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# Windows

Newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

## Special Congregational Meeting

Sunday, Dec. 6, 11:30AM

The Board of Trustees has called for a Congregational Meeting at 11:30AM on Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup> in support of the following resolution:

*Whereas* the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany appointed a strategic planning committee in May, 2008, to make recommendations for the future direction of the congregation; and

*Whereas* the planning committee, which adopted the name Dream Catchers, engaged the congregation and listened to our vision and dreams through a variety of meetings and discussions held since the fall of 2008; and

*Whereas* the Dream Catchers strategic plan outlines goals and objectives in four areas: Community and Connection; Theological and Philosophical Diversity; Social Justice; and Beacon of Liberal Religion; and

*Whereas* the Board of Trustees has received and endorsed the plan from the Dream Catchers

*Therefore, be it resolved:*

That the congregation of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany affirms and adopts the 2009 Strategic Plan and endorses its goals and objectives.

Vol. '09-'10, Issue 4  
December 2009

**Minister**

Rev. Sam Trumbore

**President**

Linda Way

**Intern Minister**

Chris Antal

**Church Administrator, interim**

**Membership Coordinator**

Amy Lent

**Director of Religious Education**

Leah Purcell

**Religious Education**

**Director Emerita**

Ann D'Attilio

**Music Director**

Matt Edwards

**Administrative Assistant/Sexton**

David Stone

**Custodian**

Olga Oja

## Sam's Outlook

### Why we need your vote December 6th

Planning ahead is important. That is what our Dream Catchers have been doing with your help and guidance for the last year and a half. We need your support on December 6 after the service to affirm their work.

Many of us don't seem to value planning ahead. Many people put off doing a will. Many people don't put money aside for a rainy day. Many younger people don't have health insurance, taking the risk that nothing will happen to them. Far too many people do not make plans for retirement or for the education of their children early enough.

Our congregation did an admirable job of financial planning before we did our building expansion. We raised almost two

million dollars to pay for it. But that wasn't enough to pay for the building so we borrowed a little over a million. Through careful projections over 20 years and using a big chunk of our endowment as a "sinking fund," we came up with a plan to gradually incorporate our mortgage into our budget over a number of years. We wouldn't have gotten our mortgage without this careful planning.

The Dream Catchers have been doing the same kind of careful planning to help our congregation begin to imagine goals and objectives. You have told them what you want to see and they have put those dreams together into a strategic plan. You told them we want to develop ways to **Sam's Outlook, continued on pg. 3**

**Publication deadlines**

Dec. *Update*: Dec. 7

Jan. *Windows*: Dec. 21

## From the President

### Two reflections on Christmas:

1. I grew up never believing in Santa Claus; in our family he was always part of pretending. As a quick-to-criticize-her-parents teenager, I remember asking my mother about this childhood "deprivation"- why she and my father had never tried to make Santa "real" when my brothers and I were young.

Her response still resonates. Until I was nine we lived in an apartment complex on the edge of Newark, NJ. The neighborhood was filled with immigrants, African Americans, and folks who occasionally had bread and jam for supper – but as children we walked to school, dreamed of owning a dog, and played kick-the-can until the streetlights went on together. At some point I became aware that my parents were "house hunting" and someday we would move and I would have a bedroom of my own, but all in all it was a fine childhood and economic and color differences among my friends went largely unnoticed...except by my mother...and especially at Christmas.

My mother explained: Children should never be made to feel they are "bad" or "unloved by Santa" because they don't get the presents others get. She believed that even children understand that some families can afford more than others; but Santa, she felt, was different. To children he was more like "God" – and no child should feel unworthy in Santa's eyes! Therefore, in our household, "Santa" kept the milk-box at the back door filled with small gifts and any child who visited close to Christmas could take one. He also filled our stockings with candy and oranges and trinkets – again to share. But Santa did not fly around the world and put presents under our tree and "forget" some of our neighbors. That was a Santa my mother would not perpetuate. I believe she was a wise woman - and today I firmly believe in the power of

myth and cherish the spirit of Santa.

2. A few years ago a teaching colleague asked me if UU's celebrate Christmas. I didn't tell her that "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" and "Jingle Bells" were both written by Unitarian ministers; but this year, with yet another version of *A Christmas Carol* now in movie theaters, I am again reminded of one of the small ironies of her question. Perhaps the most cherished and frequently performed and read stories of the season, *A Christmas Carol*, was indeed written by a Unitarian, Charles Dickens.

In 1842 Dickens traveled to America, met Ralph Waldo Emerson and William Ellery Channing, and returned to England with great enthusiasm for the prevailing 19<sup>th</sup> century ideas of New England. The next year Dickens wrote his Christmas classic and affiliated with a Unitarian Church in London. Whether you find the story of Scrooge and Tiny Tim a bit "sappy" or always heartwarming, it certainly reflects timeless and recurrent UU themes: the problems of poverty and the need for social reform, the awakening and transformative power of generosity, and the ever present possibility and grace of personal redemption. "Bah, humbug?" Not to me!

Let us remember that the holidays can be an especially difficult time for many folks. Here at FUUSA we have had a number of deaths in the past two months. Death, divorce, and other losses and heartbreaks often feel especially poignant on holidays. Let us reach out to each other with compassion and love – and let us also open our hearts and accept the magic of the season. Whatever your feelings are this holiday season, whatever your memories, present reality or dreams or concerns for the future, I

wish you a season of friendship and peace.

### To the immediate – Your vote is needed!!

The Board of Trustees has called for a special meeting of the congregation after the service on December 6 for the purpose of congregational affirmation of the Strategic Plan. (See the front page of this newsletter for the text of the resolution.) Being present at the meeting and casting your vote is, I believe, part of the responsibility of FUUSA membership.

The Dream Catchers have worked for almost 18 months to capture, synthesize and reflect our collective vision for our future. We are grateful to them and we are grateful to so many of you who have participated in the process. And now, before your Board of Trustees moves to the next step and tackles the very real tasks of implementation – we ask for your affirmation and adoption of this vision.

The democratic process is part of our guiding principles; at FUUSA we encourage and value every voice; and we are asking for your voice, your vote, on December 6. See you at the meeting!

*Linda*

### Don't forget the Circle Dinner

If you signed up for the Dec. 5 circle dinner you should have heard from your host where you will be going for dinner! If you haven't heard by Nov. 29 contact coordinators Ann Lapinski and Andrea Smith.

## The UUSC and "Guest at Your Table"

Have you taken your Guest At Your Table box home to fill up during this holiday season? If you missed the chance, stop by the RE Office and pick up a box.

There are two parts to the UUSC (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee) effort with particular reference to Guest At Your Table. One is to encourage children and youth to contribute to the work of the UUSC. The other is to encourage individuals and families to join the UUSC.

Your contribution will support UUSC's work to advance human rights and promote social justice in the United States and around the world. As a member, you will also join a community of more than 40,000 UUSC supporters who share your ideals. You will also stay up-to-date on human rights issues through regular mailings, action alerts, and a subscription to the newsletter, *Rights Now*.

If an individual or family reaches the level of giving as follows, they become members of the UUSC: \$40.00 for an individual, \$75.00 for a couple or family, \$10.00 for a student or youth, \$20.00 for a student or youth couple, \$20 for a senior, \$40.00 for a senior couple. We will add up the checks, change and bills in each box, and give proper credit to each person or family (make sure to put your name and address on the box).

Let's become a leading UU congregation in supporting the UUSC by being generous in contributing to Guest at Your Table and becoming members of the UUSC.



### **Sam's Outlook, cont. from pg. 1**

deepen our sense of community with each other. We want to encourage more acceptance and appreciation of the theological and philosophical differences between us while staying focused on the values that unite us together. At the same time, we want to take advantage of our differences to challenge and deepen our theological and philosophical growth and development. We want to get more involved in the city of Albany to make a positive difference in the lives of children and families. We are deeply concerned about the sustainability of our ecosystem and want to be part of the solution to the many environmental problems that face us. We want to bring our values into the public square and advocate for the public policy initiatives that support them. And finally, we want to be a beacon of our values to the larger community and invite those that share them to join with us in our congregational life.

That is what the Dream Catchers heard, crafted into a strategic plan that was mailed to you (and can be found on our web site [albanyuu.org](http://albanyuu.org).) If you affirm all this planning ahead and preparation for new initiatives, we need your vote! Our Board needs to know that you are behind these plans to encourage them to implement this congregational plan. The implementation will initiate significant changes in priorities, attention, and even the allocation of resources. Next year's budget will be guided by

this plan. Staff resources will be re-configured to support this plan. My sermons, my priorities and my time allocation will be shaped and accountable to this plan. Your leadership will not let this plan sit on the shelf. They will begin implementing it December 7.

This is why it is of the utmost importance that this plan be what you want your Board, your minister and your staff to do. The Board has unanimously adopted it. Your staff is behind it. I am behind it. We are all ready to make it real. What is of very high importance to us is knowing this is what you want us to do. We don't want to get half way into implementing this plan and get a lot of doubts and questions coming at us. We want as close to 100% of you with us as we charge ahead to tackle the problems and impediments that stand in the way of our progress.

So this is why it is of extremely high importance that you make every effort to be at the December 6 meeting after the service and give us your enthusiastic endorsement of our strategic plan. This plan has implications almost as significant as the decision to do our building addition. It will direct how we allocate our resources. It will set in motion initiatives that will define who we are and what we are becoming. We need to know you are behind this plan!

See you December 6!

Rev. 

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## **Our outreach to the hungry**

Our generous contributions to the FOCUS Interfaith Food Pantry have helped to feed 288 households 10,350 meals in September and 252 households 9360 meals in October. During the summer the Pantry served more than 800 families with 30,000 meals. Currently, the Pantry is looking for volunteers to help pick up orders at the Regional Food Bank in Latham once every 3-4 weeks. If able and interested, call Lorraine Houk at the FOCUS office (443-0460).

Election Day saw the start of the 26<sup>th</sup> season of the Winter Breakfast Program. This serves a hot breakfast three days a week (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) 7-9 am through April 15 at Westminster Pres. and offers many opportunities for volunteering. To volunteer, call/email Alison at 443-0460, [Focuschurches@juno.com](mailto:Focuschurches@juno.com).-- Jane Allen

# Religious Exploration

## Lifespan and adult education

In the last two years there has been a lot of discussion about "Lifespan Religious Education" in our congregation. Rev. Sam referenced this in a sermon entitled "Becoming a Learning Community" the spring of '07 just before I began serving as your Director of Religious Education. There are two basic aspects to looking at Lifespan RE as opposed to two separate programs, one for children and youth and one for adults. One aspect is to break down the generational "silos" within our congregation. The other is to insure that there is support for individuals in each age of life and in each stage of philosophical or faith development.

Most of my work focuses on maintaining our excellent RE program for children and youth and supporting the volunteers who staff it. The RE Council also looks for opportunities for people of all ages to come together at FUUSA. However, the Religious Education Council has begun to talk about how it can support Religious Education for individuals of all ages. The REC has developed a mission and philosophy for children and youth. Rev. Sam and I wondered what a philosophy of adult ed would look like to guide the work of the REC.

So this summer I did some research. After talking with leaders in our district and the UU Association and reading up on my developmental psychology, I kept hearing one striking theme: Religious Education for us adults is more than just stuffing our brains.

It might seem ironic that the goal of education is not specifically acquiring knowledge, but religious education has broader and deeper goals. We come to FUUSA to be part of a community. And we adults each come with a spiritual or philosophical story to tell. Adults are always con-

structing a personal narrative - a way to understand the world through their experiences. The stories of the adults are part of what feeds the story of our community. The story of our community, whether it's the FUUSA community of UU-ism, is a source for adults to gain wisdom. Faith or philosophical development is a way to create meaning in life and lies at the intersection of the personal and the community narrative.

With this research and insight in mind, the subcommittee of the Religious Education Council created a philosophy of adult education. Here are some key points in it.

- ◆ The adult education program should strive to give adults opportunities to examine their stories in the light of UUism, by using the six sources of our living tradition.

- ◆ Each adult education offering should help adults integrate their learnings into their personal philosophies, theologies and values.

- ◆ The adult program should offer the same "basics" as the program for children and youth.

- ◆ Adult education is a means to overcome oppression in our society at large.

So now we have some guidance in moving forward to create a program to meet the needs of adults. The first fruition of this guidance was the course Chris Antal offered: Writing Your Spiritual Autobiography Within the Context of the Six Sources. What's next? I'd like to offer a course to parents about parenting specifically as a Unitarian Universalist or one on looking at the act of parenting to create meaning in your life. Rev. Sam will offer a Lenten Bible study focusing on what we can learn from the apostle Paul. There are more resources available from the UUA.

I'm also excited to see that the UUA is also developing **multigenera-**

**tional** courses. "Gather the Spirit" is being field tested now. It's an eight-session, multigenerational program that teaches stewardship with a focus on water. More at <http://www.uua.org/religiouseducation/curricula/tapestryfaith/gatherspirit/index.shtml>

Looking further out, the UUA is developing well researched, challenging courses for adults that lay leaders can present. There 3 new courses that will be field tested next year: "What Moves Us: Unitarian Universalist Theology"; "Our Living Unitarian Universalist History"; and "A History of Unitarian Universalist Resistance and Transformation". More at <http://www.uua.org/religiouseducation/curricula/tapestryfaith/abouttapestry/130209.shtml>

What are you looking for to help you on your journey? Talk to a member of the REC, Rev. Sam or me. We'd love to hear from you.

In joy and service,



## Spirituality Book Club

Our next meeting is January 17th at noon after the service - bring lunch. We will be discussing Wherever You Go, There You Are by Jon Kabat-Zinn

Feb 14 book will be Silence: The Mystery of Wholeness by Robert Sardello

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*Newsletter Crew:* Many hands!

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



# HOLIDAY EVENTS

## at FUUSA



### **Holiday Crafts Workshop**

**Saturday, Dec. 5, 9:30-11:30**

Food, crafts, music, fine company!

Come join this multi-generational event to kick off your holiday season.

Cost of admission:

\$3.00/adult

\$2.00/children 12 and under

\$10.00 family maximum

Cost to make a wreath: \$5.00 each

Sponsored by the Religious Education Council

### **Christmas Tree Decorating**

**Sunday, Dec. 13, 11:00 a.m.**

Everyone is invited to bring an ornament to put on the tree in Channing Hall. The tree will stay up until Sunday, Dec. 27 when it will be taken down and the ornaments distributed.



### **Christmas Caroling**

**Sunday, Dec. 20, 1:00 p.m.**

Stay tuned for details.

### **Christmas Celebration**

**A multigenerational Christmas service**

**Sunday, Dec. 20**

Come get your Christmas spirit switched on through a retelling of Jesus' nativity narrative with our children playing the different parts in the story. Sing those old familiar Christmas carols, see the manger scene unfold before your eyes, and feel the renewal of hope that this season inspires.

**Children and youth participation:**

**Sunday, Nov. 29,** 11:30 to 12:30 - Children and youth choir rehearsal

**Sunday, Dec. 6,** 11:30 to 12:00 – Selection of major parts of the pageant and costume selection

**Sunday, Dec. 13,** 11:30 to 12:30 – Pageant rehearsal

### **Solstice Celebration**

**Monday, Dec. 21, 7:00 pm ,**  
Channing Hall

Join us for this earth-centered Unitarian Universalist ritual to recognize the shortest day of the year. Drums and rattles are welcome!

Please bring a non-perishable food item for the food pantry—and, if you are so inspired, a snack to share after the celebration.

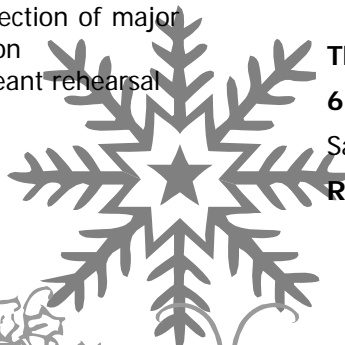
### **Christmas Eve Candlelight Services**

**Thursday, Dec. 24**

**6:30 and 8:15 p.m. Candlelight Services**

Sanctuary

**Reception** will be between the services.



## Social Responsibilities Council

SRC will be meeting at 8:30 a.m. Dec.6 because its regular meeting time would conflict with the Congregational Meeting on adoption of the Dream Catchers' Strategic Plan. Social Justice is a large part of this plan, and I hope that you were able to attend one of the 3 discussions on the recommendations and you will attend both the SRC and the Congregational Meeting.

On November 15, six members of FUUSA, Donna Doran, Julie Lomoe, Don Odell, Robb Smith, Jacqui Williams and I attended the social justice conference in Amherst NY with the theme "Social Justice in an Economic Tsunami." Jacqui and Robb were both presenters, Jacqui speaking on

the role of race in economic justice, and Robb, religion and political street fights in the NY State Senate. Rev. John Buehrens, former president of UUA, and Rev. Richard Gilbert, social justice coordinator for the St Lawrence District, emphasized the tough times ahead for social justice and the critical role UUs will be asked to play.

SRC wishes to commend the RE classes who participate in social concerns by Trick and Treating for the food pantry and UNICEF and by starting a recycling program in their classrooms.

Standing on the Side of Love  
Lois Griffin

### Justice Committee Update

New York State, along with several other states, is facing the painful problems of balancing the budget and maintaining its expensive prison system. We offer here some background information about the situation in NY State and what has been done to date to meet this challenge.

In the past 10 years, New York State has seen a drop both in crime rate and in prison population – from 71,000 to 59,000. Yet calls for closing facilities to save money have received staunch opposition of correction officers' unions and of politicians from the upstate areas where most of the prisons are located.

Nevertheless, in the past year, policymakers did manage to shut down 10 different facilities: three prison camps and seven prison annexes – with a total of 2250 beds and at an expected saving of \$52 million over two years.

Prison camps are minimum security facilities without perimeter fences. Annexes consist of free standing housing units with their own mess halls, activity buildings,

and exercise areas, located on the grounds of a larger prison facility. All of the annexes being closed house minimum and medium security inmates.

Even with these closings, there remain 5000 empty beds in the 69 prison facilities throughout New York State.

There is no conclusive evidence that incarcerating more and more people enhances public safety, and some research suggests that time in prison makes people more prone to violence. It wastes billions of dollars a years and devastates the low-income minority communities where most of our prisoners come from.

### Green Tips for December

- ◆ Turn off lights when not in use to save on electricity.
- ◆ Put a lid on pots for boiling water. It reduces cooking time and energy use. Also, match the pot size to burner size to avoid energy waste.
- ◆ Use warm or cold water for laundry when possible. Rinse in cold and only wash when you have full loads.

Garden lovers: Collect Sunday's

## Paths to peace in Afghanistan

### The impact of the US military presence in Afghanistan

Fahima Vorgetts, an Afghan-American from Maryland who fled Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion, will give a presentation with slides in Channing Hall on Tuesday, December 8, at 7 pm. Fahima has dedicated her life's work to improving the conditions of women in her native country. She travels to Afghanistan several times each year, where she has been involved in opening new schools for girls and literacy classes for women, creating income-generating projects for widows, and arranging for the shipment of medical and school supplies and clothing to refugees. Fahima has addressed the United Nations and traveled widely speaking at university conferences and religious organizations, appeared on many television and radio programs, including the BBC and NPR, and been featured in articles in the Baltimore Sun and the Washington Post. She is the winner of several awards from peace and human rights organizations. She is an inspiring, charismatic speaker who possesses wisdom on the realities in Afghanistan and recommendations on how the US should and should not be involved. She will have oriental rugs and crafts at her FUUSA talk, to sell to support her organization, Women For Afghan Women's projects in Afghanistan and refreshments will be served.

Sponsored by Women Against War Afghanistan Project and co-sponsored by Social Responsibilities Council of FUUSA.

coffee grinds after coffee hour for your garden. It makes great compost. Pick a Sunday and sign up at the SRC table.

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## Building Bridges

### A Young Adult event

Have you "bridged" out of youth group and are asking yourself, "What bridge?? I don't see any bridge?" or are you a young adult (18 to 25 years) looking to connect with other UU's of your generation? If so, please plan on attending FUUSA's Building Bridges Young Adult Event being planned for January 9, 2010.

The planning for this event is in its infancy but it is sure to contain discussion groups, workshops, music, a coffee house, a worship service, games, fun and good times. This will be a great opportunity to connect with other young adults and to help design a "bridge" for young adults in this area and across the District. If you are a young adult or young adult ally who would like to help build the bridge between youth and adulthood and/or would like to register for this event, please contact Tracy Landers. More details for this event will follow as plans progress.

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## Are you in your 20s-30s?

### This one's for you!

Sunday, Dec. 20, 3:00-6:00 pm

Please join us at the home of Barb and Chuck Manning for a holiday gathering for young adults. Doesn't matter whether you're new to FUUSA, been around a while, are a member or not—just so long as you're in your 20's or 30's and are interested in connecting with others of the same!

RSVP at the Sign Up Site in Channing Hall, or send email to [administrator@albanyuu.org](mailto:administrator@albanyuu.org). We will send you directions to the Mannings' house in Delmar. If you have questions call Amy Lent at the church office, 463-7135.

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## Toward a Safe Congregation

### A Congregational Conversation

The second ad hoc committee on safe congregation policies will host two congregational conversations on promoting youth and child safety within our FUUSA community. We invite you to join us in discussion to help frame our values about working toward this essential goal in the context of our unique Unitarian Universalist and FUUSAn identities.

The conversations will be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of January from 11:30 am-1:30 pm in Emerson. The first will be conducted in a World Café model, providing opportunity for several focused conversations to occur simultaneously, and the second will be conducted as a plenary session. Light lunch fare and childcare will be provided.

Please look for sign-up sheets in the New Year to help us plan for food, childcare, and stimulating discussion.

Committee Members: Jean Poppei, chair, Winston Hagborg, Patti Jo Newell, Reese Satin, Lauren Tobias

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## Give Away the Plate

### Smart Boards for Albany High

ARISE clergy have been meeting with the new Albany High principal, Dr. David C. McCalla. He is very concerned about the school's high drop-out rate. Some 300 students who enter the high school do not finish. He knows and we know that those youth who do not graduate are quite likely to become involved in activities that will either get them killed or sent to jail. A high school diploma is a lifeline for them to begin to carve out a better life for themselves.

Previous administrators of Albany High have neglected the importance of technology in helping to reach these at risk students. Albany High is woefully deficient in technological resources, about ten years behind, at a time when students need to be preparing for the nanotech revolution coming our way.

One such tool is something called a "Smart Board." These interactive tools combine the simplicity of a whiteboard with the power of a computer to create engaging lesson plans that inspire and motivate learning.

ARISE and other religious organizations will be fund raising during the month of December to buy some of these Smart Boards for Albany High. We will have a give away the plate for this purpose on December 13. ARISE will then go to other sources of funding to multiply our donations. This fundraising is the beginning of a non-proselytizing partnership of support between religious organizations and the schools to help at-risk kids graduate.

Please be generous to support this new initiative that goes beyond the current resources available in the school budget to bring Albany High into the 21<sup>st</sup> century of education.

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## About Us

Thayer Heath, chair of our Green Sanctuary Committee, has been appointed to the National UU Ministry for Earth. This group reads and approves applications for Green Sanctuary from UU congregations all over the United States. Way to go, Thayer, and congratulations!!

## Thanks!

The Holiday Bazaar committee wishes to thank all of the donors, workers, and shoppers who made the fourth annual bazaar a great success. See you next year. Plan ahead and join the committee.



## Newcomer orientation

### Learning about Unitarian Universalism and FUUSA

We invite you to meet with others who are new to the congregation at our next **"Getting to Know UU"** session, scheduled for Saturday, January 23 from 8:45 a.m. to noon.

We'll start with coffee and snacks and getting to know each other: new folks, Membership Committee, and Rev. Sam Trumbore. You'll learn about Unitarian Universalism and about our congregation, and you'll get a chance to ask all the questions you've been collecting. We'll talk about how to get involved in the FUUSA community and about becoming a member. All in all, it's a fun morning of conversation and fellowship, and a pleasant first step on the path to membership!

There will be a sign up sheet in Channing Hall (at the Sign Up Site) in early January, or you can call Amy Lent interim Membership Coordinator (and Church Administrator) at the church office, 463-7135.



## New Member Sunday

On Sunday, February 7, we will welcome new members into our congregation. Newcomers who have recently signed our membership book, and others who want to join, are encouraged to come and be recognized.

Membership is open to all. To become a member of FUUSA you will start by signing an Intent to Join. There is no test of faith or belief requirement to join our community, only general agreement with the purpose of our organization. The expectations of membership are: Participation on Sunday morning; Involvement in and helping with our activities; Financial support of the congregation. Each expectation is flexible depending on each person's ability to participate.

One officially becomes a member by signing the membership book in the minister's office. And then we will welcome you to the congregation during the Sunday service on New Member Sunday! Please call either Kathy Hodges, chair of the Membership Committee or Amy Lent, interim Membership Coordinator, (at the church office, 463-7135) if you are interested in becoming a member.

## Budget requests due January 10, 2010

Yes, it's time once again to figure out how much money your program, committee or group will need in the next fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2010 and ending June 30, 2011. While it may seem far away, this year once seemed distant also.

The budget form for submission can be found on the FUUSA web site, [www.albanyuu.org](http://www.albanyuu.org) on either the home page under News, or in the File Cabinet under Church Office at the bottom of the left side menu. If necessary, the office can supply you with a printed form.

The Finance Committee and the Board use the completed form to help determine what your group's priorities are for next year and how much money will be needed to support your endeavors. It will be assumed that no funds will be needed if a form is not submitted. Regular mail and email submissions will be welcomed.

The form is self-guiding, however, if you have questions, please contact Steve Moskowitz, Finance Committee chair.

## From Joy Library

*"Rev. Sam's sermon "Ethical Eating" and "Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice" as a UUA Congregational Study/Action Issue for 2008-2012 prompt our recommendations. Most are shelved with the **NEW BOOKS.***

**Eating Animals** by Jonathan Safran Foer "... explores the fictions we use to justify our eating habits—from folklore to family traditions and national myth—and how such tales justify a brutal ignorance. "... tackles the issue of factory farming and the toll it takes both on animals and the environment..." [641.303 FOE ]

**The Face on Your Plate: The Truth About Food** by Jeffrey Mousaieff Masson. "...how food affects our moral selves,

our health, and the environment... how denial keeps us from recognizing the animal at the end of our fork—think pig, not bacon...the pivotal book of the food revolution." [641.306 MOU]

**The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals** by Michael Pollan.

"...exploration of the hungers that have shaped our evolution, and of the profound implications our food choices have for the health of our species and the future of our planet." [394.12 POL]

**Righteous Porkchop: Finding a Life and Good Food Beyond Factory Farms** by Nicolette Hahn Niman. "... not only *why* to choose meat, poultry, dairy, eggs, and fish from traditionally farmed sources ...,

but also *how* to do so... and what questions to ask when eating out... a must-read for anyone who cares about food sources or good eating." [ 636.0832 NIM ]

**In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto** by Michael Pollan. "...Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants." [613.2 POL]

See also **Unitarian Universalists for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. "Our Purpose/Our Goals:** To move from the mere celebration of the 'interdependent web of existence' into practices that affirm species interdependence in our everyday personal, social, economic and political lives". <http://www25.uua.org/ufeta/>



## *The Oriel Magazine Call for Submissions*

The Oriel, the literary and arts magazine of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany, is accepting submissions for the 29<sup>th</sup> Edition of this publication. The editorial staff encourages all members and friends of FUUSA to submit works of poetry, prose and art for consideration of inclusion in this year's publication. The editorial staff would like to include the many voices and varying artistic perspectives found in our community.

Artists and writers are asked to comply with the following submission guidelines:

### *2010 ORIEL Guidelines for Submission*

1. Submission Deadline: **January 20, 2010.**
2. You may submit artwork, poetry, prose, or song lyrics. All work must be original. Work previously published in ORIEL will only be considered if it is part of a memorial tribute. Copyright remains with original author and artist. All rights reserved.
3. All entries **must** be submitted electronically. Send submissions via e-mail to: oriel-submission@albanyuu.org.
  - a. Submit prose and poetry in Microsoft Word document using Times New Roman, 12 point font. (Be sure that your saved document has a "doc" extension and not a "docx" extension.)
    1. Poetry: 3 entries maximum per person; 60 lines maximum per entry.
    2. Prose: 2 entries maximum per person; 1000 word maximum per entry.
    3. Song lyrics: 2 entries maximum per person; song should fit on two standard pages.
  - b. Submit artwork in jpeg format. Artwork: black ink, pen or pencil drawings only; no limit to entries; no larger than one standard 8x11 page. (no color drawings or photographs)
  - c. Contact Art Editor Terry Way you need artwork scanned. Contact Literary Editor Irene Saulsbery if you need literary work typeset.
  - d. Entries that do not comply with the guidelines will not be considered.
4. ORIEL editorial staff reserves all rights regarding final editorial decisions.
5. Writers and artists will not receive payment for work submitted to or included in the ORIEL.
6. Writers and artists will be notified if their work is accepted for inclusion into the 2010 edition of the ORIEL. Writers and artists agree to provide a short biography for inclusion in the magazine. Biographies should not exceed 75 words.
7. Writers agree that work submitted to the ORIEL can be published in the ORIEL or may be read during the ORIEL Coffeehouse, **Friday, May 14, 2010.**
8. The ORIEL editorial staff encourages submissions from all members and friends of FUUSA, regardless of age; however, writers and artists under the age of 17 should have parental permission prior to submitting work for consideration. Further, the editorial staff does not want to interfere with the RE Spring Art Show, therefore, artwork that is being used in the Art Show should not be submitted to the Oriel.
9. All writers and artists whose work is accepted into the ORIEL will receive one free copy of the ORIEL Magazine. FUUSA families may receive one free copy per family.

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

## Channing Circle

The December meeting of Channing Circle is scheduled for Monday, Dec. 19 at noon. All retirees are invited to join the Circle for a special presentation by Roland Hummel. Roland will give a talk on noted sculptor George Rickey, and will show slides of his work. Bring your sandwich and salad. Coffee and tea will be available. Anita Patka and Marion Tischler will treat us to dessert. Mark your calendar to join us on the third Monday.

## Walker Book Club

The next meeting of the Walker book club is Sunday, Dec. 13. The meeting commences with a potluck supper at 5:30 PM at Lisa Walker's, Delmar. Bring your favorite dish to share, and a small contribution to cover beverages. If you need directions, call Lisa. Newcomers are always welcome.

Dates and books currently scheduled:

- ◆ Dec. 13: Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout. Suggested by George Allen and Lisa Walker.
- ◆ January: Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen (John Cooley, Winston Hagborg)
- ◆ February: DesCartes' Bones by Russell Shorto (Don Odell)

### *Sunday Volunteers Sign up in Channing Hall*

	Lead Usher (1)	Ushers (3)	Coffee Hosts (2)	Greeters (2)	Chalice Lighter (1)
Dec. 6	A. D'Attilio	A. Patti	A&M Dockter		H. Tobias-Wallingford
Dec. 13		R. Blanchard			I. Daniels
Dec. 20	D. Odell		T&L Henderson		
Dec. 24	6:30 pm 8:15 pm D. Odell	6:30 pm 8:15 pm	N/A	6:30 pm 8:15 pm	N/A
Dec. 27					E. Andrews

**UUSC holiday cards** are on sale in Channing Hall at coffee hour.

## 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

Exceptions:

## Events Happening Every Week in the Month of December

Mondays	10:30 AM	Pre-School Playgroup Wash. Pk. or 23
Tuesdays	10:00 AM	Philosophy Group B-8
	1:00 PM	Bridge B-8
Wednesdays	10:00 AM	Projects & Quilts B-8
	7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal Emerson

Exceptions:

## All Other Events Happening in the Month of December

3-Dec	Thursday	6:00 PM	Coalition to Prevent Violence/SRC	26
5-Dec	Saturday	9:30 AM	RE Holiday Crafts	Channing
		6:09 PM	Circle Dinners	offsite locations
6-Dec	Sunday	11:30 AM	SRC Meeting	B-7
		11:30 AM	Bazaar Postscript	Channing
		11:30 AM	Congregational Meeting on Strategic Plan	Emerson
		12:00 PM	RE Pageant Rehearsal	B-8 (time approx.)
		12:00 PM	Tolle Discussion Group	B-7
		7:00 PM	Men's Group	B-6
7-Dec	Monday	9:00 AM	Windows Update deadline	office
		4:30 PM	Intern Committee	B-2
		6:15 PM	Religious Education Council	Channing
10-Dec	Thursday	4:30 PM	Intern Committee	B-8
		7:00 PM	PCC Meeting	B-8
11-Dec	Friday	1:30 PM	Grannies for Peace	B-7
		8:00 PM	Youth Con (no other building use)	all spaces
12-Dec	Saturday	8:00 AM	Youth Con (no other building use)	all spaces
13-Dec	Sunday	7:00 AM	Youth Con (breakfast & cleanup)	Channing, Classrooms
		11:30 AM	Tree Decorating	Channing
		11:30 AM	Service Leader Training	Sanctuary
		12:00 PM	RE Pageant Rehearsal	Emerson (time approx.)
		1:00 PM	Parents of Teens Support Group	Channing
		1:00 PM	Junior Youth Group	B-8
		5:00 PM	Cancer Support Group	B-8
		5:30 PM	Walker Book Club	L Walker's
14-Dec	Monday	1:00 PM	Windows Update mailing	Channing
		1:00 PM	Shelter Meal Prep	Kitchen
		7:30 PM	Monday Men	B-8
15-Dec	Tuesday	6:30 PM	Finance Committee	26
		7:00 PM	Soul Matters-Sherman/Way	Stott/Joy Library
17-Dec	Thursday	7:00 PM	Board of Trustees	B-8
19-Dec	Saturday	6:30 PM	Guilderland Plus Potluck	Joyner/Kleinberger's
20-Dec	Sunday	3:00 PM	Young Adults Gathering	Manning's
		7:00 PM	Men's Group	B-6
21-Dec	Monday	9:00 AM	Windows deadline	office
		12:00 PM	Channing Circle	Ch., Kit.
		7:00 PM	Solstice Celebration	Channing
24-Dec	Thursday	6:30 PM	Candlelight Service	Sanctuary
		7:30 PM	Reception	Channing
		8:15 PM	Candlelight Service	Sanctuary
27-Dec	Sunday	11:30 AM	Tree Undecorating	Channing
		11:45 AM	Green Sanctuary Committee	B-7
28-Dec	Monday	1:00 PM	Windows mailing	Channing
		1:00 PM	Shelter Meal Prep	Kitchen
		7:30 PM	Monday Men	B-8

## Cancer Support Group

The Cancer Support Group will hold its monthly meeting and potluck supper at FUUSA on Sun. **Dec. 13**. We invite anyone surviving cancer, including significant others, to attend the meeting at 5:00 p.m. and/ or the supper at 6:00 p.m. for sharing information and support

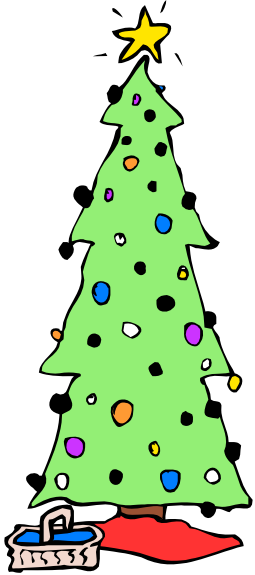
**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Annual Wine and Dine for UU Weekend**  
**Saturday, January 23, 2010**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany**

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Bring an  
ornament  
to decorate  
the tree  
in Channing Hall  
Sunday,  
December 13

## Sunday Services

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

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

Religious education classes are held from 10:00-11:20 a.m.. The nursery opens at 9:45 a.m.

**Dec. 6 "Listening into the Wilderness,"** The Rev. Jo Page

One of the wackier characters to populate the Christian pre-Christmas season of Advent is the rude, scruffy and unkempt John the Baptizer. In spite of his personal hygiene issues and peculiar diet, he attracts followers who meet with him not in the temple in Jerusalem—the expected locus of religious activity—but out in the wilderness. And it's there that he calls people to a radical reevaluation of their lives. In what ways might we need to enter into our own wildernesses, abandoning those routines or institutions that prevent us from living a genuinely contemplative and compassionate life?

**Dec. 13 "Impossible Illumination,"** The Rev. Sam Trumbore

Long ago, there was not enough oil to keep a lamp lit for the eight days it took to purify a holy space. But somehow, the oil lasted and the light did not go out. What seemed impossible came to pass. The practice of lighting candles for Chanukah can be about far more than celebrating a miracle after a military victory. What impossible illumination might be waiting for each one of us? **Note:** Today we will "give away the plate" in a special collection for Albany High School. See inside for details.

**Dec. 20 Multi-generational Christmas Celebration,** The Rev. Sam Trumbore and Leah Purcell

Come get your Christmas spirit switched on through a retelling of Jesus' nativity narrative with our children playing the different parts in the story. Sing those old familiar Christmas carols, see the manger scene unfold before your eyes, and feel the renewal of hope that this season inspires.

**Dec. 24 Candlelight Christmas Eve Services at 6:30 and 8:15 pm** (Sanctuary)

**Please note:** The later service tends to be "standing room only"; come to the earlier one if you can! Reception will be between the two services.

**Dec. 27 "Beyond Innocence,"** The Rev. David Weissbard

The turning of the year is a point at which evaluation and re-evaluation of our direction comes naturally. I am among those who believe that we, as a nation, are disabled in that process by what some have referred to as our "pseudo-innocence." You can't get somewhere different if you don't know where you are. On this Sunday between Christmas and the New Year, I'll be making some suggestions about that disability.