio.



UUCUV Solar Panels Are Up!



There will be a “Blessing of the Solar Panels” at the worship service on Sunday, December 23 (coincidentally, close to the winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year!)

The UUCUV built its new sanctuary with the idea of installing solar panels, and has achieved that goal within three years of the opening of the new Sanctuary in December 2015.

The Green Sanctuary Committee led the effort. Key participants in the effort were Colin High, Nick Warren, and Phil and Claudia Kern. Norwich Solar Technologies, headquartered in White River Junction, designed and installed the system. Forty-five solar panels have now been installed, thirty on the sanctuary and fifteen on the farmhouse.

According to Allan Wieman, the system will produce over 19,500 kilowatt hours (“kWh”) annually, enough power for four houses. Over its life of 30 years, our solar installation will produce more than 545,000 kWh. It will reduce carbon emissions by 312,700 lbs. (equivalent to emissions from 15,900 gallons of gasoline).

~ Margo Nutt

Religious Education News & Views

Sparrow F. Alden, CRE

Jólabókaflóð

Necessity is the mother of some fabulous traditions. During World War II, the government of Iceland limited the importation of goods - but the restrictions on imported paper were less than those on what might be considered luxury or gift items. Wed the relative availability of paper to Iceland's long literary history and long winter coziness, and you get the Jólabókaflóð, the Yule Book Flood.

The Icelandic tradition is to exchange gifts on Christmas Eve - books, of course - and then read all night through. There are indeed publishing companies

which only bother to go into production from September through November.

Are you thinking about how to deepen your experience of the winter holidays? How to uncomplicate December while providing joy for months? I'm certainly aiming to celebrate Jólabókaflóð more and more every year.

~ Sparrow (currently reading *The Wise Man's Fear* upstairs, *The Story of Kullervo* downstairs, and listening to *The History of English* podcast while driving)

An Eye Out for Safety

Children's programming meets until about 11:30 on Sunday mornings, allowing deep learning (and some adult coffee time after the service). If you want access to a children's space on Sunday before 11:30, please talk to Sparrow. We limit the adults in children's spaces to the kids' own guardians and RE leaders. You'll be able to get chairs, measure the rooms, and give tours at other times on Sundays or in the week - all of these are interruptions in the classrooms which happened this fall. Each of these interruptions was by someone unknown to the RE teachers, and while they want to be polite, they will hold children's safety paramount.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our fire

drill - especially to the Hospitality team which accommodated an outdoor coffee hour! We are working on bumps in the road which the practice process revealed: classes which are meeting outside didn't hear the alert and so did not know it was time to go to the Children's Garden; some children stayed with their parents instead of reporting to the garden to be checked off. Look for a more streamlined process on another beautiful day next autumn!



Spotify!

Spotify is a web-based service for listening to music which has been organized by different folks into hundreds of different lists. Membership is free (you could pay a fee for fancy features, if you like), and as a Soul Matters congregation, we all have access to playlists created along the different themes we are contemplating together (<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/spotify-lists.html>)

I am going to try an experiment and use the Soul Matters playlist for December (Mystery theme) as my background music all month. I am curious to find out how the lyrics and music effect me. Care to join me? Click that link, choose the Mystery playlist, click the green button, and then the "would you like to sign up for free so we're not playing music to a spam-bot?" window will pop up.

How the Stars Get in Your Bones

by Jan Richardson

See how the sorrow in you
slowly makes its own light,
how it conjures its own fire.
See how radiant
even your despair has become
in the grace of that sun.

Did you think this would happen
by holding the weight of the world,
by giving in to the press of sadness
and time?

I tell you, this blazing in you—
it does not come by choosing
the most difficult way,
the most daunting;
it does not come by the sheer force
of your will.

It comes from the helpless place in you
that, despite all, cannot help but
hope,
the part of you that does not know
how **not** to keep turning
toward this world,
to keep turning your face
toward this sky,
to keep turning your heart
toward this un-endurable earth,
knowing your heart will break
but turning it still.

I tell you,
this is how the stars get in your bones.
This is how the brightness
makes a home in you,
as you open to the hope that
burnishes
every fractured thing it finds
and sets it shimmering.

Partner Church News

Ellen Phillips

Dec. 3, 2018 The latest from the partner church pilgrimage:

Plans are shaping up for our time in India. We have been communicating with our friends in Mukhap and Ahmedabad which has been really fun and heart-warming. The folks in Mukhap are as excited to meet us as we are to meet them. We've been keeping in touch regularly through Facebook messenger.

The first part of our journey will begin January 27 when we leave from Logan airport. We will arrive in Mumbai the next day. We plan to take a day to rest in Mumbai and then fly to Guwahati (the nearest city to Mukhap with an airport) on January 30. Our hosts have generously agreed to pick us up at the airport and bring us to Mukhap where we will be staying with associate minister Leiki Suchiang in her home. We can't wait to meet her and her family. We will be in Mukhap for five days. The first two days will be spent getting to know our partners and thinking about how we can strengthen our partnership. On February 2 we will join in their 125th anniversary celebration. We have heard there will be several church services and community activities. On February 3 Unitarians from all over North East India will come to Mukhap for their annual meeting. We are told these proceedings will be held in both English and the local language, Khasi, so we look forward to learning what we can from them. Also, on this day, we will meet with church leadership and discuss the future of our partnership and the tuition program. We will work out plans and agreements and share our hopes for the future. After the annual meeting we will make our way out of Mukhap and hope to visit some more places in the state of Meghalaya. We would like to see the spectacular waterfalls in Cherrapunji if we can fit it in.

The second part of our journey will be spent in Ahmedabad with Claudia and Phil Kern's friends Mahesh Upadhyaya and Meena Patel from the state of Gujarat. Mahesh is a life-long social activist and more recently has become a Unitarian and received a Master's Degree in Theology from Meadville Lombard

Theological Union in Chicago. Meena has worked in labor organizing and women's rights her entire career. We will have some incredible opportunities to see first hand the work they are involved in. We will visit a village that is dealing with issues related to the caste system and witness the work of a group working there to develop rights for the Dalit women and children who are considered to be of an untouchable caste. We will meet Hindu and Muslim women who are working toward peace between their religions. It will be an immersive experience that will certainly give us a better understanding of the lives and struggles of the people we meet. We also look forward to visiting the home of Gandhi and taking in as much as we can of Ahmedabad since we are blessed to have friends who are locals and willing to show us around.

We are ever grateful for the support of the congregation. We are getting close to reaching our fundraising goals thanks to your generous gifts. We look forward to sharing our experiences with you when we return and we welcome your questions, observations and stories of your own travel. We encourage you to share your ideas about the partnership and any hopes that you have for the future. This is a journey for a few of us but the partnership is for all of us. We seek to create lifelong friendships that stretch across the globe and live in our hearts forever.



UUCUV Library News

Olive MacGregor, Library Committee Chair

The following four books have been added to the collection:

248.3 Braestrup, Kate

Beginner's grace: bringing prayer to life. (In the UU section of the library, donated by Margo Nutt)

B Braestrup, Kate

Here if you need me. (Donated by Margo Nutt.) This one looked so good that I took it right home to read. I promise it will be returned by the time you read this. I had never heard of Kate Braestrup, an author and chaplain with the Maine Warden Service. She is quite amazing, and if you look her up on your computer, you will see what I mean.

J Fic England, Dorothy

Sam the fuzzy caterpillar: a story about transgender acceptance. (A rainbow book in the children's section.)

J 303.6 **The land of many colors**, written by the Klamath County YMCA Family Preschool. (donated by Griffin Ruest)

We hope to meet more often this winter to check over donations, process books, enhance labels, discard some items, and organize our supplies. My thanks to Margo for her book reviews and Polly's cataloging information. We appreciate Reverend Jan's help with the closet.

Members: Polly Gould, Margo Nutt, Olive MacGregor

Book Review

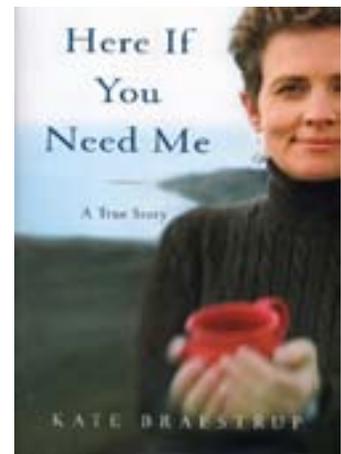
Margo Nutt

Full disclosure, I donated these books to our Library because they are two of my favorites. Turns out they are favorites of Rev. Jan too! ~~ Margo

Here If You Need Me

By Kate Braestrup

Here If You Need Me is the story Kate Braestrup's remarkable journey from grief to faith to happiness - as she holds her family together in the wake of her husband's death, pursues his dream of becoming a UU minister, and ultimately finds her calling as a chaplain to the Maine Warden Service and their search-and-rescue workers. It is dramatic, funny, deeply moving, and simply unforgettable--an uplifting account of finding God through helping others, and of the small miracles that happen every day when a heart is grateful and love is restored.



Beginner's Grace

By Kate Braestrup

In spite of many traditions and teachings and books about prayer, millions of Americans have become ambivalent about it. They are unsure how, when, where, and even why they might pray, afraid they'll do it wrong, or worried that they won't be heard. And who, as UUs, do we actually pray to?

Even if you don't pray or don't consider yourself religious, there's room in this book for you. Braestrup explains how and why the practice of prayer can open a space in our busy lives for mindfulness, gratitude, contentment, and a wider compassion toward others. Plenty of food for thought here.

Excerpts from Rev. Jan's Services

How Are We People of Vision?

You have indeed, made many dreams come true. You have imagined this sanctuary into being, you have envisioned this strong and vibrant community. Your common visions have been living here for many years, joining together and animating the air we breathe. And becoming who we are. In order to create something, we must first imagine it.

We continue to grow our vision. We continue to plant new seeds in the hearty soil of dreams that have been imagined before ours. We continue to shift the culture towards one of our own imagining.

We envision a diverse community of all ages that is robust and full of energy, love and care-- so much that this song of ours carries and this love flows all throughout the Upper Valley and beyond, creating a world of equality, inclusion and respect.

But do we include in our vision our willingness to be uncomfortable? Because vision is a force for change. And change is uncomfortable. Can we let go of our tightly-gripped opinions to genuinely listen to others? Can we hear the voices of people of color, young people, trans people, immigrants, elders, uneducated people, trees, rivers, people with different political, religious and socio-economic perspectives?

Can we keep showing up on the side of love? Swimming **against** the current of our culture to be radically loving and unequivocally welcoming? Because that is how we create a tipping point, how we truly become the community we envision.

What Do the Children See?

Dr Jacqui James: "Religious Education must be seen as one of the central tasks of the congregation. Until congregations recognize that the entire church is responsible for the education of its members, we will continue to offer religious education that falls short of our vision."

Welcome means: eagerly sought out because we are excited for new perspectives - we are excited to learn

more deeply -we are excited to be richer and more whole - we are excited to be a real microcosm of this beautiful world and to work together for deeper understanding.

Welcome means: we have been waiting for you our whole lives: thank you, thank you for coming today.

The Gift of Forgiveness

Rev. Nadia Boltz Weber says that if someone causes us harm we are connected to that mistreatment like a chain.

Maybe holding onto the harm done to us doesn't combat evil, maybe it feeds it.

If we're not careful, she says, we can absorb the worst of our enemy and on some level start to become them.

Forgiveness is wielding bolt cutters and snapping the chain that links us. It says I refuse to be connected to the mistreatment.

Forgiveness, she says, is about being a freedom fighter.

Further Up, Further In

I think being in nature is sanctuary for all of us earthlings. Even people who grow up in cities surrounded by concrete and traffic. We are hardwired for connection to this planet that sustains us. That is part of us.

We are tied to each other like an umbilical cord from mother earth to her offspring. We need these sanctuaries-- where we can feel attuned to the world around us.

We also know that the sanctuaries in our lives do more than simply protect us. They also send us. They don't just help us heal from our journeys; they also strengthen us for the new journeys ahead.

We think we are separate. We think our actions do not affect others. It is that belief that we are apart from

(Continued on page 12)

Excerpts from Jan's Services (cont'd)

the world we live in, that causes us so many problems.

.....

I could feel the sacred refueling of my spirit beginning to happen. Rabbi Abraham Heschel says that to be spiritual is to be constantly amazed. He says our goal should be to live life in radical amazement.

I have to admit that even as I began to fall into amazement, I'd resist complete surrender. I had a thought, or a vague feeling, that there was too much wrong in the world right now for me to let go. It was selfish. A privilege others did not have. I thought that somehow I had to choose joy OR grief, happiness OR sorrow, sanctuary OR despair.

But the warm sun illuminating the fiery glow of the trees; the fluidity of the water; the lazy floating leaves drifting down--they took me to amazement. And I realized that we humans, we are big enough in our beings, to hold more than one truth simultaneously.

In fact, we must. We must go into the wild places, or sit in own own backyards or at our windows and be amazed. And be filled with love for this world.

I was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me

There is a story being told in this country about us being separate and apart from each other. The story says some are better and some are worse. The story says the ones that are worse can be treated dreadfully.

The story says hatred is justified. But that is not OUR story. We know absolutely that LOVE is stronger than hate. Love is the mortar that cements us all together.

Beloved Community

For Dr. King, The Beloved Community was not a lofty utopian goal but a realistic, achievable global vision, in which all people can share in the wealth of the earth. In the Beloved Community--poverty, hunger and homelessness; racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will not be tolerated because human decency will not allow it. Love and trust

will triumph over fear and hatred. Peace with justice will prevail over war.

How are you a living sanctuary? How can you---unfinished, holy, disappointed, and weary be a sanctuary? A place of solace and renewal.

How can you not?

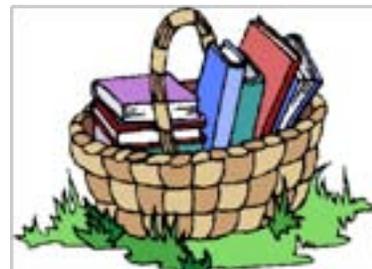
Begin with the love you are created from. Be intentional about seeing who is near you and open your bruised and tender heart wide and let them in. Let yourself rest there too. Join in formation with those around you, sit with the hurt and stay. Create sanctuary.

Memory

Memento mori (Remember you too will die) has me asking: what if this were my only day? How would I live it? And I find, when I remember, that I live with more freedom, more joy, more courage to take risks, to look foolish, have fun, step out of my comfort zone, reach out to others. Notice the sky around me, the smell of the leaves, the light pouring through the windows. When I remember.

Harvest of Memories

As we tend our stories, we cultivate a community of gratitude; we labor together to ripen and mature as the seasons call us forth. To add color for the long winter, I want stories that have inspiration, and stories of vision, and honest stories of mistakes made, so that we can learn and grow and be the people our faith calls us to be.



Sleeping In The Forest

by Mary Oliver

I thought the earth remembered me, she took me back so tenderly,
arranging her dark skirts, her pockets full of lichens and seeds.

I slept as never before, a stone on the riverbed,
nothing between me and the white fire of the stars but my thoughts,
and they floated light as moths among the branches of the perfect trees.

All night I heard the small kingdoms breathing around me, the insects,
and the birds who do their work in the darkness.

All night I rose and fell, as if in water, grappling with a luminous doom.
By morning I had vanished at least a dozen times into something better.

Reading by Katie Pratt

When I look into your eyes, I see your spirit.
When I notice your feet,
I see the journey you're taking,
the compass you follow.

Would you put down your logical way of thinking
for just a moment to see the hidden spirit glowing in you,
the spirit I see living through the truthful, inspirational things you do,
the spirit that keeps me walking after you?

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. 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 Sparrow or email Lori Fortini at 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_1YThhrc5Q3wcaENTxnA/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

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 our Music Director, Linda Hoover, if you would like to sing with the choir. music@uucuv.org

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.



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) or Jo Shute (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

“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



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 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

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
Julianna McGonigle, RE Teacher
Hannah Jeffery, RE Teacher
Jenny Albee, RE Teacher
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
9 AM Wednesdays
at office@uucuv.org

**SPRING CALL DEADLINE
WILL BE IN MID-FEBRUARY**

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: 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: 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.

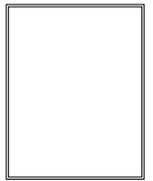
CARES AND CONCERNS: With cares and concerns, please contact the Caring Circle Coordinator of the month (listed in our weekly email news) and/or the Rev. Jan Hutslar or Sparrow Alden (contact information above).

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



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UUCUV Phone: (802) 649-8828

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

E-mail: office@uucuv.org

UUCUV Newsletter: *The Call*
