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.

WINDOWS

Newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

April 2012

In this issue:

- 1 Services
- 2 Calendar
- 3 News
- 5 Lifespan Learning
- 7 Our Community
- **10** Social Justice
- 11 Columns
- 16 Contact Us
- 17 Flyers

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.)

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 and environmental topics), Children's Chapel, social events, and adult education.

All are welcome!

Services

Apr. 29

Apr. 1 "A Faith That Rejects Redemptive Violence," The Rev. Sam Trumbore

Most, if not all, Unitarian Universalists reject the belief that Jesus needed to die on the cross in order to atone for humanity's sin beginning with Adam and Eve disobeying God and eating an apple. As long as religion has been around, it has been used to justify going to war and killing other human beings. While the taking of life may, in extreme circumstances, be required to save lives, there is nothing redemptive about it.

"A Faith of Love and Community," The Rev. Sam Trumbore Apr. 8 Our Easter family service will celebrate the love and community of our religious community through which the Easter message of life triumphing over death is lived. That message can have life giving meaning for us whether or not we are Christians. Music: Choir

Apr. 15 "Giving Up Unhappiness," The Rev. Sam Trumbore "Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," powerful words crafted by Thomas Jefferson, define the underpinnings of a free society. Yet the pursuit of happiness can be an arduous struggle that is never attained. Could a more effective path to happiness be giving up its opposite, unhappiness?

Apr. 22 "Listen", Senior High Youth Harmony--the search for truth and meaning through music.



"This I Believe" As Unitarian Universalists, we honor the voices of members of our congregation in their individ-

ual search for truth and meaning. This service provides an opportunity to hear the personal reflections on life from FUUSAns Lee Newberg, Sharon Babala and Elissa Kane. Music: Choir

Calendar

Events happening every Sunday at FUUSA

9:00 AM	Mindfulness Meditation	Sanctuary
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
6:00 PM	War Healing Circle (2nd & 4th Sund	ays/mo.) Emerson
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Exceptions:

Exceptions:

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
2	7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal	Emerson
Thursdays	5:00 PM	Metta Meditation	26

All other events happening in the month of April_

1-Apr	10:00 AM	Children's Chapel
•	11:00 AM	Special Congregational Meeting Emerson Hall
	11:30 AM	Social Responsibilities Council B-7
	11:45 AM	Skit Rehearsal
	12:00 PM	Stewardship Gathering Channing Hall, Kitchen
	12:00 PM	Stewardship Gathering B-3/B-4, B-5
	12:30 PM	Rite of Passage B-8
2-Apr	6:15 PM	Religious Education Council . Channing , Kitchen
3-Apr	7:00 PM	Lifespan: Lenten Bible Study B-8
	7:00 PM	UU Christians B-5
4-Apr	5:30 PM	Evensong Channing Hall
	6:00 PM	Wellspring Meeting B-8
5-Apr	6:30 PM	Finance Committee Meeting B-8
	7:00 PM	SGM John Sherman B-5
6-Apr	5:30 PM	Stewardship Gathering Emerson
		Community Hall, 26, B-5, B-6
	5:45 PM	Parent Group Channing, Kitchen, 23, 24/25
8-Apr	11:45 AM	ForumB-8
	11:45 AM	Skit Rehearsal26
	5:30 PM	Walker Book Club Channing Hall, Kitchen
9-Apr	10:00 AM	SGM Patrick/Odell B-5
	3:30 PM	Shelter Meal Prep Kitchen
	7:00 PM	Monday Men B-8
	7:00 PM	New UU-Social Justice Philosophy B-7
	7:00 PM	SGM English
	r 6:00 PM	Lifespan Learning Committee
ТТ-Арі	r 2:00 PM	SGM PatkaB-5
	5:00 PM	Religious Services Committee
10 4	6:30 PM	SGM Peggy Sherman
12-Api	r 5:30 PM	Endowment Trust Stott Lounge/Joy Library
	7:00 PM	Mark Morrison-Reed Lecture and Book Signing
	7:00 PM	Channing Hall, Sanctuary
10 0.00		Program Coordinating Council (PCC)
	r 6:00 PM	Annual Fellowship DinnerOffsite
14-Api	r 8:00 AM 3:30 PM	Thandeka Meeting Stott Lounge/Joy Library
1E A.p.		Art Show Set up Channing Hall
тэ-Ар	r 11:30 AM 11:45 AM	Peace TeamB-7 Green Sanctuary MeetingB-8
16 10	r 12:00 PM	Channing Circle Channing Hall, Kitchen
το-Αρι	7:00 PM	New UU - Membership B-7
10 Am	r 5:30 PM	Evensong
το-Αμ	0.30 FIVI	Evensoriy Grianning Hair

5:30 PM	Safe Congregation Response Team
6:00 PM	Wellspring Meeting
19-Apr 7:00 PM	Board of Trustees B-8
7:00 PM	SGM John Sherman B-5
20-Apr 6:00 PM	High School Youth Rehearsal Emerson, Kitchen
9:00 PM	Senior High Overnight Whole building
21-Apr 12:00 AM	Senior High OvernightWhole building
8:30 AM	Barefoot Books: Justice GA fundraiser
	Emerson Community Hall, Kitchen
9:00 AM	FUUSA Women for a Better World
	Channing Hall, Kitchen
5:00 PM	RE Helper Orientation21
6:00 PM	Potluck "Why Justice GA?" Channing , Kitchen
22-Apr 10:00 AM	High School Youth Service Emerson Hall
23-Apr 10:00 AM	SGM Patrick/Odell B-5
6:30 PM	New UU: Membership B-7
7:00 PM	Monday Men B-8
7:00 PM	SGM English B-5
25-Apr 2:00 PM	SGM Patka B-5
5:30 PM	EvensongChanning Hall
6:30 PM	SGM Peggy Sherman B-5
27-Apr 6:30 PM	B. Miller auction item Channing Hall, Kitchen
29-Apr 11:45 AM	Forum Lee Kindlon

Forum

Apr. 29 Lee Kindlon, District Attorney candidate

Looking Ahead May 11-12 Rummage Sale, household goods May 20 Annual Meeting June 2 Plant Sale

News

"Hopeful for a better Albany"

I've just returned from one of the most exciting evenings I have ever had at FUUSA. By exciting, I mean stimulated, informed, inspired and hopeful for a better Albany. Emerson was nearly filled with a bi-racial audience. On the dais were bi-racial speakers, Dr. Alice Green, Director of Center for Law and Justice, DA David Soares, Albany Police Chief David Krokoff, and Albany County Sheriff, Craig Apple. The topic "The Disproportionate Impact of the Criminal Justice System on People of Color in the Capital Region." Does it sound as dull as dust? Well, it was anything but.

The program started with a dramatization by Too Deep Entertainment, a group of young people who poignantly articulated by song and drama the impact of the incarceration of people of color. And who would not be moved to tears by reminder of the mistreatment of slaves, in the moving voice of Willie White, which transitioned into the New Jim Crow and the enslavement of prisoners, then into the Jim Crow laws of segregation, and now into the disproportionate imprisonment of people of color. If you haven't read the book by Michelle Alexander, <u>The New Jim Crow</u>, you should.

After the presentation and statements, members of the audience were able to articulate their view of the problems. These included the Albany school's truancy rate and the drop out rate, and the long standing problem of racial profiling with the difficulty of getting enough minority law enforcers. But all in all, with problems articulated and acknowledged, the general feeling was that this was a very good beginning for further meetings to try and solve some of the problems.

My dull words here do not capture the positive spirit in the room with a real dialog and with a will to take

EAT, TALK, LAUGH, DANCE

Annual Fellowship Dinner Friday, April 13 at Franklin Terrace, Troy

Reservations are due at the FUUSA office by April 8, so send in that RSVP card today!

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

- Proposed bylaw change, Articles XI and VI
- Multi-generational potluck "Why Justice GA?"

action to solve some of the problems. My hope is that here at FUUSA that many of us will find a way we can be helpful. Certainly donating our space in Emerson for such a meeting is of help. Thanks to all of you who contribute to make this happen. – Lois Griffin

Proposed bylaw changes

—3—

The Board of Trustees is proposing changes to FUUSA's bylaws, Article XI, Financial Policy and Article VI, Councils to be voted on at the Annual Meeting on May 20. The text of the proposed changes is at the end of this newsletter. Watch the order of service for the date of a congregational conversation to discuss the changes.

A <u>Special Meeting of the Congregation</u> will be held on **Sunday, April 1** immediately following the service. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and vote on a previously proposed resolution that will amend the by-laws to establish a five-year term for Endowment trustees, with one member elected each year and also define the procedure to implement the by-law change during the elections at the regular Annual Meeting in May. This earlier resolution was printed in the March newsletter.

Making welcome

We are all wanderers, passing through, guests of the universe,

and our job as a religious clan is to share earth's bounty

and to set a warm, inviting place for one another.

-Carolyn and Tom Owen-Towle

Our volunteer greeters, ushers and coffee hosts create a welcoming environment every Sunday morning. By giving a little extra time, they make a big difference in our community, and they are still able to participate in the service. Won't you join in this ministry of hospitality? Instructions are available, and experienced helpers are on hand to help novices.

Sign up on the bulletin board in Channing Hall or

online through our website or the links in FUUSA e-mails. Pick a date and a role. Or e-mail Stephanie Hayes (administrator@albanyuu.org) and we'll put you on a list to be notified when there are vacancies for an upcoming Sunday. Call Stephanie at the office (463-7135) if you have questions about signing up or need instructions sent to you.

Thank you to all who contribute to our Sunday hospitality ministry.

Stewardship Gatherings

It's not too late to sign up for a Stewardship Gathering. Call (446-0382) or email (rhdana@nycap.rr. com) Dick Dana if you are interested in attending an evening of lively conversation about our hopes and dreams for FUUSA's future.—Dick Dana, Stewardship Committee Chair

St. Lawrence District Assembly April 26-27, in Rochester

"DA" (District Assembly) is a great way to meet UUs outside of FUUSA and participate in interesting workshops at a reasonable price and not too far from home. We encourage as many FUUSAns as possible, including youth, to attend and participate. FUUSA can send five delegates: If you are interested in being a delegate, please contract FUUSA President Chuck Manning (439-4226, chuckmanning@hotmail.com) or Denominational Affairs liaison Don Odell (482-4574, drodell31@yahoo.com). FUUSA will pay registration fees for delegates. We will try to arrange carpooling for FUUSAns.

The D.A. brochure is available in the FUUSA lobby and online at http://sld.uua.org/conggrowth/ districtassembly.html. Registration rates increase on April 14, and lodign rates are guaranteed only until April 1.

Call to Arms!

A call to arms--legs, bodies, and brains, etc., has been issued by the CCC (Commnity Connections Committee)! The message is a simple one: "We need you! "

The CCC is a fairly new committee charged with carrying out our Strategic Plan objective of fostering a congregational culture of service to the community and of increasing ways to be part of it. A first major effort will be to hold a Community Health Fair on Saturday, May 5.

—4—

The CCC is a small committee and needs help in both arranging for and holding the Community Health Fair. Help will be needed in distributing flyers, setting up and taking down tables and chairs, staffing various activities, contacting participants, getting donations, etc. Long term involvement in the committee would be most welcome.

If you would be willing to get involved in any way, and we hope you will, or if you have questions, please contact Mark P. Yolles at mpy116@gmail. com or 434-4963.

Call for Nominations

The Nominating Committee has issued a call for nominations for the following positions to be elected at the Annual Meeting on May 20, 2012:

Position, Term

President, 1 year Vice President, 1 year Secretary, 1 year Treasurer, 1 year Assistant Treasurer, 1 year Board of Trustees (2), 3 years Board of Trustees (1), 1 year Religious Education Council Chair, 1 year Religious Education Council (4), 3 years Social Responsibilities Council (2), 3 years Nominating Committee (2), 3 years Endowment Trust (1)*, 5 years* *Pending related Bylaw changes announced in March Windows.

Requirements for Elected Positions

Any person holding an elected position must be an active member of FUUSA for at least 30 days prior to being elected and must not have a pledge in arrears (2010-11 pledge year or previous). Candidates for the Endowment Trust must be members for at least 3 years.

Nomination Procedure

Society members may contact anyone on the committee to let them know of their interest in the above positions or to suggest someone else you feel would be qualified. Call Dawn Dana, Committee Chair (446-0382), if you have questions. Committee members are: Meredith Andrews, Debbie Brown, Dawn Dana, Dave Munro, and Linda Way.

Nominations of candidates for any elected position may be made by presenting the Nominating Committee with a nominating petition signed by 25 active members of the Society. Petition forms can be found in the Nominating Committee mailbox in

Lifespan Learning

"What Moves Us? Unitarian Universalist Theology"

Ten Tuesdays, 7-8:30 pm, beginning April 10 led by Rev. Sam Trumbore and Leah Purcell These workshops designed by Rev. Dr. Thandeka provide a framework for new and longtime Unitarian Universalists to engage in theological reflection, not as an intellectual exercise, but as a process of meaning-making that equips one for living in the world as a Unitarian Universalist person of faith. The program explores the life experiences of both historic and contemporary Unitarian Universalist theologians, highlighting that which caused in them a change of heart, a new direction, new hope, and a deeper understanding of their own liberal faith. Participants can engage with, and bring their personal experiences to bear on, the very questions explored by each theologian in turn. The program offers a pathway for developing not only one's own personal theology but also one's deep understanding of the threads of our Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist theological heritage. Note: These sessions can stand alone so don't be inhibited from signing up if you can't attend every one of them.

A Spiritual Deepening Small Group

Six sessions: 6:00-6:50 pm Tuesdays, April 17, 24, May 8, 22, June 12, 26 led by Rev. Sam Trumbore

Progress in spiritual deepening requires both personal commitment and mutual support. The Spiritual Deepening Small Group's goal is to provide a context for both making personal commitments and getting the support of the group to follow through on those commitments.

The design of those personal commitments are individual but will be focused in areas that correspond to our chalice lighting. The participants will the church office, or in the "File Cabinet" on the FUUSA website. The deadline for such petitions is April 6. Completed petitions may be placed in the Nominating Committee's mailbox in the office.

be asked to commit to a practice that will excite their spirit and inspire their growth and development, a practice that with both feed and challenge them. They will also be asked to commit to actively responding to the troubles in our world and sustaining our religious community. Through making an individual personal commitment to actively live the mission of our congregation with the group's support, the anticipated result will be an experience of spiritual deepening and transformation over a period of three months.

If you'd like to use this method to experience spiritual deepening and transformation, sign up by calling the office (463-7135), contact Rev. Trumbore minister@albanyuu.org, or at the Sign Up Site in Channing Hall. *Note: Attendance at most if not all of these sessions will be required for the group to be effective.*

The New UU

A religious education course for adults

The remaining two sessions of The New UU will be held on Monday evenings in April from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM. The curriculum is intended for both new and long time Unitarian Universalists. Each session is independent. Sign up sheets will be posted at the Sign Up Site in Channing Hall soon.

Apr. 9: Social Justice Philosophy and Practice

The workshop provides an introduction to social justice work in a Unitarian Universalist context. Because the focus of Unitarian Universalists is on this life, and because we embrace such principles as justice and compassion, we feel compelled to live out our values by working for social justice. Participants will have a chance to hear about some of the experiences from social justice activists from your congregation, who will reflect on how that work relates to their religious path. The workshop explores the value of both action and reflection on that action as integral parts of social justice work as a religious and spiritual practice.

Apr. 23: Membership

This workshop supplements the efforts of FUUSA's Membership Ministry, and presents information about the rights and responsibilities of membership in a Unitarian Universalist congregation generally, and FUUSA specifically. It will address the questions from the participants about our denomination and our congregation, and what it means to be a participating member.

For more info on the New UU sessions contact Don Odell at 482-4574 or drodell31 @yahoo.com. If you wish to explore this online curriculum offered by the Lifespan Development of the Unitarian Universalist Association, please visit the website at http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/newuu/index. shtml.

An orientation for parent/caretaker helpers... and others interested in Sunday School

This semester about 40 FUUSA volunteers are serving as members of teaching teams in Sunday school. That's about 10% of our membership! More children and youth are enrolled in the program than last year and attendance is way up so far this spring. Occasionally a class needs a parent or caretaker to help out in Sunday school. So to keep things running as smoothly as possible, I am offering an orientation to Sunday school for adults from **5:00-6:00 pm on Saturday, April 21** in Room 21.

This will be an opportunity for parents and others to learn the routines of the Sunday school classes, and learn some classroom management skills as well as Sunday morning procedures. I'll also present overview of the curricula, including Tapestry of Faith, and the goals of the RE program. So if you're interested in teaching RE someday, this is for you too. Want to learn more about the RE program? This is your opportunity. Do you have a question for me that you think others might be interested in too? Let me know and I'll do my best to answer you.

It wouldn't be an RE event without snacks and childcare! Let me know if you'd like to come or sign up in Channing Hall.--Leah Purcell (dre@albanyuu. org – 463-7135.)

"Transforming Women's Spirits--Life as a Magical Mystery Tour" May 18-19, 5 PM Fri. – 5:30PM Sat. at First UU Society of Syracuse

Each of us searches for "Ah-ha!" moments to expand our consciousness of the world around us and our place in it. Come for ritual, workshops, shared experiences, and friendship as we feed our minds, bodies and spirits. Melinda Morris Perrin is this year's keynote speaker. Sponsored by St. Lawrence District branch of UU Continental Women & Religion. Check out: www.slduuwr.org for conference flyer and registration information. \$75 Registration due by May 10.

Joy Library notes

New titles: Look for them in the New Books section.

Free Will by Sam Harris. Free Press. 2012. [123.5 HAR] "A belief in free will touches nearly everything that human beings value. It is difficult to think about law, politics, religion, public policy, intimate relationships, morality—as well as feelings of remorse or personal achievement—without first imagining that every person is the true source of his or her thoughts and actions. And yet the facts tell us that free will is an illusion.

In this enlightening book, Sam Harris argues that this truth about the human mind does not undermine morality or diminish the importance of social and political freedom, but it can and should change the way we think about some of the most important questions in life." The Free Press. http://www.samharris.org/ free-will

"Many say that believing that there is no free will is impossible—or, if possible, will cause nihilism and despair. In this feisty and personal essay, Harris offers himself as an example of a heart made less selfabsorbed, and more morally sensitive and creative, because this particular wicked witch is dead." Owen Flanagan, Professor of Philosophy, Duke University, and author of The Really Hard Problem: Meaning in the Material World. The Free Press http://www. samharris.org/free-will (

Being alive and having to die : the spiritual odyssey of Forrest Church by Dan Cryer St. Martin's Press. 2011 [289.1092 CRY]

"... Through his pulpit at the prestigious Unitarian

Church of All Souls in New York, Reverend Forrest Church became a champion of liberal religion and a leading opponent of the religious right. An inspired preacher, a thoughtful theologian and an eloquent public intellectual, Church built a congregation committed to social service for people in need, while writing twenty five books, hosting a cable television program, and being featured in People, Esquire, New York Magazine, and on numerous national television and radio appearances.

Being Alive and Having to Die works on two levels, as an examination of liberal religion during the past 30 years of conservative ascendancy, and as a fascinating personal story. Church grew up the son of Senator Frank Church of Idaho, famous for combating the Vietnam War in the 1960s and the CIA in the

Our Community

Help our 'intergen' group attend Justice GA *Barefoot Books* sale, April 21

The group of youth and adults from FUUS Albany and FUS Schenectady attending Justice GA is raising funds by hosting a sale of Barefoot Books. The sale will be on the morning of Saturday, April 21 in Emerson Community Hall. Barefoot Books offers books, CD's and other materials that support UU values. From their website: *Explore. Imagine. Create. Connect. Give Back. That's what Barefoot Books is all about. It's exploring other cultures, our planet, ourselves. It's making time for make-believe and letting imaginations run wild and free. Most of all, it's about using the power of stories to nourish the creative spark in everyone and strengthen connections with family, the global community, and the earth.*

Take advantage of this sale to stock the shelves at your home or to give to the other children in your life. You'll also be helping a group of us to go to Phoenix, where we will join with the people there to work together. We hope that our group will leave General Assembly with a renewed dedication to Unitarian Universalism, energized for justice work and prepared to bring this work home to the Capital District.

We connected!

"Get Connected!" Sunday was a great success. Thanks to all of the people who sat at tables and 1970s. Like many sons of powerful fathers, he rebelled and took a different path in life, which led him to his own prominence. Then, in 1991, at the height of his fame, he fell in love with a married parishioner and nearly lost his pulpit. Eventually, he regained his stature, overcame a long-secret alcoholism, wrote his best books—and found himself diagnosed with terminal cancer. His three year public journey toward death brought into focus the preciousness of life, not only for himself, but for his ministry.

—7—

Based on extraordinary access to Church and over 200 interviews with family, friends, and colleagues, Dan Cryer bears witness to a full, fascinating, at time controversial life. Being Alive and Having to Die is an honest look at an imperfect man and his lasting influence on modern faith"."

shared their passions and interests for each group or committee that they represented. Everyone did a great job of making their table inviting and interesting. In particular, I want to thank Paula Moskowitz who helped organize everything and all the FUUSAns who stayed after the Healthy Congregations workshop on Saturday to set up tables and chairs. Lastly, I want to thank all of the people who helped take down the tables and set up the chairs after the event. Without all of these people, this event would not have been a success.

Congratulations to the winners of the adult raffle: Cindy Ferrari who won the Fair Trade Basket with two pounds of coffee, chocolate bars and a gift pack of UUSC notecards. Molly Daniels and Robb Smith each won "Standing on the Side of Love" caps. Betsy Miller was the winner of the canna bulbs.

Congratulations to the winners of the kids' raffle: Rose Reed and Paula Parsons each won a "Mystery Bag" of goodies.

And lastly, thanks to all who visited various tables and learned a little about what FUUSA has to offer you. We hope this helps you "Get Connected!"--Barb Manning

Walker Book Club

The Walker Book Club offers participants the opportunity to search for truth and meaning by reading and discussing a book each month from September to June. The next meeting is Sunday, April 12, 2012, at FUUSA at 5:30 PM in Channing Hall. The book group is open to all, and newcomers are always welcome.

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

Dates and books currently scheduled: April 12, 2012: **The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks** by Rebecca Skloot.

Contact Linda Hunt at Ishunt@nycap.rr.com with any questions. Join the Walker E-List to find out more about selected books and to participate in suggesting and choosing books to read and discuss.

Rummage Sale soon: May 11-12

Yes, the Spring Rummage Sale is just around the corner! Can you help?

We will be accepting GENTLY used and in WORKABLE condition small kitchen appliances, dishes (not chipped), glassware, and flat ware. Yes, the theme for the Spring Rummage Sale is household goods. We will also accept bedding (no holes) and linen. There is always a need for those.

We will start collecting the items on Sunday, May 6 right after the service. That day we will also need help in stacking and putting the chairs away after the service and then setting up the shelves and tables.

The actual sale will be on May 11-12, with hours on Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p. m. and Saturday from 9 a.m.- 2 p.m.

How can you help? VOLUNTEER. The sign up sheets will in Channing Hall in early April. Any questions? See Patty Burch.

Don't Be Just A Passenger

Marshall McLuhan was one smart dude: "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 right here in Albany and around the world? Come together with fellow FUUSAns and hundreds of your Capital Region neighbors in the CROP Hunger Walk on Sunday, May 6. This is a great family activity to encourage caring and social responsibility in your kids. We're also looking for people to work on walker registration on Walk Day, so there's a way to help even if you don't want to walk. See Dawn Dana at coffee hours starting on April 1 to sign up to walk, help, or pledge your support.

What are you doing October 12 – 14? Going to UU Weekend at Silver Bay of Course!

The multi-congregation UU Weekend Planning Committee is already working on our next fabulous UU Weekend at Silver Bay and we have an offer you can't afford to resist - sign up (and pay your deposit) by June 15 and avoid a 3% increase in 2012 prices. That's right, we are freezing last year's prices until June 15!

As those that have attended UU Weekend in the past can attest, this weekend is THE place to kick back, meet wonderful people, go for a hike, learn a new skill or hear a fastinating lecture; plus, there will be great programs for the kids. We already have signed up Jim Scott as our "artist in residence" for the weekend. Jim is an exciting acoustic guitarist, singer, and composer of powerful music that furthers the ideals of ecology, justice, and peace; Jim makes an impact on hearts and minds across the world! Also, by signing up early you help insure that the weekend will be the best it is capable of being - early registrations provide the foundation upon which the UU Weekend Committee can build the activities that you have come to expect and love!

As this is a cooperative weekend (that means we all pitch in and volunteer for a job be it large or small), this is also the best time to reserve your spot to present that program/workshop you've always wanted to lead, or to get your "choice" volunteer assignment. To volunteer to lead a workshop (movement, craft, thought provoking, or you decide), contact Jan McCracken at xxxxxxxxxx.

Watch for the 2012 registration form on the Albany UU website (www.albanyuu.org), search for "UU

Weekend" on Facebook, or look for information at the CRUUNY service in Round Lake on June 3. Members of the Albany congregation can also be on the lookout for a UU Weekend information table in Channing Hall before and after the service.

"UU Weekend is a gift we give ourselves to reconnect with each other, with nature, with our own selves." - UU Weekend Committee

Joys and Caring Corner_

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, 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.



9

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 May Ann Randall (mabrandall@gmail.com.)

Social Justice

"What can I do about all the problems facing the world today? " In the past groups of peoples have moved to new territories to find new lands to sustain them. That is not an option today. The renowned scientist Stephen Hawking thinks we better start looking for a new habitable planet that our descendants can move to. But that is also not an option for us. On March 18 Rev. Sam's sermon was "A Faith for a Crowded World" which outlined the some of the major problems facing the world, and he cited that Unitarian Universalism is a faith that can react to that world.

At FUUSA we try to respond to that troubled world. On March 18 Congressman Paul Tonko was the Forum speaker. He has voted against the NDAA, a bill that could incarcerate American citizens without a trial. Attendees at the Forum pointed out to him other potential threats to our freedoms. On March 25, our Forum will host DA David Soares who will be speaking about the right of citizens to assemble publicly in Albany. Some of us this month lobbied at the Capital for immigrants' rights and women's rights. On March 20, a Community Discussion was held about "The Disproportionate Impact of the Criminal Justice System on People of Color in the Capital Region."

And as you read this edition of Windows, you can find out about all the other things going on. But you ask, "What can I do? I'm busy I don't have time for all these things."

None of us can do everything. But each of us can do something. Perhaps you can stop by the SRC table and sign a petition. Or you can be sure to be an informed voter.

If a million people respond, perhaps there will be change for the better. Remember you are only one person, but you are One in a Million.

Standing on the Side of Love, Lois Griffin, Chair SRC

Focus Food Pantry

Thank you for your continued monthly support of the Focus Food Pantry. Your monetary help really makes a difference in keeping the pantry operational.

Thank you also to all the participants who came and shared the Oxfam Meal on Sunday March 4 and heard Rev. Deb Jameson talk about the hunger problem here in the Capital area. And thanks also to the RE teachers who that day introduced the hunger issue to their students. All classes were involved in studying the hunger issue from the pre-K and Kindergarten who made dry soup mix for the Focus Food Pantry, to the middle school students who made the Oxfam meal, to the High Schoolers who were given the task of creating a monthly budget with limited funds.

It is now April and the need for the Focus Food Pantry continues. We have a bin in the coatroom that is marked Focus Food pantry and will be collecting low-sodium canned soup, canned fruits and vegetables, tuna and personal care products. Diapers of various sizes are also needed.

Any questions? See Patty Burch or Renee Panetta

Interfaith Impact of NYS Legislative Education & Advocacy Day

Monday, April 30, 10:00 am – 3:30 pm Room 711A, Legislative Office Building, Empire State Plaza, Albany NY

Now is the time! Make your progressive religious voice heard. Reproductive justice is under attack nationally and in New York, basic civil rights are denied to transgendered persons, and the state minimum wage is stuck at an unlivable \$7.25 an hour. Join us to make a difference on these issues and give IINYS a memorable presence in the Capitol.

After an introduction to the issues and brief presentations by legislators, we will break up into small groups, each facilitated by an experienced advocate, and meet with your elected representatives, selected committee chairs, committee staff and program and counsel staff. You will get a final schedule and folder of materials when you arrive in Rm. 711A. Coffee and rolls will be provided. See www.interfaithimpactnys.org or call 518-441-3231 for more information. Or contact Robb Smith or Don Odell (drodell31@yahoo.com, 482-4574.

Registration is Free!* Send an e-mail to info@interfaithimpactnys.org with your name(s), title(s), email, telephone number, and congregation/affiliation, and if clergy or not. Or you may fill out the form on the SRC bulletin board, and leave with the SRC table or mailed to Interfaith Impact, 646 State Street, Albany NY 12203

*Free registration provided by the Gilbert Spirit Fund, First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY

Forum: Lee Kindlon April 29, 11:45 am

Mr. Kindlon will outline his vision for the Albany County District Attorney 's office in light of the issues facing the county. As Albany is the seat of the state capitol, many things can be within the DA's jurisdiction, statewide and national. Many legal issues confront Americans today including arrest and detention of non-citizens whose visas have expired, seizure and indefinite detention of citizens by federal officials under the newly passed NDAA, fraud in the banking and mortgage industry and fraud based foreclosures, or hours of indefinite confinement on a parked airliner at the Albany Co. airport.

Columns

Sam's Outlook_

A Change of Heart-Mind in Community

Changed hearts change minds and lives. Playing an unusual game of chess in February of 1980 led me to a powerful experience of a changed heart that initially baffled my mind. The feeling of being guided in playing the game and the feeling of love for all beings after the game were completely new to me. I had no way to conceptualize what had happened to me within my circle of friendsexcept for a seminarian at Starr King School for the Ministry named Doug. When I told Doug about my chess experience, he said, "Sam, you've had a religious experience!" I said, "I'm a secular humanist Unitarian Universalist. We don't have religious experiences."

The gap between our experiences and how we talk about and conceptualize those experiences is a vital part of Unitarian Universalism. We have a radical respect for people's experience, allowing them to figure what they mean without imposing a theological framework on them. Had I had that experience as a member of a Christian church, my minister might immediately have responded to my story by explaining to me that I had just experienced the grace of the Holy Spirit dwelling in me. My secular roommate told me I was just on an ego trip because I'd easily won the game against a stronger player. He knew me well enough not to accuse me of taking one too many magic mushrooms. Had I known any Buddhists back then, I might have heard my experience interpreted as a spontaneous experience of "metta" or loving kindness. A New Age guru might have interpreted it as channeling an enlightened chess master.

This separation between the change of heart and the understanding of that change of heart gives the person who has had the experience the authority to figure out what it means. Unitarian Universalism offers a place where that meaning making can happen in dialogue and relationship with others who affirm that personal freedom.

Now, I didn't plan to have that change of heart. Nor did I even know such a change of heart might be possible or desirable. Once I realized such an experience was possible, I started seeking them out. I discovered places where I'd have them again. I discovered them in an Indian ashram singing sacred songs. I found them doing the Dances of Universal Peace and chanting sacred Sufi phrases. The place I found them most reliably and powerfully was doing Buddhist mindfulness meditation at Insight Meditation Society retreats.

So I know how important these experiences are to me in finding satisfaction and making meaning in my life. What I've struggled to do is to find ways to help others also have these changes of heart experiences. I want people to walk out each Sunday after the service with at least a deeper heart connection. Something in the service can touch the heart, in a way that will open up a new perception or understanding of life. An hour is a short time to pull this off, but it isn't a matter of time, for the change can happen in an instant.

So imagine my joy to discover a master of changing hearts. Her name is Thandeka, a professor at Meadville Lombard, our UU seminary in Chicago. I featured her thinking in a service I did in December of last year. She and I met and had dinner together when I was at a training in January in Boston. When I've worked with her and her ideas about transforming the presentation of a Sunday service, I've gotten very positive results from the congregation. I can feel in that response a hunger in our congregation for just what she has discovered.

So I've asked Thandeka to work with me to bring more of her ideas to life in our congregation. You'll be hearing more about this and seeing some of these changes coming this fall. In preparation for that work in the fall, I'll be teaching a class of Thandeka's starting Tuesday, April 10th, called, "What Moves Us?" (Read more about it in the announcement of the class in this issue) I strongly encourage participation to help understand the unique opportunity we have as Unitarian Universalists to honor each other's religious experiences without needing them to conform to our personal theologies.

In October of 1992, almost 20 years now, I was ordained as a Unitarian Universalist minister in Niagara Falls, New York. I remember wondering before I was ordained if I would be able to convey to others some of the inspiration that came to me through my transforming experiences. I realize now, that the thinking those experiences have generated cannot convey the fullness of those experiences. But what I can learn to do better is create the emotional climate that invites a change of heart. The building blocks of a change of heart experience aren't thoughts so much as feelings. As Thandeka said to me recently, "Organizing religious emotions transforms them into religious sentiment."

Stay tuned as we feel our way toward greater depths of religious experience, together..—Rev. Sam

Chuck's Chat_

The Love Fests

As I write this, we have competed five of the Stewardship Gatherings. I have been fortunate to participate in two. I read notes from some of the others. "Love Fests" fits because the Gatherings have brought out the best in each of the participants. There has been a deep sharing of the positive value of our shared beliefs and our dreams. Here are just a few examples of the comments made so far.

Describe how FUUSA and Unitarian Universalism contribute to your sense of who you are?

- "I would have responded differently to a diversity issue at work if I were not a UU.
- "Being a UU has become an inherent part of my identity, the longer I belong to FUUSA the stronger that connection becomes."
- "I use UU principles to determine how to relate to the world. Sometimes I ask, What would the perfect UU do?"
- "By providing a safe place to discuss ideas, FUUSA lets me listen and consider different sides of an issue and come to a conclusion that might be 180 degrees different from where I started."
- "I sit in Emerson on Sunday morning, look around at the individuals there and realize, I love these people in a deep and profound way because of who they are and because we share common values."

What have we done in the past two years that you are most proud of ?

- "Many of the actions we have taken are the result of implementing our Strategic Plan, for example, the Social Responsibility Sunday where there was an outpouring of support for different SRC projects."
- "My daughter was at the NYS Marriage Equality Vote because of what she learned here."
- "The Wellspring and Evensong programs have both led to deepening and spiritual growth for individuals and families."
- "The Pastoral Associates have expanded our ability to reach out to one another and it provides another dimension to the work of the Caring Network."

What are our dreams for the future as we Work Together to Share Our Vision with the world?

 "Imagine defining our ways of caring for each other as a model that we can explain to the world."

- "Imagine building on the success and growth of the choir to expand our music program."
- "Many different and diverse groups use our building, imagine letting them know who we are and inviting them to join us in our work of changing the world."
- "Imagine starting a tutoring program to make a difference in the lives of children and families in Albany."
- "Imagine finding new ways to bring our message that doing good in the world is more important than agreeing on what to believe."

This is just a small sample of the comments so far. We have 25 more Stewardship Gatherings to go. The love, commitment, generosity, and reverence for our work and community demonstrated at these gatherings are very inspiring. Everyone I have spoken to, who has attended a Gathering, has found them to be a rewarding and meaningful way to spend a couple of hours with other members of our beloved community. If you haven't signed up yet, I urge you do to so. The Stewardship Committee has tried to contact most of our members. If you have not responded and signed up for a Gathering, I urge you to contact Dick Dana (446-0382), Stephanie (our office administrator 463-7135), or me (439-4226) to participate.

In the words of Peter Morales: "Let us dare to dream ambitious, yet possible dreams. And then let us commit ourselves to making our dreams come true." —Chuck

Religious Exploration_____

Justice GA

I'm excited that a group of youth and adults from FUUSA and the Schenectady congregation are working to prepare to attend Justice GA. I'm excited, but you may have questions.

What's GA?

GA is General Assembly. It's the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists in the United States. It's kind of like a FUUSA Annual Meeting, plus a lot more. Not only does business of the denomination get done, but there are workshops of all kinds, and there are worship services and ceremonies – like a Bridging Ceremony for all the youth who make the transition from Youth Group Participants to Young Adult. It's a four or more day event. Some groups like ministers and Religious Educators gather a day in advance for meetings. As you may have heard from Chuck Manning or read in other places, at last year's GA, a large group of GA participants rallied at a local park in Charlotte in support of marriage equality. I must say that this is all second hand knowledge – I've never been to GA.

What's Justice GA?

The location of GA is in a different city each year, and the selection of the location is made well over a year in advance. When it was announced that in 2012 GA would be in Phoenix, many UU's questioned whether or not to attend because of the immigration laws and policies in Arizona. After much discussion, it was decided that GA would be held in Phoenix and that we would use this opportunity to learn about immigration issues and to partner with local UU and other groups with UU values in their work for just and humane treatment of immigrants.

This is a lot like what I experienced at last year's LREDA Fall Conference. (LREDA is the Liberal Religious Educators Association). Religious Educators from the US and Canada met in New Orleans last year, and we decided that we couldn't go there and stay in a hotel for the whole conference. So we suspended much of the meetings and workshops. Instead, before we went, we learned about New Orleans pre- and post-Katrina. And we signed up for various service projects to do while we were there. I worked at a food bank for an afternoon. We also had opportunities to go into communities and to hear the people's stories. Justice GA is going to be similar to that.

Why is an inter-generational group going this year?

Youth are invited to attend GA each year, but FUUSA doesn't have a history of bringing youth... yet. Last summer, with Chuck's support and encouragement, two youth went to UULTI—a fourday UU leadership training. Since then, the Board and I have been looking for ways to involve youth in leadership here at FUUSA. And the Board has been very enthusiastic about supporting youth to attend Justice GA especially because there will be many opportunities for youth to learn how to do social justice work. So not only will the youth have an experience of doing the work with other UU's from around the country who are passionate about social justice, they will be learning ways to bring it home. This trip represents FUUSA's efforts to include youth in leadership roles and to celebrate the gifts they bring.

Why is this inter-generational trip important to the rest of the FUUSA community?

The organizers are working to make this GA like no other. As you may have read, there will be opportunities for off-site delegates to participate in the proceedings via the web. There are many ways for everyone to learn about immigration issues. Go to http://www.uua.org/ga/2012/ for more info.

The hope is that this group will be bringing back skills and enthusiasm to do more great work at FUUSA. The hope is also that the youth will be inspired to work for social justice after they have left our RE program and perhaps move on to another congregation or other institution. The hope is that adults will gain an experiences partnering with youth that will inspire them to help us move forward in creating a culture at FUUSA that supports youth in participating in social justice projects. The hope is that we can inspire youth to participate in the leadership our congregation and that we adults continue to create the space for them to do that.

Can other people help?

Yes! The hope is that you will support us. The Board has already agreed to pay for the registration of the youth and some adults. FUUSA already budgeted a generous amount of money for my professional development this year that I'll be using to go to Justice GA. The youth are looking at other scholarships. We'll be staying in alternative housing instead of a hotel. But the group needs more financial help. Airfare is expensive and we'll need to budget for food.

We're holding a Barefoot Books fundraiser on Saturday morning, April 21 in Emerson Community Hall. Come shop and buy children's books, CD's and other materials that have UU values. You may be familiar with Barefoot Books. Here's your chance to stock your selves, or buy presents for the children in your lives and to have a get together with folks from the Albany and Schenectady congregations. There will be a presentation from a representative and then plenty of time for you to shop. We'll also have a bake sale at this event. See the article above.

Thanks in advance for your support in our community's work in educating, training, and energizing our youth and helping them to attend what might very well be an historic event. And I hope you'll participate in Justice GA in whatever way you are able.

In faith, Leah

Bringing It Home Tell Your Family Story

Most of us don't come from around here, though we may call Albany, or the Northeast, our home. Our families have stories that go back to other parts of the world. Except for those whose ancestors were Native Americans, our ancestors came here as immigrants or as imported slaves. Children who were adopted need support to understand their beginnings and the different threads of their family's background. Parents can have an impact over their children's understanding of history and culture and appreciation of many cultures by first telling their own family story.

Here are some projects that can be done by families from all cultural backgrounds – from 40 Ways to Raise a Nonracist Child by Barbra Mathias and Mary Ann French

- Start a tradition of giving your child a book about their culture or cultures as a birthday gift.
- Make a family tree with the information you have and do more research.
- Bring your child to family reunions and encourage their participation in events there.
- Consider bringing your child along with you to family weddings, funerals and religious celebrations.
- Tell stories from your family and encourage other family members to do the same.
- Watch movies or TV specials about the culture or cultures in your family.

Matias and French assert "All families need to polish and preserve their family pride. Don't assume that your child knows his heritage. He needs to know that his great grandfather struggled as a farmer in France or that his great, great grandmother died on a boat getting to this country." I would add that children who were adopted have more than one family connection to explore and honor. The topics of cultural identification, heritage, immigration, slavery, and how children learn history are complex. But you don't have to be an expert to talk to your child. Our Unitarian Universalist values help us to be tolerant and compassionate and to realize that everyone has a story worth telling.

An evening with the Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison-Reed Thursday, April 12, 2012 at 7:00 pm, Sanctuary and Channing Hall

There are many more African-American UUs than you know about. Find out who they were. Also learn what is it like to grow up an African-American UU. And explore the question: Why does UUism find becoming more diverse such a struggle? Hear Mark Morrison-Reed read excerpts from his book *In Between: Memoir of an Integration Baby, Darkening the Doorways: Black Trailblazers and Missed Opportunities in Unitarian Universalism* and get a sneak preview of the soon to be released meditation manual *Voices from the Margins.*

The Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison-Reed earned his M.A. from the University of Chicago and D.Min from

Meadville Lombard Lombard Theological School. Currently he is an Affiliated Faculty at Meadville Lombard and divides his time between teaching, speaking in Canada, the U.S. and Europe and writing. In much demand as a preacher he has spoken at over 175 congregations.

His previous book, *In Between: Memoir of an Integration Baby,* is in its fifth printing. His first book *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*—now in its third edition— has been in print for over 30 years and is required reading for those preparing to enter the Unitarian Universalist ministry.

Contact Us

Board of Trustees 2011-2012 email: <u>board@albanyuu.org</u>

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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

—16—

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, 9:00-3:30 July-August: Monday–Thursday 9:00-12:00

Website

www.albanyuu.org

Building use

To **reserve a room** for a FUUSA activity, contact Office Administrator Stephanie Hayes (463-7135 or administrator@albanyuu.org).

To **rent classroom space** for a personal or non-FUUSA activity, contact Office Administrator Stephanie Hayes (463-7135 or administrator@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)

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, Jaye Holly

Send submissions for all publications to: <u>Windows@albanyuu.org</u> or to the church office.

Publication deadlines

FUUSA Preview email: 9:00 a.m. Wednesdays Order of Service: 9:00 a.m. Thursdays Windows: 9:00 a.m. 3rd Friday of the month

ARTICLE XI FINANCIAL POLICY

Section 5. Expenditures and Appropriations

a. No contract or obligation involving an expenditure of more than \$5,000 \$20,000 shall be made or incurred, unless such action is authorized by the membership at a congregational meeting, except that in the event of an emergency declared by three quarters of the members of the board, no contract or obligation involving an expenditure of more than \$50,000 shall be made or incurred. The Board meeting declaring an emergency may be convened by telephone or email and the President shall poll the board members and record their votes.

b. Committees, councils and other entities in the Society are authorized to expend the funds appropriated for their use in the operating budget during the year of appropriation.

c. The Board of Trustees, with the recommendation of the Finance Committee, may reduce appropriations or authorize additional expenditures according to the funds available, said reduction or additional expenditure shall not exceed a total of five percent of the total budget during a fiscal year.

Section 7. Capital Reserve and Emergency Fund

a. This fund may be designated by donors as the repository of their financial gifts.

b. The Board of Trustees shall have full power to invest, reinvest, and transfer such funds in trust or for deposit, within the limits of the provisions of the Religious Corporations Law.

c. The income from this fund may be included in the operating budget or allocated by the Board of Trustees unless restricted by the terms of a donation.

d. All or any part of the fund may be used for any Society purpose but only in amounts and for purposes directed by a resolution passed at a congregational meeting, *unless the expenditure is less than the limit imposed by section 5(a) of these by-laws, \$20,000.00, or the Board has met, voted and determined, in accord with section 5(a) that an emergency exists and the expenditure is less than the limit imposed by section 5(a) of these by-laws, \$50,000.00.*

e. It shall be the intent of the Society to include specific contributions to this fund as part of the operating budget when there is no long-term debt obligation on the Society's part.

ARTICLE VI COUNCILS

Section 3: Religious Education Council This council shall consist of a chair and *eight to* twelve members, elected and serving in accordance with Articles VIII and IX of these bylaws, and the religious education director. The chair is an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees. Volunteer participants in the program shall be approved by the council upon recommendation of the religious education director. This council shall foster and maintain a religious education program for the children and youth of the Society and shall have direct supervision and control of this program.

Multigenerational Pot Luck Dinner

Saturday, April 21

In support of FUUSAns attending JUSTICE GA in PHOENIX, AZ

6:00 pm - Pot Luck Dinner

Bring a favorite dish to share or simply pay at the door: \$4 per adult, \$2 for a child under 12, with a \$10 maximum per family. Cold drinks and coffee/tea provided

7:00 pm Discussion

For those would like to stay after the dinner:

Why Justice GA Recipes for Immigration Justice

Sign up in Channing Hall

Or contact Leah Purcell or Peggy Sherman

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany 405 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12206 518-463-7135 www.albanyuu.org