

Windows

Newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

Building Bridges with Capital Region Unitarian Universalists

Join us on Sunday, April 26, at 10:30 am at the Saratoga Hilton for a celebration of our community! The Capital Region's four Unitarian Universalist congregations – Albany, Schenectady, Glens Falls, and Saratoga Springs – will come together in a spirit of Beloved Community for our first joint celebration.

We recognize that the Beloved Community, up close and personal, must always be intergenerational, focused both on pursuing holiness and goodness in our personal and congregational lives. Hence, the service will feature music, stories, art, and words from members of all four congregations, spanning all ages, as well as some words from Rev. Tom Chulak, the Saint Lawrence District executive and Rev. Tom Owen-Towle, this year's District Assembly

keynote speaker.

This is an exciting event for us, as it's the first time all four congregations are coming together to worship and to join our hearts, minds, and voices as one clarion voice for liberal religion in our community. As Rev. Owen-Towle says, "our mission as UUs is to build bridges personally, societally, and globally."

For maps, childcare details, and other important information, please see the Joint Celebration information flyer included in this newsletter. (Additional copies can be found in a pocket on the Programs bulletin board in Channing Hall.) If you have further questions that the flyer does not answer, please contact Leah Purcell at the FUUSA office (463-7135 or dre@albanyuu.org.)

Edited for the Web: Personal information and contacts removed, as well as children's last names. Web viewers needing more information are invited to contact the church ofice at administrator@fuusalbany.org.

Vol. '08-'09, Issue 8
April 2009

Minister

Rev. Sam Trumbore

President

Linda Way

Church Administrator

Amy Lent

Director of Religious Education

Leah Purcell

Religious Education

Director Emerita

Ann D'Attilio

Music Director

Matt Edwards

Membership Coordinator

Lynne Lekakis

Administrative Assistant/Sexton

David Stone

Custodian

Olga Oja

Sam's Outlook

CRUUNY:

Capital Region Unitarian Universalists of New York

Many Unitarian Universalists participate in only one congregation and have little experience of attending a different congregation of our larger Association of Unitarian Universalist congregations. The longer they participate in our movement though, the greater the opportunity they will encounter Unitarian Universalism beyond that congregation.

There are over a thousand Unitarian Universalist congregations all over the United States and around 50 in Canada. Each one has its own character and unique identity, yet attending any one of their Sunday morning services will feel very, very familiar. Another way people encounter our

larger movement is by attending the UUA General Assembly at the end of June. This five-day gathering that travels around the country of 3,000-7,000 UU's can be a powerful awakening to the wider diversity and commonality that is our Association.

We have a scaled down experience of GA here each year in the St. Lawrence District called District Assembly, which our congregation will be hosting in Albany. I encourage as many as can come April 24th, Friday evening, and Saturday, April 25th, to attend and meet representatives of our thirty-four sister congregations in upstate New York.

For the last three years, the ministers and the presidents of the four congregations in the Capital Region (Glens Falls, **Sam's Outlook, continued on pg. 3**

Publication deadlines
Apr. Update: Apr. 6
May. Windows: Apr. 20

From the President

How Safe Are We? The pervasive 21st century climate of "it's a dangerous world" has changed all of our lives – and it is changing FUUSA as well. Perhaps all of these changes are necessary and rational responses to what some see as an increasingly irrational and threatening world, perhaps not. Nevertheless, for many of us that internal balance between "stranger danger" and the model of the Good Samaritan seems to be tipping toward the culture of caution and fear.

Last month the Board of Trustees spent a considerable amount of time discussing the new Safe Congregation Policy. By the time you read this Sam will have given a sermon, "How Safe is Safe?" and we will have had a congregational conversation on the topic. My column is due before these events, so I cannot reflect on what I am certain will be thought provoking questions, concerns and comments. My thoughts are my own and include uncertainty, ambivalence, and perhaps, as has been suggested to me, the naiveté of a different era.

Let me illustrate with what I always considered a rather unexceptional personal experience. It was the late 1960s and my husband and I were living in an apartment in a working class neighborhood in Bethlehem, Pa. Coming home late one winter afternoon we saw a child, shivering and crying and kneeling over his bicycle ineptly trying to refit the bike's broken chain. We asked the boy if he was ok. We learned that he was "almost eight" and in trying to find a friend's house he had gotten lost. My husband picked up the bike and said he would fix it while I tried to contact his mother. "Jerome" knew his phone number but not his address. You guessed it – when we called no one was home. Perhaps I should have called the police right then; today I probably would. But when Jerome said his mom would

likely be home "soon" we simply let him stay with us and periodically kept calling until we reached her about an hour and a half later. She told us where they lived and we drove him (and the bike) home. While she was friendly and thanked us, she didn't seem particularly upset or relieved.

Did we do the right thing? At the time it felt as if we had simply helped a child and kept him safe until we could deliver him home. But today the idea of a child going – or even being asked – into the home of strangers at dusk is terribly frightening. And yet...and yet...would I do the same today if I saw no alternative except to walk away? My heart says yes...my head does too...I think. The "thorniest" issue of the Safe Congregation Policy seems to be background checks for the 60-70 teachers and mentors involved in our RE program. The teacher application in our new policy asks for full disclosure of convictions for criminal and sexual offenses – and, in addition, requests authorization for background checks to verify applicants' responses. Many see this policy as absolutely necessary and wholly reasonable, believing that offenders will most certainly lie on an application. Others question the value of background checks as a predictor of abuse and caution against a sense of false security they may provide. Today, all of us live with our own degree of fear – as well as the toll that fear exacts from us. There are, of course, other issues, viewpoints, and valid concerns - including whether ultimately the Safe Congregation Policy as it stands has a net positive or a net negative impact on our trust in each other and hence our sense of beloved community.

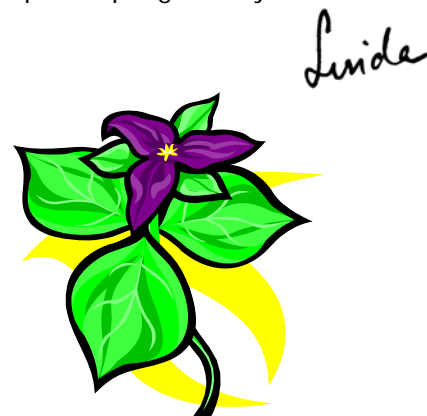
It is my hope and my belief that we can successfully navigate these issues - and that we can do so with fair process and with honesty, integ-

riety, and respect for differing viewpoints. We are committed to keeping our congregation a safe and welcoming place for all; and I believe that we will again demonstrate, both to ourselves and to each other, that "we don't have to think alike to love alike."

Where Everybody Knows Your Name...

No, FUUSA is not adopting the tag line from *Cheers*, the Boston pub of television fame, but we can work toward a time when every household in the capital district will, at the very least, have heard of Unitarian Universalism. That goal, in fact, has been a driving force behind the work of CRUUNY (Capital Region Unitarian Universalists of New York) the four area congregations of Albany, Schenectady, Saratoga and Glens Falls. Collectively our four congregations now have approximately 1000 members; recent and careful demographic studies point to the potential of many times that number who would likely be attracted to us if they only knew who we are.

To raise awareness and generate excitement about our denomination, CRUUNY, with help from the UUA, is making plans for an area wide marketing campaign in the fall of 2009. Early fund raising for this campaign will begin soon. In addition you won't want to miss the exciting four congregation celebration "Building Bridges" on April 26th in Saratoga. See the enclosed flyer and plan now for this very special spring Sunday



A Community Passover Seder

Led by Rev. David Weissbard

**Saturday, April 4, 4:00 PM
Channing Hall**

Adults = \$15.00

Children (6-12) = \$7.00

Family price max. = \$50.00

Sign up Sundays or call the
church office (463-7135)

Everyone welcome !

Share your home with a UU or two, for a night, or two

The St. Lawrence District Assembly will be convening at FUUSA on April 24 & 25. Many UUs will be coming from out of town for this event. Besides being provided with hotel information, we have decided to offer Home Hospitality at a less expensive rate as a fundraiser for the church.

Most of the visitors will only be here for the night of the 24th, but some may opt to stay on for the four-congregation celebration service on Sunday morning April 26 in Saratoga Springs. If you can offer a space for a guest and light (or heavy) breakfast Saturday morning, please complete the form available on Programs bulletin board in Channing Hall or contact Eileen Hoffman.

Attention all gardeners!

Spring is near! That means the Annual Plant Sale is not far away. As you are cleaning out your gardens this spring, take those extra perennial plants and small bushes--the plants that don't like your soil, the ones that have gotten too big, the ones you no longer like, any that just need to be separated and given more space--and pot them up for the FUUSA Plant Sale. The plant sale will be Saturday, May 30, from 9AM to 2PM. Once you have plants potted, or if you need pots, call Barb Manning.

Sam's Outlook, cont. from pg. 1

Saratoga Springs, Albany, Schenectady) have been meeting for mutual support. This has led to sharing of ideas, attendance at each other's events, joint workshops, and other activities to build Unitarian Universalism in the Capital Region. We've come to the common understanding that joint efforts to raise awareness of Unitarian Universalism benefit us all. No one congregation can do it alone. When we cooperate on joint projects, our ability to be effective is magnified.

One of the areas we quickly identified for joint activity that would benefit all of us was using marketing techniques to raise awareness of Unitarian Universalism. All of our congregations need a constant stream of new visitors just to maintain our current size because we normally lose 4-8% of our membership each year. Our congregation typically gets an average to 2 visitors a week, sometimes more, sometimes less. Of those visitors, on average, 16-20% will eventually become members. Because of our commitment to welcoming new people and with Lynne's diligence attending to newcomers, we do better than 20%. Sustaining and perhaps growing a congregation's ability spread our liberal religious message means attracting people who share our values to our doors.

Marketing is a science that the UUA has been studying and figuring out how to do effectively. Effective campaigns have been run in Kansas City, Houston, San Francisco, Tampa, and Southern California that have boosted the health and vitality of congregations in those areas and spread our message of Unitarian Universalism.

Beginning this fall, our four congregations here in Capital Region would like to attempt a mini-campaign here. The UUA has agreed to partner with us to supply the expertise about how to choose the most cost effective ways to reach the largest number of potential UU's in our area. We have budgeted \$50,000 for this campaign shared among our four congregations. You'll be hearing more about this in May.

I'm strongly supportive of this campaign and will be contributing \$1,000 of my own money to make it a success. There are so many people in this area who are very receptive to our approach to religion but have just never heard of us. I'll feel my money will be well spent if several people have their inherent worth and dignity affirmed by finding our congregations. I hope you will join me in supporting this effort.

Rev. Sam

Annual Fellowship Dinner

6:00 p.m., Friday, April 3, 2009

at Franklin Terrace (126 Campbell Avenue, Troy—formerly Mario's)

Choice of Entrée: Sliced Roast Beef, Breast of Capon, Crabmeat Stuffed Sole, Roulade of Eggplant Parmesan. Dinner will be followed by skit and dancing to the music of Alan Thomson and Group.

Cost \$32.50 per person or a lesser amount if so required by circumstances, and a \$5 reduction to those families requiring childcare services. We welcome additional voluntary contributions to assist those who would otherwise be unable to attend.

It's not too late to reserve your place at the table! Call the FUUSA office (518 463 7135).

Religious Exploration

Getting From Fetus to Prius

How blessed our youth are to be a part of a congregation where the voices of youth are honored. I was so impressed by the Senior High worship service last month entitled "From Fetus to Prius". As someone commented to me afterwards, it felt like a real service--one that was both moving and thought provoking. Those youth you saw on stage are our most committed and strongly self-identified Unitarian Universalists. Doesn't it make you feel like we've done a great job as a religious community to help raise these youth? What steps did we--and they--take along the way? And, hey, where are the rest of them?

I have found that there are three stages in a child's connection with UU-ism in their years of Sunday school. Young children usually enjoy coming to Sunday school because it's fun and they get to see a group of friends. And it's easier for parents to compel young children to come with them to FUUSA on Sunday mornings. But as children age, they develop interests in competing activities or they get busy during the week and want to sleep in on Sunday mornings. They may see that their friends from school don't have to go to Sunday school or the message they get is that Sunday school is not cool. Still, dedicated parents make Sunday school attendance a priority and expectation as a family. By the time the children get to middle school, resistance to Sunday school can be at its highest. This is often the make or break point in the formation of a child's religious identity. If a middle schooler has nurturing connections with the adults in the program, has a friend or two at Sunday school, and feels that Sunday school helps them act upon their values, then the high school group can be the pot of gold the end of the rainbow. If not, Sunday school can become a meaningless obligation to them. By the time youth get into high school, parents usually let their children decide whether or not to attend. And so

enrollment in Sunday school drops from middle school to high school.

Three youth graduated from our program this year. Last year there were eight. Next year I expect 5. High school youth lead busy lives. They have to make coming to FUUSA a priority. Our high school group, supported by five advisors, do a lot--some social activities, some social justice work, some in activities to foster faith development. The structure is there! We need to continually build enthusiasm and commitment to Sunday school attendance as children grow up. **The most effective way to build a strong high school group is to build a strong middle school group.**

An understanding of the typical characteristics of a 9- to 12 -year-old can help us to understand their behaviors and feelings around Sunday school. Hold in your heart the image of a "tween" who:

- ◆Engages actively with peers and social relationships
- ◆Achieves in several realms as a way to buffer stress
- ◆Negotiates messages about sexuality from peers, communities and family
- ◆Expresses criticism of self and others
- ◆Takes on other's perspective and understands that sharing perspectives doesn't necessarily mean agreement
- ◆Demonstrates altruism and compassion
- ◆Tries to reconcile the inner self with the outer self
- ◆Respects social order and sometimes challenges it
- ◆Demonstrates interest in ethics of care and justice
- ◆Seeks belonging and membership
- ◆Expresses interest in a religion that embodies her values

The idea of working with these middle school youth sounds wonderfully challenging, rewarding and daunting all at the same time. I know that the 7th and 8th grade OWL teachers and the volunteers teaching our 5th and 6th graders are extremely

dedicated. They continually assess the needs of the youth and adapt the program and curriculum. But there is only so much that can happen in an hour or so a week on Sunday mornings.

Rev. Sam and I are considering piloting a middle school youth group next year to meet once a month outside Sunday mornings. Our goals will be to facilitate group building, to do some social justice work and to facilitate religious identity formation and faith development. We'll be looking for parent support on this and there will be opportunities for individuals from the congregation to share their passions and experiences. Sound good to you? Let us know. In joy and service,

Deak



Bringing It Home

Your teenager is your child. So often we see teenagers as demanding, immature and self-centered. When they were babies we expected these characteristics and we treasured our children. When our children grow to be teens, how can we love them and parent them not as their peers and yet not as their bosses either? In Spiritual Parenting Hugh and Gayle Prather remind us that adolescents have needs. While it is true that you and your child are not equal in terms or age or ego maturity, spiritually you and your adolescent are not only equal, you are one. "You must make all decisions with your child not by vote or by her ego choice, but with her heart held tightly to yours."

Social Responsibilities Council

The next meeting of the Social Responsibilities Council will be held on Sunday, April 5 at 11:40 in Classroom B-7. We invite you to attend!

In March, the Criminal Justice and Prison Reform Committee of the SRC, as a member of the Capital District Chapter of the Coalition for Fair Criminal Justice Policies held its second forum on Prison Health Care, this time with a focus on mental health. A panel of experts from the Office of Mental Health and the Department of Corrections provided background on existing programs and responded to questions and concerns raised by participants. These forums have provided a productive exchange of ideas and information for prison families and for those who oversee healthcare in our prison system, and have reminded us all once again of the interconnected web of which we are all a part. A summary of recommendations from the forum will be submitted to each Department.

Work also continues in the areas of Inner-City/Community Outreach, Economic Justice, Universal Healthcare, and Environmental Justice – which is the focus of the month for April. Mark your calendars for the April 18 “Support Your Local Greens” Earth Day Fair at FUUSA.

Giving Away the Plate

March 29 will be our next “Give Away the Plate” Sunday. Donations that are not specifically designated to your pledge will be given to the Inner City Youth and Family Coalition for their work in reducing youth violence in Albany. This grass roots organization is working effectively through the political structures and through the media to highlight the needs of families and youth in the city. In addition, three members of the group have responded each time that violence has

erupted in Albany – providing help during and after the event and working with the people involved to prevent further violence. Donations to the Coalition are accepted through an account at the Trinity Institution. *Please make any checks payable to the Trinity Institution, and indicate YVIRC (Youth Violence Intervention Restorative Conferencing) on the memo line.* Your generosity when the offering is received will make a big difference in the lives of our Albany neighbors.

Green Sanctuary event

On Saturday, April 18 from 10 to 4 pm there will be an Earth Day Fair in Emerson along with a café in Channing with food provided by the Honest Weight Food Coop. Admission is free and the lunch is moderately priced. Beside the 14 exhibitors, an excellent movie “Who Killed the Electric Car” will be shown twice, a “grease” bus will be on display along with free tree saplings, free shopping bags first come first serve and more. We are looking for volunteers to help out during the day so call or email Don Odell if you can spare an hour and get a free CFL bulb. So come, enjoy and learn what is happening in our area on environmental issues.

Reminder -We are still recycling ink cartridges and cell phones. The boxes are now located in the coat room on the shelf. Bring your old CFL bulbs to the SRC table and we will dispose of them properly. Now that spring is coming sign up for a compost exchange at the SRC table.

Habitat House

Work has begun again on the FUUSA Habitat project. Sign up in Channing Hall on Sunday.

Regional Events

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend!

♦Mar. 29. Congressional Town Hall Meeting on HR676. Westminster Presbyterian Church, 262 State Street in Albany. Congressman John Conyers, author of HR676 – also known as the Medicare for All Bill, will be part of this important event. For more information, call 434-7371 or go to www.singlepayernewyork.org.

♦Apr. 14. ARISE Annual Banquet. 6:00 PM at Albany Crowne Plaza Hotel. Please see Dick Dana for details.

♦Apr. 18. Earth Day Fair here at FUUSA. The theme is “Support Your Local Greens.” Gain some important environmental tips from local vendors, pick up a sapling for planting, enjoy demos and videos and stop in for lunch at our ‘café’. For details, stop by the SRC Table during coffee hour.

♦Apr. 27. Save the date. Grannies for Peace public event at FUUSA with speaker Joan Wile from Grannies Peace Brigade in NYC (author of *Grandmothers against the War: How We Got Off Our Fannies and Stood Up for Peace*). *Co-sponsored by SRC.*

♦Watch for Afghanistan Awareness Evening being planned at FUUSA by Women Against War and Co-sponsored by SRC. To be held in March or April.

♦Apr. 29. “Home Across Lands.” 7:00 PM at Page Hall, 135 Western Ave, Albany. This important film tells of the struggles, triumphs and renewed sense of hope for a refugee family and the Americans who helped them. Sponsored by the US Committee for Refugees & Immigrants and the SUNY Albany School of Social Welfare. For additional details call 518 459-1790.

Are you crew?

Marshall McLuhan said: "There are no passengers on Spaceship Earth. Everybody's crew." The CROP in CROP Hunger Walk stands for "Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty." Will you join our community in raising funds to alleviate hunger at home and around the world? Come together with fellow FUUSAs and hundreds of your Capital Region neighbors in the CROP Hunger Walk on Sunday, May 3. See Dawn Dana at coffee hours starting on March 29 to sign up to walk or to pledge your support.

Circle Dinner Revival!!!

We are bringing back circle dinners to FUUSA. For those of you who are unfamiliar with circle dinners, they are small gatherings of FUUSA members and friends to give participants a chance to enjoy a shared meal and socialize. We will start with one circle dinner this year on May 30 so please hold the date. The catch phrase for the dinners is "6 to 9 at 6:09". In other words, we will place 6 to 9 folks together for a meal at 6:09. We'll need lots of hosts and want lots of participants. You simply submit a name(s) and we'll match you with a host for a meal. Sign ups start in May.

"Job well done"

This letter from Arlen Westbrook was received recently, and we thought we 'd share it with you:

Even though I have been living in Santa Fe, NM for about 8 years, I am still a member of FUUSA for a number of reasons--one is the Oriel and another is that it is a superb UU congregation.

I read in Windows that the Social Events Committee (SEC) is taking a sabbatical leave and hope you will pass on my thoughts to the members. (Incidentally, there is no such committee or activities in the UU church here). After Perry died and I joined the SEC and attended for several years, I was much impressed by the warmth and enthusiasm of all the members, the wanting to work and be involved in programs that brought the society further together and was also fun. The potlucks at the D'Attilios' were most yummy, they were the epitome of hospitality and something I looked forward to every month. FUUSA and the committee met a real need in my life at a difficult period and I hope I was also able to contribute something.

I understand that the SEC may feel its work is done and some activities may be self-perpetuating without it, but heard the news with some sadness. Just thought I would pass on these comments to you and anyone else interested.

St. Lawrence District Annual Assembly at FUUSA

Friday evening, April 24
Saturday, April 25

Registration forms available on Programs bulletin board in Channing Hall or online at <http://www.sld.uua.org/>.

Would you like to attend half of District Assembly for free?

You can earn lunch and registration for either the morning or afternoon sessions of District Assembly (Saturday, April 25) by volunteering the other half of the day in the children's program. I'm setting up morning and afternoon activities for three groups of children.

The youngest group will use our Nursery and toddler rooms for play, age-appropriate activities and quiet time.

The pre-K through third grade group will have games, crafts and activities for part of the day. If the weather is nice, the group will go to the playground in Washington Park for part of the day.

The fourth — eighth grade group will have games, crafts and activities for part of the day and a field trip to one of the local museums.

Contact Leah Purcell if you are interested in volunteering in the children's programming at dre@albanyuu.org or call the office at 463-7135. And get half of DA for free!

Mindfulness Meditation Retreat—April 10-11, 2009

This retreat, will be led by Rev. Trumbore, on Friday 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., and Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.. It gives the participants an opportunity to learn Buddhist insight meditation techniques and refresh and deepen their meditation practice. All are welcome whatever your level of experience. There is a potluck vegetarian lunch on Saturday and all are encouraged to bring something to share. Please register with the office (463-7135) if you'd like to participate. (A voluntary donation can be offered at the end.)

Rev. Trumbore has practiced Buddhist insight meditation for over 20 years and is Past President of the Unitarian Universalist Buddhist Fellowship. He has found this meditation technique to be one of the best for Unitarian Universalists because it is light on ritual, ceremony and cultural baggage. It helps people train their minds to strengthen concentration and widen moment-to-moment awareness. Regular practice of this technique quiets and sharpens the mind and opens the heart.

Refugee Resettlement Project update

For those of you who were not here on Sunday, March 15 we will continue to take pledges for financial help to resettle the Iraqi family. The pledge forms will be located at the SRC table by the brass bowl. Our goal is between \$4000 and \$5000. Thanks to everyone we have raised \$3168 so we don't have far to go to reach our goal.

How would you answer these questions that matter to FUUSA?

As part of FUUSA's strategic planning process, the Dream Catchers recently hosted three opportunities to focus on important questions about who we are as a congregation and where we want to go. You weren't able to make it? Read the questions that we discussed, see a couple of the comments from participants (in italics), then share your own ideas by sending them to dreamcatchers@albanyuu.org!

At our **Community and Connections World Café** on Saturday, February 21, we asked:

How should we care for one another?

What is our hunger for deeper connection with each other?

I long for an extended family of church elders who can give my kids the local grandparents that they don't have.

Let's do a Saturday nite world café that is part serious (a question or two), part social!

How do you see us being in community with our neighborhood?

At our **Spirituality and Theological Diversity World Café** on Sunday, March 1, we asked:

What does spirituality mean to you in the context of our community?

What could FUUSA do to help or challenge you to deepen your spiritual or personal growth and development?

Best services are those that challenge spirituality – walk away a different person because of the exposure to a new idea or perspective.

Giving Questions instead of Answers.

How can FUUSA participate in the larger cultural discussion of theological acceptance and diversity?

In our **Social Justice Conversations** on Saturday, March 14, we interviewed each other to discover our own sense of calling as well as our collective energy for making a difference in our world.

What is your passion for making a difference?

Participants expressed the greatest commitment to issues involving inner city children and youth; refugees; and our urban neighborhood.

Opportunities for youth to overcome the roots of poverty.

Resettling the Iraqi family.

Be better neighbors to our neighbors.

The Dream Catchers look forward to your e-mailed contributions.

Something VERY different on Sunday, April 26!!!

There will be no activity at FUUSA this Sunday!

The Capital Region's four Unitarian Universalist congregations – Albany, Schenectady, Glens Falls, and Saratoga Springs – will come together in a spirit of Beloved Community for our first joint worship service.

The service will be at the **Saratoga Hilton** and will begin at **10:30 a.m.** It is a multi-generational service and celebration of our community!

Childcare for ages Newborn to Pre-K will be provided at UU Congregation of Saratoga Springs, located at 624 N. Broadway, which is within walking distance of the Hilton.

Those interested in **carpooling to Saratoga Springs** should meet at the University at Albany parking lot that we use on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. on the 26th.

The children have a place in the choir on April 26

Yes, some sing low and some sing higher. The children are invited to join our choir and the choirs of the other three congregations for our worship service in Saratoga Springs on Sunday morning, April 26.

It will be a true multi-generational event not to be missed! Contact Leah Purcell if your child is interested in participating.



Cheese and Wine Tasting report

The Wine Mavens would like to thank everyone who attended the cheese and wine tasting event on February 28th. By all reports, the evening was an enjoyable success and FUUSA retained \$716 after expenses were paid. We thank Cheese Maven Eric Paul who so generously shared his knowledge of cheese and his time spent sleuthing out some great ones. We would especially like to thank our volunteer helpers whose efforts were essential to the quality of the evening. They were: Peg Sherman, Deb Vogel, Don Odell, John Cooley and Jack Atwater. It's almost time now to begin research for the 2010 event. Your suggestions are welcome. Just contact one of the Wine Mavens: Al DeSalvo, John Sherman, Rick Whitebread, Bob Blank and Peter Meixner.

Spirituality Book Club

The Spirituality Book Club meets at noon on Sundays to discuss books on spiritual subjects. Upcoming book: Apr. 19: Art of Power by Thich Nhat Hahn

If you have questions contact Philomena Moriarty Trumbore

Interfaith Impact of NYS Legislative Education & Advocacy Day

For the first time in forty years, the NYS Senate is controlled by a Democratic majority, and issues the UUs have supported for decades finally have a chance of getting passed. But legislators and their staffs need to hear from you.

Will New York Legislators finally approve same sex marriage, comprehensive sexuality education for teens (the Healthy Teens Act), or a Reproductive Health Act? Will the highly dysfunctional and prejudicial Rockefeller Drug Laws finally be abolished? Will students in our state finally be protected from harassment due to gender variant identity and expression? And what about other long simmering issues, such as universal health care, the Gender Non-Discrimination Act, farm worker rights?

On Monday, May 11, 2009, Interfaith Impact of NYS will hold its annual Legislative Education and Advocacy from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm in Room 711A of the Legislative Office Building, located at the corner of Swan and State Streets in the Empire State Plaza, Albany. This is your opportunity to make your voice heard and get your values on the table as laws are being made.

Your \$25 registration fee includes a continental breakfast and networking lunch, and packet of advocacy materials. You'll get an introduction to the issues from 10:00 to 11:00 am and then join a team led by an experience advocate to talk with key legislators and staff.

Registration form is available on the Programs bulletin board in Channing Hall, or you can register on-line at www.interfaithimpactnys.org. If you have any questions, contact Robb Smith: e-mail robb@interfaithimpactnys.org.

Membership Musings

In my last published musing (I muse quite frequently as it happens) I opined on the idea of "counting." I talked about how the amount of visitors has averaged two per week since we opened Emerson, and I said that next I would report on how that compared to the previous few years.

Sam, the technological wizard that he is, whipped up some data from our regular membership database. The data was from 2001-2009. And, yet again, we debunk another myth. "If you build it they will come," as experienced by other UU congregations, for us is more like, "if you build it they will come on every other day but Sunday." It seems that we, ever wanting to be different than the average UU bunch, have attracted exactly the same number of visitors on Sundays for the last eight years.

So, what does that mean for us right now? It means that if we continue on as we have been, we will be greeting two visitors a week on average. It means that if we continue all we have put in place internally to assure that folks are welcomed, we will continue with growth at the same level that we have been enjoying. We have been experiencing what could be described as slow, measured growth; which is a fine kind of growth. It's an organic kind, a natural kind. Trees grow like that. The roots get strong, it branches out, and if it's fed with sun and rain, it continues to grow. New people are

able to acclimate, we're able to acclimate to the new people, and all is right with the world.

If, however, we want to respond to the call from the UUA to grow faster than our regular, organic speed, then we may have to take some different tacks: extra fertilizer, more sun, more water. The public relations committee is looking at ways to expand their efforts to attract new people. Their efforts expended on the website have certainly been worth it. More than half of our current visitors have been to our website before they actually come in to visit. This "prequalification" is great because it means that different from 10 years ago, people know a little about our outlook and the things we value before coming to try us out.

Since our building is in use so much (just take a look at the garbage pails if you don't believe the calendar) we have also been discussing ways that we can remind renters that they are visiting not only a lovely, well-appointed location, but a nurturing religious community. We take great pride in welcoming people on Sunday morning, and this past year we've tried to extend that to the other days of the week. Building stewards work diligently to meet new folks, show them around, and even sometimes, talk to them about UUism.

Remember we all have a part in growing the membership. Notice that the word has you in it, member. - Lynne Lekakis

Interfaith Impact of NYS (IINYS) works for the common good through progressive religious advocacy. IINYS is associated with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and functions as the legislative ministry for Unitarian Universalism in New York State. Both FUUSA and the St. Lawrence District are members of IINYS.

Annual Fellowship Dinner: optional pricing

This year there are three alternative levels of payment: (A) \$32.50, the dinner's true cost. (B) those persons so required by circumstances may pay a lesser amount of their choosing (C) additional contributions to assist persons who would otherwise be financially unable to attend.

"GA"

Unitarian Universalist Association's General Assembly – June 24-28. The annual General Assembly is in Salt Lake City, Wednesday, June 24 -- Sunday, June 28. Registration and housing forms are available online at uua.org. It is easy to complete the entire registration process online.

General Assemblies make overall policy for carrying out the purposes of the Association and direct and control its affairs. Voting at each regular and special General Assembly shall be by accredited delegates from certified member congregations, certified associate member organizations, and trustees. And, there are many workshops, presentations and activities. It is a great experience and, in addition, the election of the next president of the UUA will occur at this GA.

If you are interested in being a delegate, please contact Linda Way, or Don Odell.

Prison Action Network

Thank you to everyone who donated to Prison Action Network via the March 1 Give Away the Plate. Your donations added up to \$694, which will go a long way toward gas for the volunteers who drive families to prisons, and to making up the difference for incarcerated Building Bridges subscribers who can't afford the full cost of a year's subscription. For you anonymous contributors, whom I can't thank personally, please know that your support means a lot to me and our members. Thank you very much for your generosity and the validation it gives to my work. Judith Brink, Director, Prison Action Network

Albany city wide clean up

The City of Albany is holding a city wide clean up on Saturday morning, April 18 from 9 to noon. The Washington Square Neighborhood Association (WSNA – FUUSA's neighborhood association) will participate. Please represent FUUSA at this effort. One meeting place is Washington Square, the park right in front of FUUSA. Come and join other FUUSAns in this effort with the neighborhood, and then go to FUUSA's Earth Day Fair for lunch and other events. Questions? Please contact Don Odell, FUUSA's liaison with the WSNA.

Earth Day Fair

Saturday, April 18, from 10AM-4PM

Emerson Community Hall and Channing Hall

Free Admission

Moderately priced catered lunch by
Honest Weight Food Co-op available

"Support Your Local Greens"

Five Rivers, Cornell Cooperative Ext., Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy, Community Gardens, Renewable Power Systems, Save the Pine Bush, Fox Creek Farms, Birch Bark & More, Environmental Advocates, Friends of Thatcher Park, Honest Weight Food Co-op, Center for Health, Environment & Justice

Spring Rummage Sale

The annual Spring household sale will be May 8 and 9, Mother's Day weekend, just eight weeks away. So mark your calendars and clean your closets. Plan to sign up and work before, during, and after the sale because many, many folks are needed. If you are available during the day on Friday or Saturday we particularly need your help at the sale. Any household goods, decorations, small furniture and linens sell well. Donate your books to your local library sale. Sorry we can't sell any kids toys or sporting equipment any more. No computers or used TV's this time either. Consider your town electronics recycling day for these. Questions about donations? Contact Carolyn Stetson

"Elegant Italian Dinner" a great success

The Rite of Passage youth and advisors would like to thank the patrons of their fundraiser dinner. Thanks to your generosity, the group earned \$960 toward their trip to Boston this spring. We also would not have been able to achieve this without the help and hard work of Jack Heinsohn. Jack gave us advice on the menu and shopping and spent a long day and evening working in the kitchen. Thanks, Jack! We'll give your regards to Concord and Boston.

If you need the services of the Caring Network, please call the office during regular hours at 463-7135.

Items of personal joy or caring may be submitted during the service on the yellow cards provided, or directly to Irene Saubery or Ann Lapinski.

East of the Hudson Reunion

Inviting all former "East of the Hudsoners" and any newcomers to a Reunion Potluck Supper, at 5 pm Sunday April 19, at the Bolgatz house, 127 Elmgrove Ave, Troy. Note the change of time and day and please let Jean know whether you can come. This will be a real potluck. Malcolm Bell says we can cope with 11 apple pies if need be!

Walker Book Club

Next meeting/potluck supper on Sunday, April 19, at 5:30 PM at Lisa Walker's, Delmar. Bring your favorite dish to share, and a small contribution to cover beverages. If you need directions, call Lisa. Newcomers are always welcome.

Dates and books currently scheduled: April 19. Arundhati Roy, The God of Small Things. Suggested by John Cooley. Also bring your short story suggestions and pick those to be read for the June meeting.

Channing Circle

The Colonie Timeless Tappers sparkled on the Emerson Community Hall stage for our March program and were greatly enjoyed. We meet again on Monday, April 20th at noon. During a poll taken at the March gathering, we discovered that some members would enjoy playing games and others would just love to talk to each other. So, why should we not try to please both factions. We will have a variety of games available and also encourage you to bring any game that you enjoy and would like to introduce to others. For those who just want to continue their conversations we'll make sure there will be a comfortable space to do this.

All full time retired FUUSA members and friends are cordially invited to become members of Channing Circle. Please bring your sandwich; dessert, coffee and tea will be provided.--Thayer Heath and Ursula Poland

Committee chairs:

Reports to be included in this year's **Annual Report** are due Monday, April 20. Please send .doc or .rtf file to alent@albanyuu.org. Paper copy may be mailed to the office.—Church administrator, Amy Lent.

Sunday Volunteers

Sign up in Channing Hall or call Eileen Hoffman or for Greeters Lynne Lekakis.

	Lead Usher (1)	Ushers (3)	Coffee Hosts (2)	Greeters (2)	Chalice Lighter (1)
Apr. 5		B&L Thomson	M. Baker	P. Kaczmarczyk	
Apr. 12			T. Henderson	F. Eames	C. Wessman-Froese
Apr. 19				SS&C Quinn	C. Tilgner
Apr. 26	<i>We'll all be in Saratoga Springs this Sunday for the four congregation celebration service at the Saratoga Hilton! See you there!</i>				

Events Happening Every Sunday at FUUSA

9:00 AM	Mindfulness Meditation	Sanctuary
10:00 AM	Service	Emerson
10:00 AM	Religious Education	Classrooms
11:00 AM	Coffee Hour	Channing, Emerson

Exceptions:

Apr. 5 Children's Chapel will be in the Sanctuary

Events Happening Every Week in the Month of April

Tuesdays	10:00 AM	Philosophy Group	B-8
	1:00 PM	Bridge	B-8
Wednesdays	10:00 AM	Projects & Quilts	B-8
	7:00 PM	Choir rehearsal	Emerson

Exceptions:

Choir—No rehearsals Wednesdays April 22, 29; No choir on Sundays April 12, 19.

All Other Events Happening in the Month of April

1-Apr	1:30 PM	SGM Patka	B-8	14-Apr	7:00 PM	SGM Sherman	Stott/Joy Library
	5:30 PM	SGM Murray	B-8	15-Apr	1:30 PM	SGM Patka	B-8
2-Apr	5:30 PM	ARISE CEEEJ Meeting	Channing		5:30 PM	SGM Murray	B-8
	7:00 PM	SGM Street/Boreali	Stott/Joy Library	16-Apr	7:00 PM	Board of Trustees	B-8
3-Apr	6:00 PM	Annual Dinner	Franklin Terrace	17-Apr	2:00 PM	Earth Day Fair Setup	Emerson
4-Apr	9:00 AM	Seder Cooking	Kitchen	18-Apr	8:45 AM	Getting to Know UU	B-8
	1:00 PM	Seder (event starts 4:00)	Channing, Kitchen		10:00 AM	Earth Day Fair	Emerson, Channing
5-Apr	10:00 AM	Children's Chapel	Sanctuary		7:00 PM	Dances of Universal Peace	Channing
	10:20 AM	Religious Education	Classrooms		7:00 PM	Rite of Passage Svce.	Rhsl. Emerson
	11:30 AM	Children's Choir Rehearsal	Emerson	19-Apr	11:30 AM	Children's Choir Rehearsal	Emerson
	11:45 AM	SRC Meeting	B-7		12:00 PM	Spirituality Book Club	B-8
	11:45 AM	Census Test/A Coleman	B-3/4		5:30 PM	Walker Book Club	L. Walker's
	1:00 PM	Canvass Sunday	Emerson	20-Apr	9:00 AM	Windows deadline	
	1:00 PM	Rite of Passage Meeting	B-8		9:00 AM	Annual Report deadline	
	5:00 PM	Cancer Support Group	Webb's		10:00 AM	SGM Perkins	B-8
	7:00 PM	Men's Group	B-8		10:30 AM	Preschool Playgroup	23
6-Apr	9:00 AM	Windows Update deadline			12:00 PM	Channing Circle	Channing
	10:00 AM	SGM Perkins	B-8	21-Apr	7:00 PM	SGM Sherman	Stott/Joy Library
	10:30 AM	Preschool Playgroup	23	23-Apr	7:00 PM	Finance Committee	B-8
	3:45 PM	Shelter Meal Prep	Kitchen	24-Apr	7:00 PM	SLUUD DA Gould Lecture (time approx)	
	6:15 PM	Religious Education Council	Channing			Emerson, Channing, Kitchen	
7-Apr	12:00 PM	Staff Meeting	Study	25-Apr	9:00 AM	District Assembly	all FUUSA spaces
	7:00 PM	AdEd: Lenten Bible Study	B-8	26-Apr	1:00 PM	UU Metro joint service	off-site (time tentative)
	7:00 PM	SGM Sherman	Stott/Joy Library	27-Apr	10:30 AM	Preschool Playgroup	23
8-Apr	10:00 AM	Projects & Quilts	B-8		1:00 PM	Windows mailing	Channing
	5:30 PM	ARISE Core Team	B-7		3:30 PM	Shelter Meal Prep	Kitchen
	7:00 PM	Wash. Sq. Nbhd. Assoc.	Channing		6:30 PM	Grannies for Peace	Emerson
9-Apr	7:00 PM	PCC Meeting	Channing		7:30 PM	Monday Men	Stott/Joy Library
10-Apr	1:30 PM	Grannies for Peace	B-7	28-Apr	7:00 PM	SGM Sherman	Stott/Joy Library
	6:00 PM	Meditation Retreat	Channing, B-8				
11-Apr	8:00 AM	Meditation Retreat	Channing, B-8				
13-Apr	10:30 AM	Preschool Playgroup	23				
	1:00 PM	Windows Update mailing	Channing				
	3:30 PM	Shelter Meal Prep	Kitchen				
	5:00 PM	Membership Committee	Study				
	7:00 PM	Committee on Professional Ministry	Study				
	7:30 PM	Monday Men	Stott/Joy Library				

2010 Census jobs info

Sundays, Apr. 5 and May 3, at noon in Room B3/B4. If you have questions please call Alison Coleman, 424-7078.

ARISE Auction & Banquet

FUUSA's ARISE Core Team (FACT)

ARISE is holding it's annual Silent Auction & Banquet at the Albany Crowne Plaza (free parking) Tuesday April 14. The featured speaker is Gladys Carrion, Commissioner of the N.Y. State Office of Children & Family Services, an agency in the thick of the debate around federal stimulus

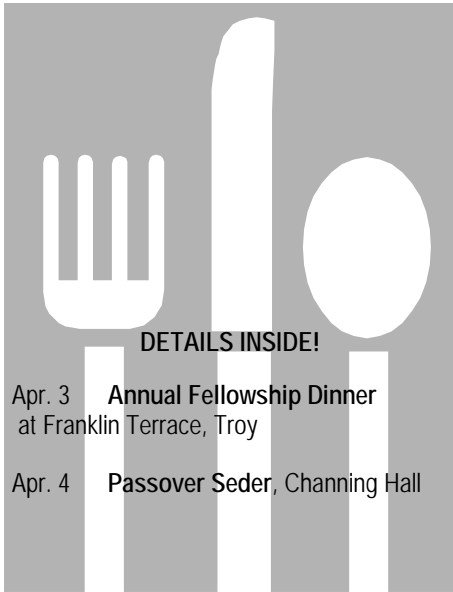
package monies. Come support an organization near and dear to the hearts of many FUUSAns, and participate in what is always an enjoyable evening. Hors d'oeuvres and silent auction are at 6; dinner is at 7. Tickets are \$40 for this annual fundraiser. Donations of goods for the Silent Auction will be gladly accepted. See Dick Dana in coffee hour, or give him a call.

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

405 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12206
518-463-7135
www.albanyuu.org

Non-Profit
Organization
**U.S. Postage
PAID**
Albany, NY
Permit No. 301

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Sunday Services

Mindfulness Meditation, 9:00 a.m., Sanctuary

SERVICE is at 10:00 a.m., Emerson Community Hall except as noted

Religious education classes for children are at 10:00: the Nursery opens at 9:45.

Apr. 5 “A Bridge Over Troubled Water” --The Rev. Sam Trumbore (Emerson) **Children’s Chapel** (Sanctuary)
The economic troubles we’ve faced this fall and winter have us hunkered down, cutting spending, and fearing the worst. The massive failure of our banking system and the deflation of housing values are creating a sinkhole that threatens to pull us all down with them. Who can we turn to when the waters are rising? Let us turn to each other for mutual support through FUUSA.

Apr. 12 “Easter: More than One Way”--The Rev. Sam Trumbore (Emerson) **MULTI-GENERATIONAL SERVICE**
This multi-generational Easter service will celebrate the rebirth of life that comes with spring. Easter is the combination of multiple religious celebrations expressing the exuberance we feel as the flowers return from under the deep piled snow we’ve endured this year. The Truth cannot die and shall always be found again. Please bring an object for our celebration table that symbolizes how you honor or recognize the coming of Spring.

Apr. 19 “The Rite of Passage Service”—(Emerson)
Our Rite of Passage youth participants will share their beliefs in music, words and visual art.

Apr. 26 “Building Bridges: A Capital Region Unitarian Universalist Celebration (in Saratoga Springs) **MULTI-GENERATIONAL SERVICE**
Our four congregations will meet at 10:30 a.m. at the Saratoga Hilton for a celebration of our community! The Capital Region’s four Unitarian Universalist congregations – Albany, Schenectady, Glens Falls, and Saratoga Springs – will come together in a spirit of Beloved Community for our first joint worship service. THERE WILL BE NO ACTIVITY AT FUUSA THIS SUNDAY!!!! See details elsewhere in this issue.

