

## Sundays at FUUSA

Please join us on any Sunday for: Mindfulness Meditation, Religious Education for children and youth, the Service, Coffee Hour, or any combination thereof. Other programs include Forum (social justice topics), Children's Chapel, Green Sanctuary Discussion (environmental topics,) War Healing Circle; social events, and adult education.

**All are welcome!**

# WINDOWS

Newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

April, 2011

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### Sunday Schedule

- 9:00 AM  
Mindfulness Meditation
- 9:45 AM  
Nursery/Toddler rooms open
- 10:00 AM  
Service  
Children's Chapel  
(1st Sunday/mo.)  
Religious Education
- 11:00 AM  
Coffee Hour
- 11:45 AM  
Forum (2nd & 4th Sundays/mo.)  
Green Sanctuary Discussion  
(3rd Sunday/mo.)
- 7:00 PM  
War Healing Circle  
(2nd & 4th Sunday/mo.)

## Services

**Apr. 3 "What Leaves an Impression?" Rev. Sam Trumbore**  
Some may remember the inspiring story told by the Rev. Kaaren Anderson in our congregation during District Assembly that illustrates the theme for this morning's service. The story was about a man in the habit of a simple act of kindness that he practiced for many years. That simple act of kindness touched many hearts ... and left a lasting impression.

**Apr. 10 "God is Okay," High School youth**  
As a non-doctrinal, inclusive denomination, Unitarian Universalism allows people to explore and grow spiritually in a safe place. 'Theists' and 'atheists' have different ideas and beliefs about what constitutes the Human Spirit, and sometimes this creates tension in our community. Some of us are atheist or agnostic, and that is okay. Some of us believe in something we call God, and that is okay.



**Apr. 17 "Social Responsibility Sunday," Rev. Sam Trumbore**  
Jesus wasn't executed because he was a mystic, a healer, a wisdom teacher, or a movement initiator. He got in trouble because he was a social activist! Our congregation takes social responsibility seriously as well. During this service, you'll have the opportunity to hear about some of the things we're doing and let us know which ones are most important to you. Through our activism, we continue Jesus' tradition of being exceptions to the rulers.

**Apr. 24 "A Green Easter," Rev. Sam Trumbore**  
Given the proximity of Easter and Earth Day, we've decided to celebrate them together. With the trees likely to be leafing out this weekend, we'll be celebrating the yearly return of green. And the resurrection story of Jesus has some green in it, too. Be sure to come Saturday to clean up the neighborhood and the FUUSA grounds.

# Calendar

## Events happening every Sunday at FUUSA

9:00 AM	Mindfulness Meditation	Sanctuary	Exceptions:
10:00 AM	Service	Emerson	
10:00 AM	Children's Chapel (1st Sunday/mo.)	Sanctuary	
10:00 AM	Religious Education	Classrooms	
11:00 AM	Coffee Hour	Channing, Emerson	
11:45 AM	Forum (2nd & 4th Sundays/mo)	Emerson	
11:45 AM	Green Sanctuary Discussion (3rd Sun./mo)	B-8	
6:00 PM	War Healing Circle (2nd & 4th Sundays/mo.)	Emerson	

## Events happening every week in the month of April

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

## All other events happening in the month of April

<b>1-Apr Friday</b>	5:00 PM	First Friday	Channing Hall	<b>17-Apr Sunday</b>	11:45 AM	Teacher Support Meeting	Room 26
	6:30 PM	HUUGGs Packing Group	Emerson		1:00 PM	Threshold Meeting	Room B-8
<b>3-Apr Sunday</b>	10:00 AM	Children's Chapel	Sanctuary		2:00 PM	Spirituality Book Club	Offsite
	11:30 AM	Canvass Meeting	Room B-3/B-4	<b>18-Apr Monday</b>	12:00 PM	Channing Circle	Channing, Kitchen
	11:30 AM	Skit Rehearsal	Emerson		6:15 PM	NA Subcommittee	Room 26
	11:45 AM	Social Responsibilities Council	26		6:30 PM	SGM Collins	Room B-5
	12:30 PM	Rite of Passage	Room B-7, Room B-8		7:00 PM	Lifespan: Heart of Christianity""	Room B-8
<b>4-Apr Monday</b>	6:15 PM	Religious Education Council	Emerson Alcove	<b>20-Apr Wednesday</b>	2:00 PM	SGM Patka	Room B-5
	6:30 PM	SGM Collins	Room B-5	<b>21-Apr Thursday</b>	7:00 PM	Board of Trustees	Room B-8
	7:00 PM	Lifespan: Heart of Christianity""	Room B-8	<b>22-Apr Friday</b>	6:00 PM	Parent Potluck	Channing, Kitchen
<b>5-Apr Tuesday</b>	7:00 PM	Canvass Meeting	Room B-3/B-4	<b>23-Apr Saturday</b>	10:00 AM	WSNA - SRC Neighborhood Cleanup	Grounds
	7:00 PM	Christian UUs	Room B-5		6:00 PM	Circle Dinners	Offsite
<b>6-Apr Wednesday</b>	2:00 PM	SGM Patka	Room B-5	<b>24-Apr Sunday</b>	11:45 AM	Peace Team	Room 26
	5:30 PM	Caring Network Meeting	Room B-8		7:00 PM	War Healing Circle	Room B-8
<b>8-Apr Friday</b>	6:00 PM	Annual Dinner/Century House	Offsite	<b>25-Apr Monday</b>	3:00 PM	Shelter Meal Prep	Kitchen
<b>9-Apr Saturday</b>	4:30 PM	Senior High Service Rehearsal	Emerson, Kitchen		7:00 PM	Wellspring Meeting	Room B-8
	7:00 PM	Dances of Universal Peace	Channing Hall		7:30 PM	Monday Men	Room B-7
<b>10-Apr Sunday</b>	11:30 AM	Art & Aesthetics Committee	Stott Lounge/Joy Library	<b>26-Apr Tuesday</b>	6:45 PM	Pastoral Care Associates	Room B-7
	11:30 AM	Cong. Conversation: Safe Cong. Policy	Emerson	<b>27-Apr Wednesday</b>	2:00 PM	SGM Patka	Room B-5
<b>11-Apr Monday</b>	3:00 PM	Shelter Meal Prep	Kitchen	<b>28-Apr Thursday</b>	6:30 PM	Finance Committee (tentative)	Room B-8
	7:00 PM	Lifespan: Heart of Christianity""	Room B-8		7:00 PM	SGM Sherman	Room B-5
	7:30 PM	Monday Men	Room B-7	<b>29-Apr Friday</b>	6:00 PM	SLD District Assembly - Ithaca	Offsite
<b>12-Apr Tuesday</b>	5:30 PM	Lifespan Group	Room B-7	<b>30-Apr Saturday</b>	8:00 AM	SLD District Assembly - Ithaca	Offsite
<b>13-Apr Wednesday</b>	2:00 PM	SGM Patka	Room B-5				
	6:15 PM	Wash. Sq. Nbhd. Association	Channing Hall				
<b>14-Apr Thursday</b>	7:00 PM	SGM Sherman	Room B-5				
<b>15-Apr Friday</b>	7:30 PM	Shakespeare & Love Concert	Emerson				
<b>16-Apr Saturday</b>	6:30 PM	Guilderland Plus Potluck	Offsite				

**Looking Ahead**  
 May 6-7 Rummage Sale  
 May 13 Oriel Coffeehouse  
 May 15 Annual Meeting

## News

### Disaster relief

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the UUA/UUSC Japan Relief Fund on Sunday, March 20 during either the Sunday morning offering or Chris Antal's ordination. Your generosity totaled \$4,716 (both services.) We are continuing to make a difference in the world.

### Don't forget!

#### Annual Fellowship Dinner

6:00 p.m., Friday, April 8 at the Century House

For those who have made reservations but who have not yet paid, please know that we will have to pay for your dinner, whether or not you appear. See you Friday evening, April 8th, at the Century House.—Thanks, George Kleinberger.

#### Meet Albany Police Chief Steven Krokoff April 13, at FUUSA

*What do you know about the neighborhood around FUUSA?*

If you would like to learn more about it there will be

### Flyers in this issue

At the end of this newsletter you will find full page items on:

- ◆ Shakespeare and Love concert flyer
- ◆ "UU Revival" June 5 service flyer
- ◆ Circle Dinner sign up

an opportunity at 7 PM, Wednesday April 13 when Albany Police Chief Steven Krokoff will be speaking to the Washington Square Neighborhood Association (WSNA), of which FUUSA is a member, in Channing Hall. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.

In addition there will be an opportunity to meet with neighbors in a social time beginning at 6:30 PM. FUUSA will be providing refreshments for this important event. We urge interested FUUSAns to attend. Our relationship with the neighborhood and the Albany Police Department is important.--Don Odell, for the ad hoc Committee on Community Connections

### Personnel Committee report

The Personnel Committee is in the process of assessing and potentially reconfiguring some staff positions in light of the Dave Stone's retirement. In preparing to meet new challenges in our congregation, we will be talking with various committees and committee chairs about what needs are out there. If you have any specific ideas that you would like to express, please contact one of the members of the Personnel Committee. —Mark Butt (Chair,) Mary Myers, Bruce Rodgers, Jerry



*A superb auction was held on March 19: 88 people attended and others bid on fixed price items in the weeks before, 110 items were donated by FUUSA members and friends, and \$19,800 was raised! **Thank you** to the extremely hard-working auction committee who made this record-breaking event happen.*

Deighan, Chuck Manning (representing Board of Trustees)

### **An important safety issue for all Children and food on Sunday mornings**

Everyone, please be aware that families expect that their children will get snacks only in their classrooms or after the service at Coffee Hour on Sunday mornings.

So please do not offer children candy or treats or other food or leave food out in the lobby or other places in the building. This is a safety issue because some children have food allergies or sensitivities--and we don't want the wrong things to get into children's mouths. Also, parents usually provide healthy snacks for their children's classrooms, and parents are also responsible for monitoring what their children eat at Coffee Hour, so let's not make their job any harder. Thanks! Leah Purcell

### **UUA General Assembly Charlotte, NC— June 22-26**

Registration and GA housing began on March 1. Registration information is available at <http://www.uua.org/ga/index.shtml>. Please consider being a FUUSA delegate. Contact FUUSA President Chuck Manning or Denominational Affairs liaison Don Odell.

If you have never been to a General Assembly, you have missed a great experience. There will be opportunities to experience wonderful and uplifting worship services; participate in the democratic process in conducting the business of the denomination; hear terrific speakers; connect with social action groups, professional and educational resources, UUA organizations and staff, Beacon Press, and the UUA Bookstore in the General Assembly Exhibit Hall; and network with other congregation leaders, share best practices, and learn from one another. You will return to FUUSA reinvigorated and inspired to put your values to work; and witness for our faith in moving and exciting



*Congressman Paul Tonko, Rev. Sam, and Sandy Steubing at the March 21 "Crash Course" on peak oil in Emerson Community Hall.*

ways as we look forward to and prepare for a special "Justice" General Assembly in Phoenix, AZ in 2012. Questions? Contact your Denominational Affairs liaison Don Odell.

### **Celebrating our Religious Education Program Sunday, June 12**

Please mark your calendars for RE Sunday on June 12. This will be a multigenerational service with special significance. We'll honor our RE volunteers on this day and we'll also honor our graduating senior high youth with a Bridging Ceremony. In particular, we need youth and young adults (as well as our graduating seniors) to participate in the Bridging.

### **Annual reports due April 18**

Committee chairs: If you would like a copy of the report submitted by your group last year, contact Church Administrator Amy Lent.

## Lifespan Learning

### Adult Education

Sign up for classes at the Sign Up Site in Channing Hall or call the office at 463-7135. Courses are held at FUUSA.

### The Heart of Christianity

April 4, 11, 18

Mondays, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

led by Rev. Sam Trumbore

Lent provides an excellent time to explore the Christian part of our Unitarian and Universalist

heritage, deepen our appreciation of it and, for some of us, faith in it. Marcus Borg, in his book, *The Heart of Christianity*, and Rev. Trumbore's February 27 sermon with the same name, both outline two different approaches to Christianity. One of those non-exclusive approaches has much compatibility with our Unitarian Universalist approach to religion. The purpose of this class will be to use Borg's book to better understand the two different approaches and find out if the liberal, contemporary understanding has value for our individual growth and development and our congregation. Please sign up at the Sign Up Site.

## Our Community

6 to 9 at 6:09

### Join us for a Circle Dinner!

Our next circle dinner will be Saturday, **April 23**. Circle dinners are potluck meals for six to nine people held at various houses throughout the Capital District. You can sign up to be either a host or a guest. Dinner host/guest assignments will be made by Apr. 10 and hosts will be given their list of dinner guests. Then each host will contact each of their guests to coordinate food and give directions to their home.

If you sign up to be a host, please put the date on your calendar to remind yourself that you have made this commitment! If you are willing to be either host or guest, sign up for both!

Sign up forms are available in Channing Hall and are due by Apr. 10. You can also sign up by email: contact Martha Musser.

### Parking for the able-bodied (and early)

If you get here a little early on Sunday morning, and if you have the strength of body and/or of character, we ask you please to park in the *farther* parking lot. This will help those who arrive just in the nick of time for the service to find a space and get in the door before the gong—and it will also help newcomers who don't yet know their way around here to have a more pleasant first visit.

The farther University at Albany parking lot is the **Thurlow Terrace Lot** on Western Avenue. It is just about parallel to our location on Washington Ave-

nue (as the crow flies over Richardson Hall) and yes, you will have to walk further to get to FUUSA. But think of it this way: exercise!

Remember, please, if you are coming here for some other event outside of our usual Sunday morning activities, you must park on the street. We do occasionally request (and receive) permission to use the SUNY lots for large events, and when that is the case the information will be included in the event's publicity.

### Spirituality Book Club

The next Spirituality Book Club meeting features the book *The Untethered Soul* by Michael Singer. We are meeting at Eric Randall's on April 17th at 2:00 pm. For more information contact Philomena Trumbore.

Written about the book: *What would it be like to be free from limitations and soar beyond your boundaries? What can you do each day to find this kind of inner peace and freedom? The Untethered Soul offers a simple, profoundly intuitive answer to these questions. Whether this is your first exploration of inner space or you've devoted your life to the inward journey, this book will transform your relationship with yourself and the world around you.*

*"In the book, The Untethered Soul, Michael Singer takes you step-by-step through the process of Gyana, the Yoga of the Intellect, to the Source. Moreover, he does it with elegant simplicity. Read this book carefully and you will get more than a glimpse of eternity."* -Deepak Chopra, Author, Life After

Death: The Burden of Proof

### Walker Book Club

The next meeting of the Walker book club is Sunday, April 10, at FUUSA at 5:30 PM in Channing Hall. Newcomers are always welcome.

Each meeting begins with a potluck supper, followed by a lively discussion of the book of the month chosen by participants. Bring your favorite dish to share, and a small contribution to cover beverages. Participants may choose to either: bring and store their own dishes, drinking vessels and eating utensils; or use dishes etc. at FUUSA and help with the dishwasher.

Dates and books currently scheduled:

- ◆ April 10 – The Imperfectionists by Tom Rachman.
- ◆ May 8—Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neal Hurston.

Contact Linda Hunt at with any questions or for a list of books suggested by participants for future months. Join the Walker E-List and participate in suggesting and choosing books to discuss.

### Guilderland Plus Potluck date change Saturday, April 16, 6:30 PM

Due to the conflict of previously noted date for the Guilderland Plus potluck gathering and a concert at FUUSA, Linda Hunt and Larry Gambino proposed that we change the date to the April 16. Please contact the hosts.

### War Healing Circle

The War Healing Circle is changing its meeting time to 7:00 PM (still on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays).

### Studio Art Group forming

Are you interested in drawing/painting from life/still life? Let us know who you are! Call Arlene Gilbert or Marion Tischler.

### Joys and Caring Corner \_\_\_\_\_

**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 office at [administrator@fuusalbany.org](mailto:administrator@fuusalbany.org).

***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 Ann Lapinski .or Mary Ann Randall.*

## Social Justice

Have you stopped reading the paper and listening to the news? Seems it is just one bad thing after another. The earthquake, the tsunami, the nuclear disaster, more bombings. And it seems like the same thing on the domestic level. Unemployment, housing foreclosures, budget cuts in services when people most need it. How do we handle all of this? We can't do everything, but we can do something. I was pleased that the Board decided to give away the plate March 20 to UUA/UUSC Japan relief fund. (If you missed the service, you can still make a contribution—contact the FUUSA office for details.) Chris Antal asked that the offering at his ordination that afternoon be given also to the Japan relief fund.

Originally the Give Away the Plate was designated by SRC to be given to Lydia's House which is "providing a monitored supportive housing program to assist single formerly incarcerated females as they navigate the transition from prison back into the local community."

The new date for the Give Away the Plate is April 17. To read more about Lydia's House and its founder Tamika Williams, go to [www.Lydia's House, Inc.](http://www.Lydia'sHouse.com)

April 17 will be a Social Justice service. SRC knows that you are interested in social justice and would like to have us adopt a more focused approach. Therefore we will be giving you some choices, some opportunities for service and see where you would like us to put our emphasis. And we also will be asking for your suggestions.

Standing on the Side of Love  
Lois Griffin

### Food Pantry News

After many years, Jane Allen and Lois Thomson have stepped down from the Executive Board of the Focus Food Pantry. The experience has been rewarding, but it is time for "younger blood" to be taking the reins.

Introducing Renee Panetta: As well as an active RE teacher at FUUSA and a well-known FUUSAn to most of us, Renee has been a faithful volunteer at the food pantry, as well as the Focus Churches

breakfast program serving those in need of a hot meal and a warm place during the desperately cold days of winter.

We are lucky to have Renee, and up-and-doing young woman who will represent FUUSA well on the Food Pantry Board. If you still have your mid-March Windows Update, please read the important article Renee has written about the Feinstein Grant, an important financial aid to the food pantry.

It's been great - good luck, Renee!-- Jane Allen and Lois Thomson

### Green Sanctuary

April is a big month for the Green Sanctuary team. We're working on an Earth Day Easter weekend and we need your help.

- 1) An important contribution to our FUUSA neighborhood can be made on Saturday, April 23, when we help pick up trash from 10 AM to 2 PM. Even if you have just an hour to spare, come on down. I'll give you my cell number so you can find us. Contact Sandy if you can help.
- 2) Can you carpool, bicycle, walk, or take public transportation to FUUSA on April 24? Special recognition by Sam if you do. For car pooling and bicycle companions, consult your FUUSA Neighbors map. Not on FUUSA Neighbors yet? Forgot how to access FUUSA Neighbors? No problem – contact Sandy.
- 3) The GSC is also working up ongoing project ideas for the whole congregation. If you have a green idea – contact us!

What would you like to do on Earth Day after the service? People will be dressed down due to bicycling. Let me know if you have any ideas.

Contact Sandy Steubing, co-chair of Green Sanctuary Committee.

### Whose values are they talking about?

There's lots of talk in political campaigns about "family values" – but what are they really talking about? Families at FUUSA know that an important part of our values involves teaching our children to care for others in need and give back to our communities. One excellent way to live out our values is to participate as a family in the CROP Hunger Walk, coming up on May 1. The funds raised sup-

port our local food pantries, as well as hunger relief programs in the developing world. Join with other FUUSA families to Walk with the World. Visit the CROP Walk table at coffee hours starting on April 3, or see Dawn Dana for more information.

## Columns

### Sam's Outlook

#### The urgency of preparing for a future with less stuff

Remember the Chinese curse, may you live in interesting times? We are living in interesting times. During the months of February and March, Sandy Steubing led a "crash course" to educate us about the challenging times ahead of us. Trends in energy, the environment and the economy look like three enormous ships that are on a collision course.

Our economy, powered by fossil fuels, is highly dependent on oil. Oil production has peaked in over 80% of the known fields. Demand for oil continues to surge in Asia. We need to find alternative energy sources – but we don't have the capital to invest. Our national debt has grown exponentially and our savings are at an all time low. The material resources needed for moving away from oil dependence are also limited. The quality of ore mined is in decline, along with other insults to the environment too numerous to mention. Add up the problems we face in energy, the economy and the environment and we're looking at a pretty scary picture of the future.

This is also a unique time in human history. The human species is running up against the limits of our planet's resources. We are effecting the climate with our greenhouse gases. We are consuming close to half of everything that grows. We are exhausting reserves of many minerals. All the stuff we are consuming and the waste we are generating clearly is degrading the planet's ability to support us and wiping out many other species. And the bill is coming due. And the price will be measured in millions, perhaps billions, of lost human lives.

Representative Paul Tonko visited Monday night, invited by Sandy to address these problems. He

**Need to talk?  
FUUSA Pastoral Care  
Associates are here  
to listen!**



Our Pastoral Care Associates have been trained in compassionate listening skills and are available to all members and friends of our congregation. To contact a Pastoral Care Associate, email [listeners@albanyuu.org](mailto:listeners@albanyuu.org), contact Reverend Sam Trumbore, the FUUSA office at 518-463-7135, or one of them personally. They are: Jon Newell, Phil Rich, Sharon Babala, Jan Satin, Jean Bolgatz, Randy Rosette, Mark Yolles and Robin Miller.

talked about solutions he advocates like green jobs and alternative energy that will be part of the solution. But I didn't hear from him an appreciation of just how big the problems we're facing are. And he is one of the more progressive, forward thinking legislators in Washington. Rep. Tonko told us about the regressive attitude in the current Congress. The Tea Party oriented Representatives don't see these problems coming.

The Republicans are about to embark on hearings that dispute global climate change. They want to blame and reject the messenger by trying to turn science into political theater. Unfortunately this will just distract the nation from the real problems that are already here, whether or not they are the result of climate change. Diminishing our appreciation of good scientific work will not help us deal with the rest of the problems tugging at the leash waiting to be released to wreak havoc.

What seems clear to me from what I heard is Washington is not prepared to even begin considering to deal with these problems. Disruptions in the availability of oil, a likely outcome of expected declines in oil production paired with increasing demand, will have far reaching impact, affecting food production and distribution. Worldwide supply lines are likely to be disrupted. Our standard of living is built on cheap fossil fuels. And we haven't even discussed the threat water shortages present.

State and local governments are even less prepared and have even fewer resources with which

to respond. In a crisis situation, our congregation may be a first line of defense for our members and friends and for our neighborhood. Much as communities do emergency preparedness for a natural disaster, a blizzard or for civil defense, so we need to begin preparing to support each other through fuel and food disruptions, encouraging the development of local energy sources like biomass, solar and wind, and local food by supporting local farmers.

The most important way our congregation can help in response to the crises to come is spiritual. If, as is expected, our material standard of living declines, the quality of our lives need not. The satisfaction of community, personal growth and development, and generosity are not dependent on how much stuff we have. Having less may help us discover that a meaningful life isn't measured in material success. The most satisfaction I've found in life has been through growing a bigger heart.

May the impending crises serve to bring us together rather than drive us apart.—Rev. Sam

## Chuck's Chat

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### Should we Tithe?

I just finished reading "Not Your Parents' Offering Plate, A New Vision for Financial Stewardship" by J. Clif Christopher. Christopher offers a number of specific techniques for churches to follow so that they can be more successful in their stewardship efforts. He states that the primary reason people give is because they believe in the mission of the church, they believe by contributing "they can be part of something that *changes lives*." In his view, a measure of a person's commitment to the mission of the church is to tithe (i.e., give 10% of their income to the church). Christopher states that not giving at this level is a signal that the person is not fully committed to the mission of the church. He goes on to state that the business of the church is to "save a person's soul, make disciples for Jesus Christ, and build the kingdom of God."

So how does this apply to us as Unitarian Universalists? Most of us do not use the language of Christopher, but I would argue that we are in the business of "changing lives". Consider this part of our mission statement: "In keeping with our dis-

tinutive, non-creedal religion, we strive to excite the human spirit and inspire its development; to respond to moral and ethical issues in our local, national and world communities; and to sustain a vital and nurturing congregational life."

That sounds to me like we want to change lives and also change the world. We use very different language than Christopher, but I believe our success can be as easily measured and I believe our congregation is succeeding.

Simply put, I would say we are changing the world for the better, here are a few examples:

- ◆ Each Sunday we gather to worship together and confirm our connections in our beloved community. It is a positive experience that serves as a counter weight to what we sometimes encounter during the week.
- ◆ Our caring network and pastoral associates make over 500 contacts per year as they reach out to our members in need.
- ◆ With a registration of 123, our religious education program teaches our values to children and youth every Sunday. Based on my experience with my own children, this works! UU values have a profound influence on how they live their lives.
- ◆ We are working toward becoming carbon neutral by purchasing "green power" and carbon offsets.
- ◆ We cook meals for the homeless and spend nights in homeless shelters.
- ◆ We work tirelessly for peace.
- ◆ We demonstrate under the Standing on the Side of Love banner in support of equal opportunity for all.
- ◆ We celebrate each others' accomplishments and offer support in times of crisis.
- ◆ We honor the memory of our members who have died in memorial services that are the envy of other faith communities. We hold up their lives as examples of how we can live better.

I could go on and on and each of you could make your own list of examples. I invite you to do that as you consider your level of commitment of treasure, time and talent for next year.

Please think about how each of us can support FUUSA's mission and create a better world. Our guidelines are not as simple as those advocated by Christopher. We do not say that everyone must tithe or they will be considered "not saved". But we do have recommended levels of giving. These are described in "Leveraging Our Power for Good". You can find this on the FUUSA web site at <http://www.fuusalbany.org/leverage.pdf>. Our suggested levels top out at between 2.5% to 5%. Although this is less than a tithe, it provides a strong committed level of support. We also acknowledge that everyone's financial circumstances are different. We recognize that commitments of time and talents are as important to maintaining our community as commitments of treasure. In "Leveraging our Power for Good" we define a Visionary as someone who thinks that "FUUSA is of utmost importance to me/us. I/we want to ensure that FUUSA remains a vibrant voice for liberal religion in the capital region." I believe that this level of commitment can be demonstrated by offering time and talent as well as treasure. At the same time, if you are fortunate enough to have discretionary income I challenge you to consider becoming a Visionary in terms of your treasure. Barb and I did and concluded it makes sense to be a Visionary at FUUSA, if we want to make the world a better place.—Chuck

## Religious Exploration \_\_\_\_\_

**"Owning Your Religious Past"- Plus**  
Most of us have come to Unitarian Universalism searching for something missing from our lives, but also rejecting something in our upbringing or adult, pre-UU lives. Whether we're from a religion like Christianity or Judaism, or whether we were "unchurched" or whether we have explored many religions, our previous religious and spiritual lives usually affect how we currently function as UUs. Outright rejection of our previous traditions, practices and beliefs may not be the healthiest way for us to deal with our religious past. It's sort of like a former romantic relationship; if you break up with a lover and still have a lot of anger, hurt, confusion or feelings of loss afterwards, it's not really over. It takes a bit of courage, but you have to work through it. Otherwise, though you might be aware

of it, these feelings can negatively affect your next relationship. And you can be blinded to the positive skills and qualities you developed.

What if you were able to "own" your religious past? What if you had an opportunity to get some help looking at the god you rejected? What if you could look at your spiritual journey up to this point and assess what was good about it, so that you can then check some "baggage", and also carry forward what is true and valuable for you? How freeing would that be? If you are a parent, think of how it might be easier for you to talk to your children about what you believe and to be able to hear some of their ideas – even, and especially, if those ideas might echo ones you once had as a child. Think of how you might be able to set about using traditional celebrations and rituals to create your own practices for a meaningful family life.

I have co-led the course from the Unitarian Universalist Association "Owning Your Religious Past". Its goals are "to help participants explore

- ◆ Who they are religiously
- ◆ What their past religious perspectives and experiences have been and
- ◆ Who they hope to become as UUs."

I've also co-lead workshops to help parents figure out ways to parent intentionally as UUs. And at the present moment, I'm taking Rev. Sam's course on Marcus Borg's book The Heart of Christianity. This book describes what I think might be a valuable exercise in looking at our basic worldviews.

I've heard from parents and other adults at FUUSA that they would like opportunities to explore and deepen their beliefs in a comfortable and engaging environment. People often like to work in groups because this allows them to make connections with others and gain insight they might not have otherwise. So I am excited about working with Brian Carr to design and facilitate a two-part workshop that will tie aspects of UU parenting and looking at worldviews into the course "Owning Your Religious Past."

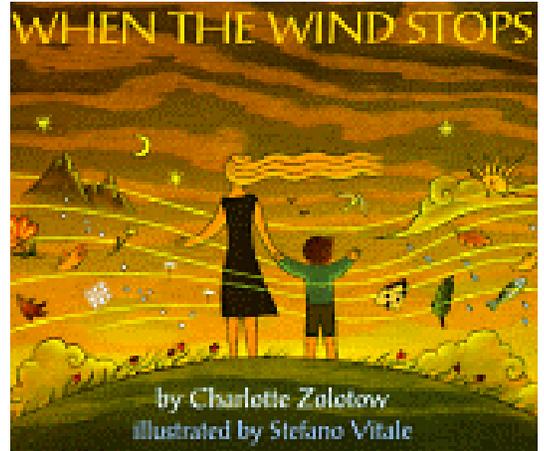
These workshops will be not just for "recent converts" to UUism. Longtime and life-long UUs often have spiritual journeys that include profound

changes. And it's not just for parents. Many of us long to be able to create meaningful celebrations and rituals. I think we'll be able to have rich conversations if participants come from a variety of life situations and varying tenure as Unitarian Universalists. I plan to offer the workshops "Owning Your Religious Past – Plus" from 6:30 to 8:30 on Monday, May 16 and Monday, May 23. Sign up in Channing Hall or send me an email if you're interested.

In faith, Leah

**Bringing It Home**

Sometimes a good book is a great vehicle for discussing "big" questions that children ask. I recommend the picture book Where the Wind Stops by Charlotte Zolotow. As a little boy is going to bed, he peppers his mom with questions about the world, because he doesn't want to let the day end. His mom gently reassures the boy that nothing in the natural world ends. "It begins in another place, or in a different way." As the boy continues questioning, the mom gives a simple scientific response to each question, but also leaves room for more wondering.



**April Sunday Volunteer Opportunities—Sign up in Channing Hall at the Sign Up Site.**

	Lead Usher (1)	Ushers (3)	Coffee Hosts (2)	Greeters (2)	Chalice Lighter (1)
Apr. 3	D. Dana	A. Patti	J. King		N/A
Apr. 10	K. Harris, Sr. High	Sr. High x3		B. Manning	C. Tilgner
Apr. 17	D. Odell	B. Zima		H. Mabee P. Patrick	C. Dorsey
Apr. 24					H. Goldstein

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### Regular meeting days

Check current calendar for time and location

Board of Trustees, 3rd Thursday

Program Coordinating Council, 2nd Thursday

### First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

**Phone:** 518.463.7135

**Address:** 405 Washington Avenue, between Robin Street and Lake Avenue, Albany, New York 12206

**Main entrance** is on Washington Avenue. Rear entrance is on West St. Both have ramp access. The building is fully handicapped accessible.

**Parking:** Parking is available on the street. On Sundays (and for some special events) FUUSA has permission to use the University at Albany's downtown campus parking lots: the Hawley Lot on Robin Street at Washington Avenue and the Thurlow Terrace Lot on Western Avenue.

### Office hours

September-June: Monday-Friday, 9:00-4:00

July-August: Monday–Thursday 9:00-12:00

### Building use

To **reserve a room** for a FUUSA activity, contact Administrative Assistant Dave Stone (463-7135 or [dstone@albanyuu.org](mailto:dstone@albanyuu.org)).

To **rent classroom space** for a personal or non-FUUSA activity, contact Administrative Assistant Dave Stone (463-7135 or [dstone@albanyuu.org](mailto:dstone@albanyuu.org)).

To **rent one of the large halls** or plan for an event that will use both halls and classrooms for a personal or non-FUUSA activity, contact Rental Agent Lynne Lekakis (427-7386 or [kaneandlekakis@gmail.com](mailto:kaneandlekakis@gmail.com)).

**Windows** is the newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany. It is published monthly, except July and August, in the offices of the Society at 405 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12206, and distributed to members and friends of the Society. Church office phone is 518-463-7135.

*Editors:* Amy Lent, Irene Saulsbery

*Photos:* Chris Strebel

*Send all submissions to:*

[Windows@albanyuu.org](mailto:Windows@albanyuu.org) or to the church office.

### Next publication deadlines

April Update: Apr. 4

May Windows: Apr. 18

**SAVE THE DATE**

# Now Is The Time!

## A Unitarian Universalist Revival

**Join us for a celebration of Unitarian Universalism  
in the Capital Region**

**Sunday, June 5, 2011, at 10:30am**

**Round Lake Auditorium  
Northway Exit 11**



### Featuring

**Rev. Scott Alexander**

*Author of **Everyday Spiritual Practice**, **Salted with Fire**, and **The Welcoming Congregation***

### Plus music!

Familiar songs to sing together, selections from the joint choir, our new youth band, and even a few played on the Auditorium's Ferris tracker organ.

### Want to get involved?

We need ushers, greeters, and picnic coordinators. Please contact your congregation's committee representative:

FUUSA—Kathy Harris  
FUSS—Melissa MacKinnon  
UUCGF—Peggy Todd  
UUCSS—Kimberley Debus  
UUCTR—Vee Abbitt



There will be a **picnic** after the service—more details will follow in your Congregation's May newsletter.

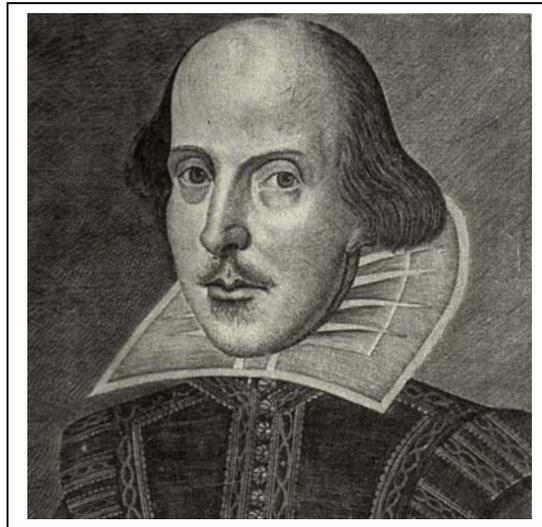
Nursery care will be available. Contact your DRE if you need nursery care.

Parking in Round Lake is limited—please plan to carpool! Again, more details will be available in your congregation's May newsletter.

**Make plans now  
to attend!**

# *Shakespeare and Love*

Music celebrating the Bard and Love, including vocals, sackbut, dulcian, capped reeds, recorders, harp, percussion, and more.....!



*The Helderberg Madrigal Singers*  
*and*  
*The Blecker Consort*

*In a unique musical collaboration celebrating*



*25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

**Friday, April 15, 2011, 7:30 P.M.**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society**

**405 Washington Ave., Albany NY**

Tickets: General admission \$15; students/seniors \$10

Info: [murphymj@cobleskill.edu](mailto:murphymj@cobleskill.edu)