

Windows Update

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 administration@fuusalbany.org.

Mid-December 2009

Minister

Rev. Sam Trumbore

President

Linda Way

Intern Minister

Chris Antal

Church Administrator

Amy Lent

Director of Religious Education

Leah Purcell

Religious Education

Director Emerita

Ann D'Attilio

Music Director

Matt Edwards

Membership Coordinator

Lynne Lekakis

Administrative Assistant/Sexton

David Stone

Custodian

Olga Oja

Publication deadlines

Jan. *Windows*: Dec. 21

Jan. *Update*: Jan. 7

Newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

Strategic plan adopted

On Sunday, December 6, the congregation unanimously affirmed and adopted the 2009 Strategic Plan for the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany in a special congregational meeting. We now look forward to members of the congregation finding their own inspiration to become involved in the very real tasks of implementing these goals and objectives and making this vision of our future a reality.

Once again - Thank you to Peg Sherman and the rest of the Dream Catchers, and to the many, many members of the congregation who participated in the process!--Linda Way, President

Construction Corner redux

Significant renovations to Channing Hall are now virtually complete, and at a very low cost. Here's the story.

◆The old nametag rack/SRC storage cupboard was removed this summer. The materials were re-cycled, providing most of the wood needed to build new folding chair storage racks in the chair storage area off the Sanctuary foyer.

◆Channing Hall, the new chair storage area, and the Washington Avenue window seat were painted.

◆A picture rail was installed, consisting of **Construction, continued on pg. 2**

Board Notes

DPA! DPA! DPA! No, this is not a new acronym – but it is what your Board of Trustees accomplished at their November 19th meeting when the focus was on FUUSA's financial well-being and projections for repaying our mortgage loans.

The “D” represents “dream.” Around the table in B-8 the Board focused on the projections for the financial health of our congregation into 2031! It felt like the invisible faces of FUUSA's future were also sitting at that table - and they were giving thanks to us, their fore-sisters and fore-brothers, as they recognized and acknowledged our foresight and planning for our congregation's financial future. Who knows? Maybe this FUUSA congregation of the future will be experiencing such growth and financial solvency that they'll be planning new satellite congregations or their next purchase and renovation to accommodate a thousand members!

“P” is for “planning” which was what

this 2009-10 Board was actually doing at the table as they worked on the best strategy for paying down the mortgage. Former Treasurer Betsey Miller gave a thorough update on the mortgage which included its history, budget projections (based on income and expense assumptions), and concerns about meeting the amount of debt service that will grow in the “out” years. Betsey presented a realistic view of the positive and negative sides of the equation and offered several ways to address the need to update and sustain a solid plan. She and the Finance Committee have clearly had their noses to the grindstone (ouch!) on the issues of building finance.

“A” is for “action.” After listening to Betsey's presentation and poring over the various spread sheets and charts, the decision was made to support the Finance Committee's recommendations to increase the amount paid in debt service from the annual operating budget by \$3000 per year for the **Board Notes , continued on pg. 3**

◆ **Construction, cont. from pg. 1** wood provided by Reese Satin, which he had recycled from a neighbor's project of several years ago.

◆ Bulletin boards were purchased from Huck Finn's Warehouse at a huge discount; List price \$99, cost us only \$32 each.

◆ New acoustical ceiling tiles were donated and delivered by Bunkoff General Contractors, the contractor that built Emerson Community Hall. (That's a neat story all by itself.)

◆ A bit of a dust-up happened concerning insurance coverage when we rented the scissor lift (used to install ceiling tiles). With the assistance of our insurance agent, we changed FUUSA's insurance carrier. The new policy saves FUUSA about \$400 per year, enough to pay the rental cost for the lift! Might this be called collateral advantage?

Total cost for the project was well under \$500, plus lots of sweat equity. --Dave Metz

Thank you, Lynne

"Being greeted so warmly really made an impression on me"

"What a friendly congregation"

"We felt welcome from the moment we entered"

Comments such as these have been heard with increasing frequency since Lynne Lekakis became our first Membership Coordinator a little more than two years ago. She and the Membership Committee have done a superb job greeting and welcoming guests and visitors – and membership has been steadily growing! Lynne has also raised our collective awareness that it really does "take a congregation." Hospitality is the task of all of us - and Lynne has been a leader in calling us to this important truth and helping us live our goal to be a beacon of liberal religion where all are welcomed.

Lynne has now stepped down as

Welcome New Members!

Judy Harrington lives in Albany with her cat, Ziggy. Her grown son, Jesse, lives on his own. Judy first came to FUUSA in 1993 with her good friend, Debbie Moskowitz, who shortly thereafter took her to Silver Bay. This year, after a long hiatus, she finally returned to Silver Bay for our wonderful UU weekend. She has been attending Unitarian Universalist churches – and going to Ferry Beach in Maine – for the last 10 years. Judy works as a case manager for developmentally disabled adults and has, in the past, been both a teacher and a tutor. She looks forward to singing in the choir, making new friends, and participating in a number of FUUSA's volunteer activities.



Nicole Mossey grew up in the capital district and went to college at SUNY New Paltz. A few years after she graduated she moved to Texas where for ten years she taught in a very friendly Catholic school. She moved back to the area to be closer to her brother. Currently she works at St. Peter's Hospital and is a graduate stu-



dent at Union where she is studying to get her MAT in Education. A few months ago when she was still new here and didn't know many people, a number of folks from FUUSA helped her with a huge graduate assignment – and she remains grateful for that help. Last spring she enjoyed a fabulous circle dinner in Guilderland and looks forward to more of these events. She also loves the warm sense of humor which she finds here.

Charles Poltenson is a recent transplant to the Capital District from the Syracuse area, having moved here three years ago to work for the New York State Department of Transportation. He has a myriad of interests including Boy Scouts, camping, hiking, snowshoeing and canoeing. An historian, he is a member of the 12th US Infantry Civil War Reenacting group. He also can be found at many of the local contra dances. Charles is a lifelong rail fan and loves train travel. Indeed, he spends some of his weekends volunteering as a conductor at the Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum in Lenox, MA. Charles is also a musician; he has played bagpipes for years and is now learning the fiddle



The Mitten Tree



Look for the mitten tree in Channing Hall. Please bring warm mittens, gloves and hats to decorate it. They will be distributed in January to Albany residents who really need them.

Chris' Chrysalis

This month I'd like to respond to some feedback I received after my most recent sermon, "My Arranged Marriage" on November 29. In that sermon I spoke of my past involvement with the Unification Church, and referred to the Reverend Sun Myung Moon as "my spiritual guide" – a remark that became the topic of some conversation during the coffee hour. In the time since that sermon, some of you have asked me to elaborate more on what I meant by that remark.

Let me begin with some reflections on an adult religious education course I taught recently at FUUSA. The course was called "Spiritual Autobiography: Nurturing your Faith within the Six Sources of Unitarian Universalism." The class met for six weeks, and we spent time on themes like "honoring teachers," "journeys," and "epiphanies." An important objective of the course was to help the class claim the positives from our religious past and make connections with Unitarian Universalist principles and commitments. To facilitate this I invited members of FUUSA to come and talk about their journey and make a personal connection to one of the six sources of our faith. In this way, we began to discover in our own religious journeys a sense of *continuity*, an es-

sential component of any spiritual autobiography. In the context of the course, I considered any teacher on our religious journey a "spiritual guide."

I have been doing some work lately to discover a sense of continuity in my own religious journey, reflect on spiritual guides, and craft my own spiritual autobiography. In the three months I have been an intern minister here at FUUSA, I have given three sermons--"War Baby, Soul Man" in August and "Faith without Certainty" in October, and "My Arranged Marriage" in November. I have honored a number of teachers. Some are well known: Bruce Lee, the Buddha, Jesus Christ, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thich Nhat Hanh. Others may not be so well known to you, but would still be included on my list: the Roman Catholic theologian Paul Knitter, the Reverend Kay Greenleaf, now retired from the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Poughkeepsie, my wife Mitsuko, and our very own Reverend Sam Trumbore! These people, along with many others, have served as guides for me on my own spiritual journey.

We Unitarian Universalists claim that "The living tradition we share draws from many sources." In fact, we identify six sources. Perhaps what

I mean by spiritual guide is best captured in the second: *Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.*

As I write this column I am mindful that today is "Pearl Harbor Day." Mitsuko, my partner of twelve years, is Japanese. The Rev. Moon, our matchmaker, has had this prophetic role for me. He showed me a practical way to embody Jesus' teaching "love the enemy." To call him my spiritual guide means I honor him as my teacher. I do not follow any teacher in blind obedience, or necessarily believe in everything the teacher believes. But do we need to be in agreement in order to learn from and grow with one another? I certainly hope not.

I challenge you to examine your religious past and claim the positives. Who are your spiritual guides? Which prophetic women and men have challenged you? What lessons do you cherish? What have you discarded? Make connections between the places you have been, and where you are now. Find continuity in your journey. In the process, throw out the bathwater; but keep the baby!
—Chris Antal, Intern Minister

Board Notes , cont. from pg. 1 next five years. This action is expected to ensure that the congregation (present and future) will meet the rapidly growing amount of debt service and be able to repay our Endowment Trust by May 2031. That took some DPA!

FUUSA is certainly fortunate to have a number of conscientious and capable minds attending to the budget projections and financial health of our congregation! The Board is grateful to them – and rec-

ognizes that we, too, are indebted to the dreaming, planning and action of those who came before us.

Another significant decision made on November 19th was the adoption of a Board Covenant, or behavioral guidelines for our working together. This action grew out of our retreat in September, and is, we believe, a way to honor and strengthen our commitment to spiritual leadership. Reminder: Minutes of this and other Board meetings are posted in Channing Hall.

Holiday Party for Young Adults

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!

Call Amy Lent at the church office (463-7135) to RSVP and get directions.

Social Responsibilities Council

Most of us are turning our thoughts to preparations for the holidays. And that first beautiful winter wonderland that we had Dec. 5 and 6 really helped put me in the mood.

When we are checking that list to find out "who's naughty or nice," don't forget to check it for your elected officials. On the "nice list" for his yes vote on Marriage Equality" in the NY State senate was Neil Breslin, on the other list was Hugh Farley. Keep checking too to find out what is happening with the Health Care bill and with what the meeting in Oslo accomplishes regarding climate change. The 350 activists have been busy lobbying and demonstrating. Here in the city of Albany, the search for a new chief of police is critical to violence prevention. You can make your voice heard in the Common Council.

At our SRC table we are making it easy to donate to the homeless. In addition to a place to put toiletries for women, there will be a place to donate for the men in the homeless

overflow shelter. Items requested for the men are unused: razors, shaving cream, foot-spray or powder, deodorant, lip balm, hair brushes, sox, sweat pants and shirts, gloves, T-shirts. Make sure you stop by the SRC table for information and to buy those gifts and fair trade items.

Human Rights Day in 2009 was Dec. 10, and Jacqui Williams reminds us of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights established 60 years ago. Its first words are, "All human beings are born free and equal in human rights." Please go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTlrSybCbHE> so that you can see this whole document animated. Certainly this is a goal for the world and it is a goal that is far from being achieved even right here at home.

The Social Responsibilities Council thanks all of you for your interest in and support of Social Justice and we wish all of you a very happy holiday season.

Standing on the Side of Love,
Lois Griffin

Green Sanctuary Committee

Check out the Social Responsibilities Council table for information on being more energy efficient, how to do an **home energy audit** and a pamphlet on **buying locally**. For new members, boxes are located on the shelf in the coat room for recycling ink cartridges and cell phones. We continue to sell **CFL Bulbs** and will take your used CFL Bulbs. Batteries can be returned to the Honest Weight Food Co-op for recycling.

Shop Local: The Green Sanctuary Committee is encouraging everyone to shop local during the Holiday Season. To promote this, we have found a local source for sunflower seeds to feed the birds. The seeds come from a farm in the Schoharie Valley. We

will be selling them in 10 pound bags at the SRC table. If we sell out, we will be taking orders.

December Green Tips

- ◆ Don't over-dry clothes. Use a clothes line whenever possible.
- ◆ Put on a sweater or an extra blanket on your bed in the winter to avoid having to turn up the heat.
- ◆ Turn off the water in between rinses while brushing your teeth.

At the table

With the holidays coming, come to the SRC table to check out our baskets of goodies plus new items made by women from Guatemala for gifts.

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

Building Bridges A Young Adult event

If you are between the years of 18-25, please plan on attending Building Bridges: A Young Adult Event being planned for January 9, 2010 from 10 am to 11:30 pm here at FUUSA. The day will be spent connecting with other UU young adults by discussing topics that impact your generation, sharing music, playing games or just chilling. It will also be a great opportunity to help plan future young adult events in this area and across the District. Lunch and dinner will be provided. If you are a young adult or a 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. Please register by Dec. 31, 2009. There will be a \$10 fee to cover the cost of food.

Refugee Project thanks

On Sunday, Nov. 8, your generous contributions during the offering yielded just under \$1300 to support our Iraqi family. That plus the \$300 received from the Rummage Sale proceeds gives us an additional two months to find more employment for the family so they can be self sufficient. Thanks so much for your continued generosity.

Channing Circle

Monday, Dec. 19 at noon

Join us for a special presentation by Roland Hummel, on noted sculptor George Rickey with 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.

"Getting to Know UU"

An orientation for newcomers to FUUSA: Next offered Saturday, January 23
Inquire at the Welcome Table or sign up at the Sign Up Site in Channing Hall

Art show in Channing Hall

A collection of acrylics and pastels by Kate Segall, a graduate of the New York Fashion Institute of Technology as an Apparel Design major and of Queens College/CUNY as a Fine Arts major, are on view in Channing Hall. Her primary interest is in doing plein-air landscapes and interesting buildings using a style that blends impressionism and realism. She prefers working on shaped board, which she feels heightens the initial impact of the work. Although she also works on a standard stretched canvas, she believes that the mind imagines a scene in a variety of shapes depending on the scene itself rather than as a reference to flat rectangular edges.

Wine and Dine for UU Weekend

Sign up in Channing Hall so you don't miss your opportunity to "Wine and Dine" on January 23 while also helping to raise money to support our annual fall weekend retreat on Lake George. While enjoying a great dinner paired with excellent wines, you will be helping to support the cost of programming provided during the weekend. Money raised also goes to provide financial aid to those who would otherwise not be able to attend. Details regarding the dinner are available at the sign up table in Channing Hall, before and after services.

Oriel – Call for Submissions

Calling all poets, writers & artists!! It is time to submit your fabulous work for consideration for our FUUSA literary publication, the Oriel. Submissions should be made by 1/20/10. Guidelines and details can be found in the December Windows and online at www.albanyuu.org.

Save this date!

Annual Fellowship Dinner

The Annual Fellowship Dinner will be held on Saturday, **April 17, 2010**. Based on the work of the Program Coordinating Council and the able leadership of George Kleinberger we are planning for a few modifications in the dinner this year. There will be on-site child care for young children and some type of event for older children at FUUSA on the same night as the dinner. There will be opportunities for greater social interaction before, during and after the dinner. There will be at least one contest/game (participation optional!). The price will be below \$30 per person. The FUUSA Players will still be putting on their award-winning skit (watch for a casting call in the new year.) If you would like to participate in planning for any of these activities please send an e-mail to Chuck Manning and let him know.

Are you feeding your Guest At Your Table?

In addition to the membership levels described in the December Windows, if you can be generous to your guest at a level of \$100 or more, your contribution will be matched by the Shelter Rock UU Congregation. Be as generous as you can. There is no amount too small or too large. Don't have a Guest at Your Table box? Please stop by the RE office and get yours. Let's join UU congregations nationwide in building connections to our shared values and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's (UUSC's) work to advance human rights in the United States and around the world.

Christmas Eve fellowship

It takes a lot of people—both volunteers and food donors—to make the reception happen between the two candlelight services on Christmas Eve.

Set up help (during 6:30 service) is still needed--sign up today at the sign up site in Channing Hall. Cookies and finger food donors are needed, too!

Thank you in advance for pitching in to make sure we can continue the tradition of this festive reception!

-Coordinator Sandy Stone.

\$

Committee budget requests are due January 10, 2010. Get the form online, in Channing Hall, or in the office.

\$

Q: How many members and friends does it take to make a photo directory?

A: A lot!

Your brand new Photo Directory is heading into the final stage of completion and we have so many people who have contributed to make it the delight that it will be when finished!

Let's start with Chuck Manning and Kathy Hodges who said YES! to make it happen along with support from Membership folks like Don Odell, John Sherman, and Mary Applegate. Others who helped people sign up were: Bunni Vaughn, Rose Anne Fogarty, and Anita Patka.

Stalwarts who showed up for 3 hour stints of checking people in for their photo appointments were: Carol Butt, Linda Way, Debbie and Peter Brown, Donna Doran, Mark Yolles, Patsy Patrick, Sue Berzinis, and Fred Boreali. Last but certainly not least, Amy Lent prepared the roster of names and addresses, Irene Saulsbery laid out the activity pages, and Peter Meixner took beautiful photos for the cover. It does take many people to create common UNITY and our directory is one more example of how that happens at FUUSA. Thank you all.

Joy and Caring Corner

From Joy Library

Shortcut to catalog from FUUSA's webpage < <http://www.fuusalbany.org/index.html> > Click "Joy Library". Follow to catalog.

Couldn't get Dewey call number online? When you get to the catalog, look for: "Joylibrary1885 has a suggested style for viewing this library (use it)" Click "use it". If you miss this the first time you can't go back to it. Start over .

Check out a book: Please sign & date the card in the pocket of the book's back cover. File the card in the green 3"x 5" box before you borrow the book.

Want to renew a book you have out? Email us at joylibrary@albanyuu.org

Include name, book title, call number. Loan period is one month.

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

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 p.m. at Lisa Walker's home, 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:

December 13: *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout. (George Allen, Lisa Walker)

January 10, 2010: *Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen (John Cooley, Winston Hagborg)

February: *DesCartes' Bones* by Russell Shorto (Don Odell)

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

The **Guilderland Plus Potluck** group will meet at 6:00 PM Sat. Dec. 19 at the home of Maria Joyner and George Kleinberger. Please contact them to let them know you are coming and what you'll bring.

Sunday Volunteers Sign up in Channing Hall

	Lead Usher (1)	Ushers (3)	Coffee Hosts (2)	Greeters (2)	Chalice Lighter (1)
Dec. 20	D. Odell		T&L Henderson		V. Panetta
Dec. 24 6:30 pm					
Dec. 24 8:15 pm	D. Odell				
Dec. 27		J. Atwater	D&B Sekellick		Z. Andrews

About Us

Attention Beverwyck Residents! Your very own Helderberg Madrigal Singers will be performing songs and carols of the season at the Beverwyck VanCortlandt Room at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 22. Free admittance. All are welcome. See the **Danas** or **Dave Metz** for more information.

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

15-Dec Tuesday	7:00 PM	Soul Matters-Sherman/Way	Stott/Joy Library	24-Dec Thursday	6:30 PM	Candlelight Service	Sanctuary
17-Dec Thursday	7:00 PM	Board of Trustees	B-8		7:30 PM	Reception	Channing
19-Dec Saturday	6:00 PM	Guilderland Plus Potluck	Joyner/Kleinberger's		8:15 PM	Candlelight Service	Sanctuary
20-Dec Sunday	3:00 PM	Young Adults Gathering	Manning's	27-Dec Sunday	11:30 AM	Tree Undecorating	Channing
	7:00 PM	Men's Group	B-6	28-Dec Monday	1:00 PM	Windows mailing	Channing
21-Dec Monday	9:00 AM	Windows deadline	office		1:00 PM	Shelter Meal Prep	Kitchen
	12:00 PM	Channing Circle	Ch., Kit.		7:30 PM	Monday Men	B-8
	7:00 PM	Solstice Celebration	Channing				

Caroling!

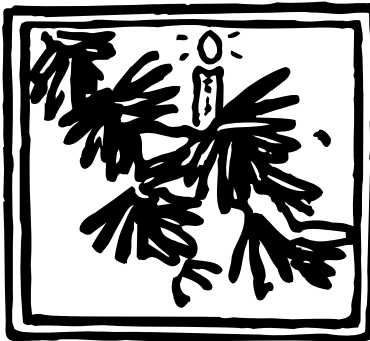
Sunday, December 20

There are two opportunities to go caroling with other FUUSAns :

The first opportunity will be to join our neighbors, **St. John's Lutheran Church**, 160 Central Avenue, Albany. They will be hosting "Carols in The Courtyard" at **12:30 pm**. They have invited us to join with them to sing carols and have some refreshments and enjoy some fellowship. This event will be outdoors so dress warmly!

The second opportunity will be gathering at the main entrance of **Beverwyck**, 40 Autumn Drive, Slingerlands at **3:00 pm** to sing carols to some of our members who reside there. This will be held inside - expect to be warm and comfortable.

Come to one or the other or both!



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.

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

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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. 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.

