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**Publication deadlines**

Mar. *Update*: Mar. 2

Apr. *Windows*: Mar. 16

# Windows

## Newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

### Dear FUUSA Family and Friends,

This time of the year our famous FUUSA optimism is kindled anew because of two things that are about to bloom around us. The first is that Spring is nearly here; the second is our upcoming annual Canvass. The harbingers of each are there for us all to see. For the first, we soon will be on daylight saving time; for the second the annual dinner skit cast is starting its work.

We come to FUUSA looking for meaningful connections in our lives. We stay for many reasons; some to be moved on Sunday morning, others to help us move on Friday nights. But the chief among these is the sense of family that is here. When we celebrate, we celebrate with our FUUSA family, finding enthusiasm in our triumphs. When hard times arrive, we come to our FUUSA family for comfort, knowing others have been there before and will help us get through.

FUUSA is the beacon in this community. We know that we as individuals, working with our fellow members and friends, are the ones who make it all happen. We are responsible and should take real credit for our successes--major projects like Emerson Community Hall, and lesser ones such as coffee and bagels on Sunday morning. We also connect with those of us who are in need, and with those outside our community who need our help to achieve basic rights and justice. FUUSAns work as a team to overcome obstacles. We are grateful and enlivened for and by all we accomplish together.

At this time of year we also have to assure the needed support for next year's operations. We recognize the reality of our current national economic situation, the worst many of us have ever experienced. And yet through good times and bad we have come together to keep our family to-  
**Canvass , continued on pg. 3**

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## Sam's Outlook

### Following Jesus as a Unitarian Universalist

Many Unitarian Universalists have a problem with Jesus. Some come from an abusive Christian background. God and Jesus were used as psychological weapons to suppress free thought and enforce conformity to the will of the institution. Those emotional scars can cover unhealed wounds. Others come from backgrounds such as Unitarian Universalist or Jewish, where they were ostracized for not being Christian. I remember being excluded by Christians because I didn't believe Jesus was part of a triune God.

While many people come into our congregation with wounded relationships to Je-

sus, that isn't the case for everyone. We have many people who grew up without a faith and are curious about Jesus and want to know more about him. We have people here who were fine with Jesus before becoming Unitarian Universalists. In fact, they are distressed when they hear others negative reactions to the mention of God or Jesus. If we are truly to be a free faith that is about values not beliefs, there must be room for Jesus here as well as room for other inspirational figures such as Buddha, Mohammad, Moses and Plato.

Key to rediscovering Jesus is separating  
**Sam's Outlook, continued on pg. 3**

## From the President

**Bridge over troubled waters:** For a brief period of time, many years ago, I was really quite broke--no soap for the laundry peanut butter sandwiches for supper broke. The ostensible reasons were divorce, an illness, a few poor decisions, and my own prideful desire to be "independent." There are two memories from that time that are still never far from my consciousness: the first was a realization about myself, the second an unexpected surprise.

The self-realization was that, in truth, I was not then, never had been, and probably never would be truly poor. I grew up in a loving family, was well educated, and had friends and relatives I could count on if I really needed to ask. As numerous writers, sociologists, and theologians have pointed out, being broke is a condition of one's wallet, and while it may be a painful condition, it does not affect the psyche, the spirit or the soul the way real poverty does. Broke is upsetting; poverty heartbreaking.

The surprise I received was opening an unsigned note in which I found a \$50 bill and the simple sentence, "Some day do the same for someone else." The postmark was local meaning it could not have come from my family, and it was many years before the terms "random acts of kindness" or "pay it forward" were to enter our common lexicon. While I was concerned that I didn't know whom to thank, I realized that this was a gift far more meaningful than the money itself. It was a life lesson about generosity, compassion and caring--of giving with no expectation of acknowledgment or reward.

Today, the national economic outlook remains bleak and extremely worrisome to us all. While many of us, perhaps most of us, have relatively safe jobs, stable incomes, and comfortable homes, we know that there are

those among us--and realistically there may be even more in the coming months--who may not be so fortunate and will need our help. We need to be ready to respond individually and as a congregation in a variety of specific ways.

In his recent sermon, "Awakening Through Brokenness," Sam called upon us to "set up a network of support for those in economic distress." We concluded the service that morning by singing "Bridge Over Troubled Waters," and we asked people to sign up through an insert in the Order of Service for ways they are willing to help. If you were not at that service and want to participate in this effort, please see the article "FUUSA's Bail-out Plan" elsewhere in this issue for information on how to help. Respondents will be informed on a case-by-case basis of specific needs within the congregation. We also, of course, need to know who needs our help. Therefore we encourage you, if you are impacted by these economic hard times--or if you know of someone else in the congregation who is--to please let Sam, me, or someone from our Caring Network know. We stand ready to help.

If indeed "the test of a community is how it responds to its members who are most in need," I am confident that we can and will rise to and meet this test.

**Our conversation with the District Futures Team:** As you know, planning, visioning and dreaming as to how to strengthen and grow Unitarian Universalism is not only happening in our own congregation with the work of the Dream Catchers, but

it is also happening within the St. Lawrence District, and, of course, the Unitarian Universalist Association. Participating in these efforts reminds us that we are part of a much larger and dynamic religious movement, and each individual and congregation enriches the whole.

Thirty-five FUUSAns participated in the recent conversation with the St. Lawrence District Futures Team, facilitated by Jeanne Crane, the District planning consultant. The conversation was rich and productive: we expressed our own vision for our congregation, articulated ways the District might help us, and "dreamed big" with what we would do if a million dollar windfall dropped in our laps. We heard both positive comments celebrating our beloved community and creative and stimulating ideas for stretching ourselves, our congregation, and our faith to new possibilities. Thank you to all who participated and to Dave Munro, who is guiding this planning process as chair of the District Futures Team.

**Finally, on the light side -- an unexpected "green gift":** Each week D brings in a container of his week's garbage and gives it to T for composting. But recently T put the bag on a coat closet shelf to attend a meeting and S mistakenly took it home thinking it was hers. Was she surprised when she opened it! So that's why you may have heard D, T and S laughing recently when they see each other in the coat closet asking, "Got the right bag?"

See you in church,

*Luide*



**Canvass , cont. from pg. 1**

gether and meet our collective needs. We will do what we have done for 167 years--make sure that FUUSA does not falter. We can and will increase the overall amount of giving by 3% over last year to meet our anticipated expenses, the lowest increase in several years, but the minimum needed to keep our promises. While most of us have not been significantly affected, some of us have suffered financial losses. Together we will meet our pledge goal, and we will include new members who will take us to the total we need. Each of us can examine the Fair Share Giving Guidelines and decide on a pledge that reflects the right level of commitment to and appreciation of our FUUSA family.

We are deeply grateful for your support, and for our opportunity together to make this a vital and nurturing religious community. Watch for more news and notes as our season unfolds.—Peter Brown, Canvass Committee chair

**Congregational Conversation**

on FUUSA's policy "**Toward a Safe Congregation** – Policies for Prevention of Sexual Misconduct, Physical Abuse and Harassment and Guidelines for Responding"

**Sunday, March 22**  
**11:30 am to 1:00 pm**  
Emerson Community Hall

Childcare and a light lunch will be provided.

**Rev Trumbore will be away** from March 25 to March 30 attending a Unitarian Universalist Buddhist Fellowship Convocation in Southern California. Urgent messages can be relayed to him through the office (463-7135).

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

him from the church created in his name. The first Unitarians did that by understanding him as a teacher not as a God. They were more interested in what he said and did before he died than what happened afterward. Even Christians have to struggle with this problem. If Jesus was God and knew he was God, then his death on the cross is meaningless since he can't be killed. On the other hand, if he is only human, then how can he be resurrected after death and become God? The Catholic solution, that he is 100% man and 100% God, makes no sense – and making sense is very important to our rational approach to religion.

The theology I've breezed through above is vastly more complicated than I can do justice to in a newsletter column. My purpose is to highlight the fact that we do have Unitarian Universalist Christians in our midst and that is just fine. Unitarianism and Universalism were originally sects of Christianity. In 1819, William Ellery Channing, at the ordination of Jared Sparks, gave the address titled "Unitarian Christianity" that signaled the beginning of institutional Unitarianism in the United States. Universalists believed at the turn of the nineteenth century that Jesus' death and resurrection was for all humanity not for some elect group as John Calvin believed. What united both Unitarians and Universalists even in the early 1800's was our devotion to a reasoned approach to figure out who Jesus was and how to follow him.

At merger, in 1961, Universalists were still more Christian, some even trinitarian, than the more humanistic Unitarians. This theological distinction that separated us was hotly debated here in this congregation before

agreeing to the merger. Both our traditions had long ago abandoned the attempt to tell their members how to believe. While everyone is free to formulate their own beliefs, we still retain, from both sides of our heritage, a special relationship with the enigmatic carpenter from Nazareth.

The Christian season of Lent, that began with Ash Wednesday on February 25 and concludes with Easter on April 12, is a good time to reflect on the life, teachings and message of Jesus. I'll be offering a sermon titled, "The Questions of Jesus," on Sunday, March 1 that will kick off my Lenten Bible Study class that begins March 3. We'll use the many questions Jesus asked as seeds for our own reflection and discussion with each other. The questions Jesus asked tended to shake people up and challenge their status quo. He can do the same for us today.

Whether you identify with Jesus or not, Lent provides a useful segment of time for self-reflection and renewal as we hunger for spring to come. I'll be encouraging the participants in the class to select one thing they will give up for Lent as a way of challenging unhealthy or harmful habits that weaken our spiritual life. I'll also be encouraging the participants to initiate a healthy or helpful behavior that will support their spiritual life.

Whether you join the class or not, I encourage everyone to reconsider your relationship with Jesus and make some room in your heart for his expansive love of the broken-hearted and his provocative challenge to the comfortable.

Rev. 

# Religious Exploration

## What does it mean to be safe?

### The dream of beloved community

Many UU's share a dream of beloved community. Our UU principles hold a creative tension between the inherent dignity and worth of each individual and the interconnectedness of life. The first and last words of our own chalice lighting, a poetic rendition on our mission statement, hold this tension: "We gather to excite the human spirit, to inspire its growth and development ...and sustain a vital and nurturing religious community."

The heart of our Religious Education program is creating healthy and nurturing relationships. I have urged our teachers and Rite of Passage mentors to teach to their passions; to be aware of the spiritual needs of the children and youth; and to build healthy and respectful relationships between adult and child or adult and youth. Forming relationships and being in community is an essential component of how all of us as Unitarian Universalists grow and learn; so it's important to pay attention to how we support community. Rev Thomas Mikelson, minister of First Parish in Cambridge, MA, writes, "In our congregations, we expect to be safe, not to have to be constantly on guard, as we have to be often in daily life, against the possibilities of exploitation and abuse... The rhythm of spiritual life is supported best by the sort of safety which is rarely found outside of religious community. Safety from abuse is one of the identifying signs of a healthy spiritual community."

### How safe is safe enough?

We want to be able to be physically safe and to be safe in our interactions with others in our congregation. And we want the same for the most vulnerable people in our community – our children and youth. Of

course, none of us can not ever be totally safe, nor can we totally protect our children in the world at large or even within our congregational community. What we do want is to create a community with the maximum amount of safety possible using precautions that we can consider to be reasonable. How can we make such determinations? First we can turn to the leadership to develop prudent policies based on the best information available and with guidance from the UUA. With that information and guidance, the Board can use its wisdom and power to, as FUUSA's by-laws state, "...create and sustain a non-creedal religious community. Our unity is based upon our concern for the individual and society and for the quality of life reflected in each."

### How do we get there?

In the fall of 2006 the Board of Trustees created a Safe Congregation Task Force to develop policies to keep children, youth and adults safe from abuse, assault and harassment. The policy is entitled "Toward a Safe Congregation". You can find the entire document on FUUSA's website in the "File Cabinet" at <http://www.albanyuu.org/safecong.pdf>. The Board adopted the policy last spring.

Much of the policy is a combination of our old RE Safety Policy and our policy for dealing with disruptive people. The policy outlines guidelines for volunteers and staff in their interactions with children and youth, including a stipulation that all adults 18 years old or older agree to a yearly background check that includes two references. The background checks would give two pieces of information: checking a person's social security number to verify their identity, and to check to see if he or she is in the national sex offender registry. In the past we only required that RE teach-

ers, advisors and mentors sign a code of ethics. In my presentations to RE volunteers, the background checks have generated some discussion. Nearly all the volunteers are in strong support of the policy, for some despite the requirement for background checks, others because of them. However some people in our congregation object to background checks.

This is all new ground for us, and so it's a bit scary, but it's also an opportunity for reflection and for sharing with each other. I chaired the Safe Congregation Task Force. In our research we reviewed the Safe Congregation policies of many congregations. One congregation's policy specifically states their goals: "[We strive to] be an inclusive community, affirming our differences in beliefs, opinions, and life experiences. However, concern for the safety and well-being of the congregation as a whole must be given priority over the privileges and inclusion of the individual. To the degree the disruption compromises the health of this congregation, our actions as a people of faith must reflect this emphasis on security." Our policy does not have such a specific articulation about how we balance the needs the individual with those of the community.

In this the first year of its implementation, our Safe Congregation policy is under review. What you would like for our community and what precautions do you think are prudent and reasonable to attain that? How do you think we should safeguard concern for the individual? To learn more about what the policy outlines for the prevention of and response to abuse, and to voice your comments on the policy, come to a Congregational Conversation on Sunday, March 22 from 11:30 to 1:00. Childcare and a light lunch will be provided.



# Social Responsibilities Council

## Criminal Justice and Prison

**Reform:** The Criminal Justice and Prison Reform Committee of the SRC, as a member of the Capitol District Chapter of the Coalition For Fair Criminal Justice Policies is presenting **Prison Health Care: focus on mental health on Saturday March 7** from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. here at FUUSA. The panel of mental health professionals include: Teresa Wuerdemann, Assistant Commissioner of DOCS Health Services; Dr. Timothy Whalen, Regional Medical Director. NE Region; Richard Miraglia, Associate Commissioner of Forensic Services for the NYS Office of Mental Health; and Doris Ramirez-Romero, Department of Corrections Director of Mental Health Services. The panel will answer questions submitted by the other participants, and a time will be set aside for participants to share their personal stories of prison mental health care. Please join us. A light lunch will be provided.

**Universal Healthcare:** Save the date – March 29. A Forum on Single Payer Universal Healthcare will be held at the First Presbyterian Church in Albany. Congressman Conyers – author of HR676 (“Medicare for All”) has accepted the invitation to speak. Other dignitaries will include Congressman Tonko. Details to follow.

**Sleep-a-Thon:** On Friday, March 6, please join the 14<sup>th</sup> annual *Sleep-a-Thon in the Park* to raise money for the Homeless Action Committee’s Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing and Outreach Van programs. Gather sponsors, spend an hour in Townsend Park (corner of Henry Johnson Blvd and Central Ave) between 7:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., and join in with high school students, college students, elected officials, and other church groups in support of this

important program. Information and registration forms are available at the SRC table or at the Social Justice Center, 33 Central Ave.

The next SRC meeting will be held on Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:40 a.m. in classroom B-7. All are welcome to attend.

◆Please continue to bring any no-longer-needed blankets or warm jackets to FUUSA for distribution to the homeless. There are still many more cold nights left in our North-east Winter! A collection box for the blankets will be in the coatroom each Sunday morning.

◆Remember – we’ll be preparing meals for the overflow emergency shelter on Monday March 29 (the fifth Monday of the month) as well as the first and third Mondays of the month. If you have questions or would like to participate please contact *Barb Cooley* or *Lois Griffin* for details.

## Regional Events

*Please mark your calendars and plan to attend!*

◆Mar. 4-6 The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual 40 hour FAST Together will be held from 8:00 PM on March 4 until noon on March 6. The event, sponsored by the Labor-Religion Coalition of New York State will focus on ‘Wage Theft.’ For details and information on how to get involved, see [www.labor-religion.org](http://www.labor-religion.org).

◆Mar. 6: **Sleep-a-Thon** fund raiser for Homeless Action Committee. Townsend Park (corner of Henry Johnson Blvd and Central Ave), 7:00PM – 5:00AM (spend an hour or more at the park – details above)

◆Mar. 7 **Prison Health Care: focus on mental health** on Saturday from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm here at FUUSA. (See details in SRC article)

◆Mar. 10, Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 PM: **Albany Community After School Network (ACAN)** will hold a forum/conversation - ‘Afterschool and Our Children.’ Location - Albany Housing Authority, 200 So Pearl Street, Al-

## FORUM

Mar. 8, in Emerson: **Albany County District Attorney David Soares** will speak on the measures he uses and proposes to use for fighting crime in Albany County. He will focus on violence prevention in the inner city of Albany, and ways to get guns off the streets. Learn about the programs D.A. Soares uses to emphasize prevention over prosecution.

To learn more about the activities of peace groups Maud Easter spoke about at the February 8 Forum, go to [www.womenagainstawar.org](http://www.womenagainstawar.org). They have a committee to prevent military action against Iran, plus committees to work on Iraqi refugee and Afghanistan issues. For more about their current work, read their blogs on <http://blogs.timesunion.com/wagingpeace>. In advocacy, there is power in numbers.

**Forums are in Room B-8 (except as noted) at 11:30 a.m.** If child care is wanted during the Forum, please call the church office at 463-7135 by noon Friday before the Forum.

bany. For information, call 462-7600 Ext 166.

◆Mar. 15 **Navigating the Healthcare Crisis**, Saturday, 1:00-4:00. Saratoga Springs Public Library, Community Room. Contact [Preed9@nycap.rr.com](mailto:Preed9@nycap.rr.com) for information.

◆Mar. 22-28 **Cover the Uninsured Week**,. Check the website [www.covertheuninsured.org](http://www.covertheuninsured.org) for events in NYS.

◆Mar. 29: Save the date for what promises to be a most informative conference on **Single Payer Universal Healthcare** to be held at 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church in Albany. Details to follow.

## FUUSA's bailout plan

Can FUUSA facilitate offering our members and friends support during these difficult economic times? Yes! FUUSA is initiating an Economic Distress Support Network. We are creating an email group to relay needs for support during these difficult economic times to those who'd like to help. Here is how it will work:

Email Rev. Trumbore <minister@albanyuu.org> (or call 463-7135) if you'd like to offer help with:

- ◆ financial counseling
- ◆ resume writing
- ◆ child care transportation
- ◆ financial support
- ◆ networking/referral
- ◆ organizing assistance
- ◆ or on a case by case basis

If you are in need, contact Rev. Trumbore who will confidentially seek assistance for you through this

new support network.

All requests for support will be screened by the minister. Helpers will be contacted by email as part of a group of people who have offered to help in the requested area. Helpers can decide when they receive the request whether to respond and offer help.

Please email Rev. Trumbore if you know of any FUUSAn who has been affected by the current economic crisis and might need assistance. Rev. Trumbore will then offer the choices of support to that individual that groups of people have volunteered and follow up with email requests to the appropriate groups.

Many thanks to the over sixty people who have stepped forward so far to offer help. Let our congregation be a bridge over troubled water for each other as we weather the current economic bad weather.

## Annual Fellowship Dinner: optional pricing

The Annual Fellowship Dinner, to be held at Franklin Terrace (formerly Mario's) in Troy on Friday, April 3, is a highlight of the church year. It is an event which everyone should have the opportunity and ability to attend, for its object is to engender as much fellowship as possible. Its byword is "The More the Merrier!"

This year, FUUSA's Executive Committee has authorized three alternative levels of payment. The first is a set price of \$32.50, which reflects the dinner's true cost. Secondly, those persons so required by circumstances may pay a lesser amount of their choosing. Thirdly, in a manner similar to UU Weekend at Silver Bay, those able and willing may express their generosity by making an additional contribution to assist persons who would otherwise be financially unable to attend. In short, finances are not a problem. Come one, come all!—George Kleinberger

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The Annual Fellowship Dinner will be held at 6:00 p.m., Friday, April 3, 2008 at Franklin Terrace (126 Campbell Avenue, Troy formerly Mario's)

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

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

Send in those RSVP's! If you don't receive an invitation in the mail, pick one up at the FUUSA office.

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## A report from FUUSA's ARISE Core Team

SAVE these two dates!

**ARISE's Annual Banquet, Tuesday, April 14**, 7 p.m. at the Albany Crowne Plaza Hotel (Silent Auction starts at 6 p.m.); dinner costs \$40.

**Workshop on Faith-Based Community Organizing, Saturday, May 2**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Siena College, \$10 (covers lunch & materials). Get the inside story from Barack Obama's community organizing teacher on the techniques he learned in his Chicago organizing days, which he applied so effectively in his campaign.

The syllabus includes:

1. moving from maintaining an institution to creating a community;
2. Understanding the biblical concept of "Power" - what it takes to get it done;
3. Reclaiming self-interest as a necessary tool to motivate one's self &

to motivate others;

4. Creating relationships - the prerequisite to effective evangelization;
5. Distinguishing between public & private relationships - or how to move from co-dependent to healthy, accountable, productive relationships; and
6. Building organizations that can be effective vehicles for social change.

### What issues is ARISE working on?

In addition to the Banquet, April 14 is also the date ARISE holds its "**New Opportunities Forum for Tech Valley**," 1 p.m.-5 p.m., at the Crowne Plaza. Corporate, educational, labor, and political leaders are being invited to discuss concrete actions to build pipelines of opportunity from distressed neighborhoods to good jobs. Four specific mechanisms will be discussed:

- 1 Developing a regional plan for housing and mass transit that con
- Core Team , continued on pg. 8**

## Refugee resettlement project

As a follow up to our Forum on sponsoring a refugee family, Sr. Marianne Comfort of Catholic Charities asked if we would be willing to sponsor an Iraqi family who will be settled in Albany in the near future. The family is a 50 yr. old mother and four young adult children; two sons ages 20 and 29, and two daughters ages 16 and 26. They currently are in Amman, Jordan, awaiting clearance to come to the U.S. Can we help out with this? Those of us meeting on February 16th felt that this project could be a way for us to help one family in need as a result of the Iraq war. Catholic Charities provides many services such as case managers, help with translators, finding an apartment, getting them enrolled in ESL classes, etc. We are needed to give volunteer support, such as collecting furnishings for the apartment, providing transportation to appointments and shopping, helping with English tutoring, providing some startup funding, and generally being available for the family's needs.

We're hoping to enlist young and old in this project. There can be a role for everyone. Dick Dana has agreed to chair the project, and he will be letting you know where you can fit in. We will be talking soon with the Board of Trustees to get their input.

The first need will be furnishings for the apartment, and I am coordinating that area. We have a list posted in Channing Hall of needed furniture and household items. If you have something to donate, sign up there, email or call Ann Brandon. We look forward to your generosity in reaching out to an Iraqi family in need, even while we help those around us in this stressful economic time.

The next meeting on the Refu-

## DOUBLEHEADER Saturday, March 7

6:00 p.m.  
Channing Hall

### *Elegant Italian Dinner*

Fundraiser for the Rite of Passage program for their trip to Boston

Menu:

Soup, gourmet ravioli, salad and bread, dessert, wine

**\$25 per person**

Your waitstaff will be the youth in the program.

Jeannie sings from the depths of her soul with rare skill and passion. Her four-octave range and unique vocal style go from strong blues-influenced singing from-the-gut, to lyrical, beautiful and sometimes haunting reflective singing. She performs jazz with equal agility, and is seen frequently in the Boston area and elsewhere. Her pop/rock sound has been compared to Bonnie Raitt, Sarah MacLachlan, Sheryl Crow and Margo Timmins of Cowboy Junkies.

7:30 pm  
Emerson  
Community  
Hall

Jeannie  
Gagné  
in Concert



Tickets:  
**\$10** per person,  
**\$20** family max

Sign up in Channing Hall during Coffee Hours in February.

Walk-ins are also welcome.

SPONSORED BY THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL

gee Resettlement Project will be held on Sunday, March 8 at 9:00 AM. In the meantime, if you have questions or would like more information, please contact Dick Dana or stop by the SRC table during coffee hour. --Ann Brandon, Member, Social Responsibilities Council

### Lenten Bible Study: The Questions of Jesus

Tuesdays, Mar. 3—Apr. 7, 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

Using the small group ministry format, we'll meet for six weeks to reflect personally on some of the questions Jesus posed as found in Christian Scripture. The goal of the class will be to learn more about the life and times of Jesus to better understand those questions. By thinking about those questions and hearing each other's responses to those questions, we hope to excite the our spirits and to stimulate our growth and development. The class will be led by Rev. Trumbore.

## St. Lawrence District Annual Assembly

### April 24-25 here at FUUSA

You don't have to travel far this year for the District Annual Assembly. We are hosting it right here in our congregation. This is a great way to meet other UUs from congregations in the district.

Some highlights:

- Friday evening April 24 activities will be the Josephine Gould Discourse by Rev. Kaaren Anderson from the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, who will speak after we gather for dinner at the church.
- Keynote speaker Rev. Tom Owen-Towle kicks off a full day of workshops & camaraderie with his address "The Prize is ... Growing the Beloved Community" on Saturday morning, April 25.
- Thought-provoking workshops and panel discussions on some of today's most important questions. Some of the Saturday workshops on the theme of growing and strengthening our congregations will include: Dealing Lovingly with Difference, Community Building through Lifelong Learning When Emergencies Happen: A Guide to Congregational Preparedness, 12 Hallmarks of Healthy Congregations, Building a Better Congregational Web Site, Dance as a Spiritual Practice Preaching by Parishioners.
- Also featuring the District Annual Meeting and a Bridging Ceremony of our senior youth.

Registration forms will be available shortly online at the St. Lawrence District website (<http://www.sld.uua.org/>), and also, at the FUUSA office. For information and if you are interested in being a delegate, please feel free to contact Denominational Affairs liaison Don Odell.

## Children's programming for DA

FUUSA is hosting District Assembly this year. I am working with District Staff to provide Children's Programming for Saturday, April 25 and I need help.

We are offering three program tracks which we hope families will find appealing. The children will have different programming in the morning and afternoon and will join their parents for lunch.

The programming offered is based on age.

- Infants and toddlers, up to three years
- Pre-K through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade (ages 3 to about 8)
- 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade (about ages 9 to 14)

Programming for high school youth will be organized by the District Youth/Adult Committee.

The programming will be similar to our Summer RE sessions with age appropriate games, activities and crafts. The older groups will go to Washington Park or a local museum as well. Each group in the children's program will be staffed with at least one adult and one youth. I will be supervising the program throughout the day. Now I'm looking for people in our congregation to help out. Would you like to staff with either the morning or the afternoon session of one of the groups? Adult volunteers will get free registration to the rest of District Assembly. So you'll get a free lunch and be able to attend a session of adult workshops or lectures. Youth will be paid \$10 per hour and join everyone for lunch too.

Please contact me if you're interested. Leah Purcell 463-7135; [dre@albanyuu.org](mailto:dre@albanyuu.org)

## Giving Away the Plate

We continue our practice of periodically 'giving away the plate' to a community organization. Any money placed in the collection plate on Sunday, March 1 that is not specifically designated toward your pledge or capital campaign contribution will be donated to Prison Action Network (PAN). Prison Action Network works in close collaboration with our Social Responsibilities Council's Committee on Criminal Justice and Prison Reform. PAN seeks to transform complaints into change by empowering the people most directly impacted by incarceration to become advocates for themselves, their incarcerated loved ones and the communities from which they come. Using their

newsletter Building Bridges to communicate with people in prison and their families and advocates on the outside, PAN has organized annual Family Empowerment Days, which this year brought over 500 people together to choose a focus for their energy. From those meetings the Coalition For Fair Criminal Justice Policies has formed with a chapter in NYC and one in Albany. In Albany the issue chosen for this year is Prison Health Care, and their second event, in a year-long campaign, will focus on mental health care, and take place here at FUUSA on March 7. Your generosity in supporting these activities through your donation is very much appreciated.

### *Core Team , cont. from pg. 6*

nects workers in their affordable homes with jobs;

2. Developing strategies for those trying to re-enter the work force from prison, from drug and alcohol rehab, from having fled one's native land as refugee;

3. Connecting city school districts to the workforce systems of the region: job training, community colleges, colleges, universities; and

4. Negotiating Community Benefits Agreements in Albany, Schenectady, and Troy in order to leverage monies for items 1, 2, and 3 above.

If you want more information or are interested in attending any of these events, see Dick Dana.



## Social Events Committee news

The following memo was submitted to the Program Coordinating Council on Thursday, Feb. 12:

The Social Events Committee (S.E.C.) was originally formed some years ago to bring some enjoyable fellowship to our congregation. We needed social activities at that time, and S.E.C. planned and executed two activities a month for several years. These events ranged from Everybody's Birthday Party and Karaoke to lovely dinner parties - both intergenerational and adults only. FUUSAns had good times as did the committee members themselves. We are blessed now with a friendly, camaraderie oriented community with several committees sponsoring suppers and other social events. S.E.C. members feel that our mission has been completed! We are still a cohesive group with over a dozen enthusiastic members, however, by a unanimous vote, we elected to suspend our work for one year pending our need to exist the following year. The Silver Bay Committee will still sponsor and execute the UU Weekend Wine and Dine Event, but alas, Everybody's Birthday Party and the Christmas tree decoration events will be on hold unless other committees choose to continue them. It is not with sorrow that this discussion and decision were made, but with joy to realize that FUUSA has become a united, socially oriented, friendly community

If you are interested in organizing Everybody's Birthday Party or the Christmas Tree Trimming next year, please contact Lois or the church office.-  
- Lois Thomson, Chair

## Channing Circle

We meet again on Monday, March 16th at noon for lunch and a fantastic program. The 'COLONIE TIMELESS TAPPERS' will treat us to a performance. They describe themselves as "a senior tap troop sponsored by the Colonie Senior Services Center. We range in age from 55 to 80+, and in dance experience from 20 years with the group to relative newcomers. We are "SENIORS IN SEQUINS" and bringing a sparkling show to our senior population is a great joy and rewarding experience for us." Not to be missed!

Bring your lunch. Members of our 'Circle' will provide delicious desserts, as well as coffee and tea. In addition to the contribution we collect for beverages, we will ask for a small donation to give to our performers. Please also bring summer programs you may have for venues that might be of interest to us.—Thayer Heath and Ursula Poland

## Walker Book Club

The Walker Book Club will next meet on Sunday, March 8, commencing with a potluck supper at 5:30 PM at Lisa Walker's, 24 Roweland Ave, Delmar. Bring your favorite dish to share, and a small contribution to cover beverages. If you need directions, call Lisa (439-6017). Newcomers are always welcome.

Dates and books currently scheduled:

- March 8. Greg Mortenson & David Oliver Relin, Three Cups of Tea. Suggested by Barb Cooley and Winston Hagborg.
- April 19. Arundhati Roy, The God of Small Things. Suggested John Cooley.
- May 10. Phil Doran, The Reluctant Tuscan. Suggested by Don Odell.
- June 14. Short stories to be selected at the April meeting, and available at the May meeting.

**Ushers Needed**—Don't forget that ushers are needed for the services every Sunday. It's easy to do under the guidance of a trained Head Usher. Sign up for a Sunday on the list posted in Channing Hall. Your help is needed.

featuring FUUSA's own  
Matt Edwards!

# BUCK2Fifty

"New Orleans R&B  
via Albany, NY"

Friday, March 27

7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Emerson Community Hall

\$15.00 adults

\$8.00 children under 10

Refreshments will be served

All proceeds from the Buck2Fifty New Orleans R&B night will go to the Choir's 2010 European Tour Fund. Our sincere thanks and gratitude to the members of Buck2Fifty for their time and talent.

Items of personal joy or caring may be submitted during the service on the yellow cards provided, or directly to Irene Saulsbery (ifsaul@yahoo.com) or Ann Lapinski (fbarker@nycap.rr.com).

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

## Why CROP Walk?

Why walk, some ask? What good does walking do to fight hunger and poverty? The CROP Hunger Walk says, "We walk because they walk." Most of the world's people must walk every day to meet their basic needs, for food, firewood, and water. So, our Walk is symbolic – we walk in solidarity with those who must walk simply to survive. The money we raise in pledges, however, goes way beyond symbolism – those badly needed funds go directly to supply local food pantries and to support hunger relief programs in more than 80 countries. Become a CROP Walker on Sunday, May 3, or pledge to support FUUSA walkers on Team UU. See Dawn Dana for more information. Join us as we walk with the world!

## Spirituality Book Club

The Spirituality Book Club meets at noon on Sundays to discuss books on spiritual subjects. Upcoming books are:

Mar. 15: Proverbs of Ashes; Violence Redemptive Suffering and the Search for What Saves Us

Apr. 19: Art of Power by Thich Nhat Hahn

If you have questions contact Philomena Moriarty Trumbore.

## Heads Up!

Committee chairs: Plan ahead for writing your contribution to this year's Annual Report. The deadline is Monday, April 20. The Annual Report is our record of all we do! If you are a new chairperson and don't have your committee's report from last year (for inspiration!) I can send it to you, just ask.—Church administrator, Amy Lent.

## 2010 Census jobs info

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

## Sunday Volunteers

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

	Lead Usher (1)	Ushers (3)	Coffee Hosts (2)	Greeters (2)	Chalice Lighter (1)
Mar. 1			J. McCracken		
Mar. 8			J. Bolgatz		S. Tilgner
Mar. 15					S. Kessel
Mar. 22	C. Manning	B. Manning			A. Nelson
Mar. 29					V. ?

## Events Happening Every Sunday at FUUSA

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

### Exceptions:

Mar. 1 Children's Chapel will be in the Sanctuary

## Events Happening Every Week in the Month of March

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

### Exceptions:

Choir—No rehearsals Wednesdays March 11, 25; No choir on Sundays March 15, 29.

## All Other Events Happening in the Month of March

1-Mar	9:15 AM	Seder Meeting	21	11-Mar	5:30 PM	ARISE Core Team	B-7
	10:00 AM	Children's Chapel	Sanctuary		5:30 PM	Canvass Committee	B-3/4
	11:45 AM	SRC Meeting	B-7	12-Mar	7:00 PM	PCC Meeting	B-8
	11:45 AM	Dream Catchers Discussions	Channing, 24/25	14-Mar	3:00 PM	Dream Catchers Conversation	Emerson
2-Mar	9:00 AM	Windows Update deadline		15-Mar	11:30 AM	Green Sanctuary Committee	B-7
	10:00 AM	SGM Perkins	B-8		12:00 PM	Spirituality Book Club	B-8
	6:15 PM	Religious Education Council	Channing		12:00 PM	Manning Auction Luncheon	Emerson (Alcove), Kitchen
3-Mar	5:30 PM	Oriel Meeting	B-7	16-Mar	9:00 AM	Windows deadline	
	7:00 PM	AdEd: Lenten Bible Study	B-8		10:00 AM	SGM Perkins	B-8
4-Mar	1:30 PM	SGM Patka	B-8		12:00 PM	Channing Circle	Channing, B-8
	5:30 PM	SGM Murray	B-8	17-Mar	7:00 PM	AdEd: Lenten Bible Study	B-8
	6:30 PM	Earth Spirits	26	18-Mar	1:30 PM	SGM Patka	B-8
5-Mar	7:00 PM	SGM Street/Boreali	Stott/Joy Library		3:30 PM	Staff Meeting	Study
	7:00 PM	Board of Trustees	B-8		5:30 PM	SGM Murray	B-8
6-Mar	5:00 PM	ROP Dinner Cooking	Kitchen	19-Mar	7:00 PM	Board of Trustees	B-8
7-Mar	9:00 AM	New Member Orientation	Channing		7:00 PM	SGM Street/Boreali	Stott/Joy Library
	10:00 AM	Prison Health Care Presentation	Emerson	20-Mar	6:30 PM	Guilderland Plus Potluck	Lapinski/Barker's
	4:00 PM	Dinner Setup	Channing, Kitchen		7:00 PM	Earth Spirits Spring Equinox	Channing (time approx.)
	6:00 PM	Elegant Italian Dinner	Channing, Kitchen	21-Mar	10:00 AM	Labyrinth (to 2:00 pm)	Channing
	7:30 PM	REC Music Event	Emerson		7:00 PM	Dances of Universal Peace	Channing
8-Mar	9:00 AM	Refugee Resettlement Meeting	B-8	22-Mar	11:30 AM	Oriel Meeting	B-3/4
	11:30 AM	Forum	Emerson		11:30 AM	Congregational Conversation	Emerson, 24-25
	11:45 AM	Census Test/A Coleman	B-3/4	23-Mar	1:00 PM	Windows mailing	Channing
	1:00 PM	Rite of Passage Meeting	B-7		3:30 PM	Shelter Meal Prep	Kitchen
	5:00 PM	Cancer Support Group	B-8		7:30 PM	Monday Men	Stott/Joy Library
9-Mar	1:00 PM	Windows Update mailing	Channing	24-Mar	7:00 PM	SGM Sherman	Stott/Joy Library
	3:30 PM	Shelter Meal Prep	Kitchen		7:00 PM	AdEd: Lenten Bible Study	B-8
	5:30 PM	Membership Committee	Stott/Joy Library	26-Mar	7:00 PM	Finance Committee	B-8
	7:30 PM	Monday Men	Stott/Joy Library	27-Mar	7:30 PM	Choir Fundraiser Cabaret	Emerson, Kitchen
10-Mar	7:00 PM	SGM Sherman	Stott/Joy Library	29-Mar	11:30 AM	Endowment Trust Meeting	Stott/Joy Library
	7:00 PM	AdEd: Lenten Bible Study	B-8	31-Mar	7:00 PM	AdEd: Lenten Bible Study	B-8
	7:00 PM	Dream Catchers	B-7				

## A Community Passover Seder

Led by Rev. David Weissbard

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

Adults = \$15.00

Children (6-12) = \$7.00

Family price max. = \$50.00

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

**Everyone welcome !**



## First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

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### **FUUSA's planning...Your voice is needed!**

The Dream Catchers want to hear from you!

**Sun. Mar. 1**, 11:45 light lunch, 12:00 p.m. discussion  
"Spirituality and Theological Diversity"

**Sat. Mar. 14**, 3:00—5:00 p.m., with hors d'oeuvres and  
shared beverages, "Social Justice Conversations"



## **Sunday Services**

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

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

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

**Mar. 1 "The Questions of Jesus" --The Rev. Sam Trumbore (Emerson) Children's Chapel (Sanctuary)**

Jesus didn't give us a lot of answers but he did give us an amazing number of questions to ponder. Rather than give an answer to a question, Jesus often offered a teaching story. Using his questions, Jesus can become a mirror for us to see ourselves. These questions will be our source for reflection in the six week Lenten Bible Study class beginning Tuesday evening, March 3.

**Mar. 8 "Reliable Uncertainty"--The Rev. Sam Trumbore (Emerson)**

Few saw the economic collapse coming that we're suffering through right now. Looking at the past, bankers fooled themselves into thinking real estate prices could only go up. Now it seems obvious that a fall was coming. Could it be that the amount of uncertainty in life is actually increasing along with the complexity of our lives and unexpected events will happen more frequently? How do we live in a world where the risk of the unexpected is increasing?

**Mar. 15 "From Fetus to Prius: A Millennial Retrospective"—High School Youth (Emerson)**

**Mar. 22 "How Safe is Safe?"— The Rev. Sam Trumbore (Emerson)**

Many grandparents are noticing how much more careful their children are raising their grandchildren than they were in raising them. Children have play dates rather than just running around outside unsupervised. For a number of reasons, parents are more vigilant in making sure their children are safe ... and that is affecting our congregation. Over the last ten years, FUUSA has instituted a number of policies, consolidated in our new safety policy, to prevent harm to children and adults. So, just how safe do we want to be? And what price are we willing to pay? Note: Please stay after the service to learn about and discuss our new FUUSA Safe Congregation Policy.

**Mar. 29 "FOOD: Freeing Our Omnivorous Delusions"— Pam Collins (Emerson)**

Our relationship with food is a complex and sometimes troubled one. In our lives, food is a necessity, a luxury, a benefit, a detriment, a comfort and an addiction. It contributes to our destructive footprint on the earth at the same time that it is our most intimate link with nature. This sermon looks at how we can weigh in on the positive side of the troubled equation of our relationship with food.