

THE JOURNEY

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Saratoga Springs * 624 N. Broadway * Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
Rev. Linda Hoddy, Minister * saratoga-uu.org * 518-584-1555 * Vol. 16 No. 6 * February 2012



*Love is the doctrine of this church,
The quest for truth is its sacrament,
And service is its prayer.
To dwell together in peace,
To seek knowledge in freedom,
To serve human need,
To the end that all souls shall grow into harmony
with the Divine—
Thus do we covenant with one another.*

Religious Services for February

Sunday services are held at 10 A.M. Children are with us for the first part of the service before their religious education classes. Nursery care is provided for infants and preschool children. A social hour is held in the Sanctuary after the service.

February 5 — “Occupy Reality”

Barnaby Feder

It has been said that love isn't genuine unless it seeks to be effective. That points us toward the tough and holy question of what's required to transform heartfelt calls for change into results that reflect our UU values.

Mr. Feder is a lifelong UU who covered business and technology for the New York Times for 27 years before entering divinity school in 2008. He is currently completing an internship at the Morristown (N.J.) Unitarian Fellowship and serving as consulting minister at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Poconos in Stroudsburg, Pa. Dan Berggren will sing his original song on the theme, “Occupy the Moment.” The Lay Worship Leader is Elinor Brook.

February 12 — “Extending Our Love to B.E.S.T.”

Phyllis Frederick and Marcia Pappas

Phyllis, the coordinator of the Free Store of the Backstretch Employees Service Team of the Saratoga Racecourse, and Marcia, the Benefits Assistant for B.E.S.T., will share their experiences, describe the lives of the workers, and suggest ways in which we can all become more involved with the organization. Refer to the article on page 2 for a list of needed items you can bring to the service.

Coordinated by Nedra Stimpfle, UUCSS member, and Bonnie Nelson, Director of Religious Education, this multi-generational service seeks to educate us about how our lives are touched by immigration, the current study-action issue of the UUA. There are no religious education classes today. The lay Worship Leader is Maureen Rice.

February 19 — “So Help Me, God”

Shelley Carter

Current disputes over the line between church and state are neither the first nor the fiercest in our history. The first three presidents of our country all contended with this extremely divisive issue. In honor of President's Day, Shelley will share some of the information in the book *So Help Me God* by Forrest Church, the late minister of the Unitarian Church of All Souls in New York City. The history of the tangled intersections of religion and politics is particularly relevant in this election year, and some of the beliefs of the early presidents may surprise you.

Shelley is a member of our congregation. The Lay Worship Leader is Robert Mohowski.

February 26 — “From Confrontation to Reconciliation”

Rev. Linda Hoddy

In honor of Black History Month, we'll look at how Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. advanced the philosophy of non-violence, and how the Occupy Movement stacks up against it. For Dr. King, it didn't end with confrontation. Instead, he said, “Reconciliation is the mandatory closing step of a campaign, when the opponents and proponents celebrate the victory and provide joint leadership to implement change.”

The Lay Worship Leader is Beth Johansen.

Coordinators for February

Caring Coordinator

Betty Hurley-Dasgupta
577-5970 • betty.lawrence@esc.edu

Child Care Coordinator

Sara Krahnke
sarakrahnke@gmail.com

UUCSS Book Group

February 20 we will discuss *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith* by Jon Krakauer. Relying on his strong journalistic and storytelling skills, Krakauer uses an array of disturbing firsthand accounts and news stories to tell the story of an appalling double murder committed by two Mormon fundamentalist brothers, Ron and Dan Lafferty, who insist they received a revelation from God commanding them to kill their victims.

The UUCSS Book Group meets on the third Monday of the month in the King Room. At 6 P.M. we have a wonderful dinner, and at 6:30 we begin discussion of the book. Everyone is welcome! You do not need to have read the book to attend the discussion.

Contact Judy for more information about the group, and Diana if you'd like to contribute to our dinner. Please join us.

Judy Halstead Diana O'Brien
halstead@skidmore.edu dianaobrien4@yahoo.com

Extending Our Love to B.E.S.T.

For the service on February 12, at which we will be honoring the Backstretch Employees Service Team of the Saratoga Racecourse, please consider bringing new or gently used items from the following list:

Toiletries, bedding (single bed sheets, pillows, pillow cases), towels and wash cloths, housewares (small appliances, dishes, glassware, utensils, silverware, small tables), soft luggage, tote bags.

For the men: jeans (32/30, 30/30), baseball caps, jackets of any kind, t-shirts, hooded and regular sweat shirts, sweaters, scarves, gloves, mittens, hats, belts, ties, shoes/running shoes/boots, straw hats; *For the women:* jeans, pants, coats, pocketbooks.

No fancy clothes for anyone, please, and no children's clothing at all. *Urgently needed items* are readers (125, 150, 175), safety glasses, and sunglasses.

After the service we'll pack the items and take them to a storage space. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Nedra Stimpfle
nstimpfle@nycap.rr.com • 587-4980

The Comforts of Home

With your help in recent weeks we've been able to create a more comfortable and peaceful environment as we gather in our Sanctuary each Sunday morning. We thank you for arriving as early as you can so that we all may be seated at the beginning of the service at 10 A.M.

We especially thank early arrivals for being seated toward the front of the Sanctuary and away from the aisles as much as possible so that those who arrive after you may find a seat more easily.

Dennis Herlihy, Head Usher
dennis_herlihy@yahoo.com

Coffeehouse, Anyone?

Save the date—Saturday, March 24—for the Second Annual UUCSS Harbinger of Spring Coffeehouse. Come join us in the Sanctuary at 7:30 P.M. to help celebrate the turning of the season. It's an open-mic opportunity for you to share a song, instrumental piece, story, prose, or poetry reading, and/or to be a part of a most attentive and appreciative audience. You can be a solo performer, half of a duo, or part of a group. Our young people are most welcome to participate.

Look for more information in next month's newsletter. Interested in helping to plan and run the event? Please check in with one of us.

Mary Cobb • marync6@gmail.com
Alan Bartenhagen • alanbart@nycap.rr.com

Want to Learn More About Unitarian Universalism and the Saratoga Springs Congregation?

On Thursdays, March 22 and 29, from 7 to 9 P.M., the Membership Committee will offer a two-class sequence entitled "Learning About Unitarian Universalism and the Saratoga Congregation."

Attendees will meet others who are new to the congregation while learning about the long and rich history of our religion. We will also talk about our individual and collective values and beliefs and will have an opportunity to discuss those with one another and with Rev. Hoddy. Some of the leaders of the congregation will also be with us to discuss the many opportunities available to both Friends and Members here at UUCSS.

We hope that you can join us for these informal and informative evenings. Please contact us for more information.

Caren Baker • carenabaker@gmail.com • 583-0944
Nedra Stimpfle • nstimpfle@nycap.rr.com • 587-4980

Please Help Us Stretch Our Budget

In order to save pledge dollars and conserve energy during this heating season, we ask on behalf of the congregation that committee chairs, group leaders, and individuals using the basement in the evenings ensure that the thermostats are turned down and the interior doors are closed if you are among the last to leave. Instructions are posted near the thermostats in the Chapin Room and the Office. Please be sure to turn off the copier, too. Many thanks from us all.

*Alan Bartenhagen, for the Building & Grounds Committee
alanbart@nycap.rr.com*

Saratoga UUs in the News

A quick reminder to periodically check the UUs in the News bulletin board in the stairwell for articles about members of our congregation that have appeared in local newspapers. Currently you'll find two articles about Caren Baker's field of honor, an article from the archives about the early days of our congregation, and a new article about how Harry Moran's work as a financial advisor relates to membership in the church and to his beliefs in social responsibility.

Wave Riders Program to Begin March 1

The Community Hospice of Saratoga is offering a 6-week Wave Riders support group program for grieving children and teens aged 3 to 17 who have experienced any type of death-related loss in their lifetimes. Through art and dialogue, Wave Riders provides a safe, supportive environment to help children and teens learn that they are not alone, that their feelings are perfectly normal, and that they can express their feelings in safe and healthy ways.

The experience of grief has been compared to the waves of an ocean. Like the ocean, the waves of shock, confusion, anger, pain, and loneliness may be present in giant surges. Given time, and with support, the waves get smaller and more time passes between each wave. The Wave Riders program provides a safe place where families can move forward on their journey of grief and healing. The program is open to children who have experienced the death of a loved one, including a parent, grandparent, sibling, or friend.

A parents educational support group runs concurrently with each children's group. This group is designed to help parents better understand how grief affects their children and how they can assist them in the grieving process.

The entire 6-week Wave Riders program is offered free of charge at the Community Hospice of Saratoga County at 179 Lawrence Street in Saratoga Springs. Registration is required, and space is limited.

Please feel free to contact the Hospice at 581-0800 for more information.

The Kudos for February

The Board of Trustees extends our wholehearted gratitude to the following people for all your contributions and dedication to our congregation over the past month:

To former members of the Board **Harry Moran, Gregg Pratt, and Sue Ward** for your dedicated service to the congregation over the past few years; and welcome to new members **Rachel McCracken, Jim Mihuta, and Nedra Stimpfle**;

To **Sally Kirouac** for organizing the Growth Task Force dinners, and to all the hosts who welcomed us in their homes: **Barbara and Jerry Kass, Shelley and Jack Carter, Linda and Brent Wilkes** with **Arliss Nygard and Murray Penney, Caren Baker, Elizabeth and John Collins** with **Mary Cobb and Dennis Herlihy, Laura and David Crummack** with **Nancy and Dan Berggren, and Gayle and Brian King**;

To **Jack Carter** for moderating the ongoing meetings of the Growth Task Force, and for hosting the informative Alice Mann video presentations on mission and growth;

To **Brent Wilkes** for writing the formal job descriptions for the Board of Trustees;

To **Carol Holley and Chris Kus** for attending the Our Whole Lives training;

To **Laura Crummack** for chairing the new Communications Committee;

To **Bonnie Nelson** for co-leading the Fire Communion service on New Year's Day, and to all who brought food and drink for the brunch that followed;

To **Nikki Williams, Lili Dobert, and Sue Bender** for your inspiring service about the Wellspring program;

To quartette extraordinaire **Kimberley Debus, Dan Berggren, Jack Carter, and Linda Hoddy** for your performance of Michael Harrison's beautiful choral arrangement;

To **Karen Hess and Elinor Brook** for service as Worship Associates; Karen concluded three years of service on New Year's Day, and Elinor will conclude more than two years of service on February 5;

To **Mark Nelson and Ben Nelson** for serving as greeters or coffee hosts on many a Sunday morning;

To **Kim Zygadlo and Paul Mastrodonato** for donating the sink and vanity for the upstairs restroom, and to **Jim Mihuta** for donating the wicker table; to **Alan Bartenhagen** for restoring and painting the vanity and table; and to **Michael McGraw** for your plumbing and woodworking expertise;

To **Rob Haren** for making various improvements to the building as required by the city's fire inspector;

To everyone who contributed to the financial gift of \$938 to Shelters of Saratoga at our Christmas Eve services;

To everyone who volunteered at the community service projects on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in Saratoga Springs.

RE News for February

State of the Youth Group at UUCSS

As I sit down to write, it is just a couple of hours away from President Obama's State of the Union address. He'll talk about where we've been this year, and where we're going. We've been doing a lot of that here lately in our congregation. We've been doing it quite a bit in regard to our Youth Group as well.

I passionately believe that young people inherently have an amazing capacity for compassion, love, and empathy. I believe they truly want to serve and make a difference in their world and have the power to create enormous positive change—if we, as the adults in their lives, listen to them and support them in opportunities to do so. In keeping with our 6th Principle of working toward a world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all, it is our responsibility as a congregation to work together to ensure that our youth have these opportunities.

This is just one of the many reasons why a strong, vibrant youth ministry is so important to a UU congregation. In addition, it is our UU children and youth who are the future of not only our congregation but of our faith. It is these remarkable young people who will take Unitarian Universalism with them as they go out into the world and spread it if we provide an empowering, enriching youth ministry experience for them. In addition, an active, vibrant youth group will radiate that positive energy throughout the whole congregation.

Over the past two years, Addy Waldie has done an absolutely outstanding job of coordinating and leading the Youth Group. She's invested an incredible amount of time and energy with our youth working on social justice projects, such as raising funds for Rebuilding Saratoga, developing their youth community and their identity, and building fellowship. And she's been doing it all on her own. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Addy for her incredible contribution to our Youth Group—for all her time, energy, and commitment to our kids. *Thank You, Addy!*

However, one person cannot do this alone. Our Youth Group has endured some bumpy times this school year, mainly because we haven't had enough adult volunteer leadership to support Addy in her role. But she's done an amazing job of keeping the group together during this difficult time. With this in mind, we've been working diligently to look at what was needed and taking action to get the group the support that it needs to thrive. And we're making some great strides. I've been working to recruit more volunteers. Also, we've chosen a social justice-themed curriculum, "Heeding the Call: Qualities of a Justice Maker," which, along with providing a rich learning opportunity, also provides a structured learning tool for adult volunteers to work from. The group is no longer meeting offsite at First Baptist but is back "home" and meeting at UUCSS. And we're opening a dialogue about what we want for our Youth Group.

At a planning meeting this past week, we started by asking three questions: "What do we want to provide for our youth?" "What heritage do we want to pass onto them?" "How can we include them more in our congregation?" Here's what the group came up with:

- 1) To have our youth be positive about church.
- 2) To provide values education and a safe place for youth to process life issues.
- 3) To provide a safe environment where they can be themselves.
- 4) To provide a space of their very own that they can call "theirs" and create it the way they want it.
- 5) To help them develop their own spirituality and relate it to service through service trips.
- 6) To provide heritage trips to important UU sites.
- 7) To integrate them into our church life; that they will serve both within and without; to be involved with projects of the Social Justice Committee.
- 8) To develop their leadership skills.
- 9) To educate them about Unitarian Universalism and world religions.

And now, I'd like to hear from you. I'd like to invite all of you into this conversation. What do *you* want for our/your Youth Group? I ask that you think about those three questions. How might you answer? We're looking for feedback from everyone. This isn't just a conversation for parents of kids currently in the group. This is a conversation that needs to involve every member of our congregation. As we continue to talk about growth and "where we go from here," I believe that the needs of our children and youth and their families must be of paramount importance and a primary focus in that discussion. I will continue in my role to advocate for those needs and for the best possible Religious Education and Youth Group experiences we can provide. In order to do that, I need to hear from you. Please know that I am always available to talk with you about your thoughts, ideas, suggestions, and concerns.

It's true—we've made a great start! As part of the effort to increase adult leadership and to support Addy in her role, we've pulled together a small team—a terrific group of volunteers who have come forward to teach and substitute. Our newest Youth Group volunteers are John Adams, who has volunteered to assist Addy with teaching the group on a fairly regular basis, and Jack and Shelley Carter, who have volunteered to teach periodically throughout the year. Thank you all so very much for being willing to give your time and energy to help and support our youth!

Although we're making progress, we've a long way to go, and we need your help! We still have a serious need for adult volunteers to teach, to be available as substitutes, and to help

with special events, service projects, and other initiatives. Our Youth Group cannot continue without a strong, consistent team of adults.

If you like working with young people, please consider volunteering to work with the Youth Group. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact me at 899-8098 or dre@saratoga-uu.org. I am also currently holding office hours on Thursdays from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M. at the church and can be reached there at 584-1555. I look forward to hearing from you!

With peace and warm blessings for these winter months,

Bonnie Nelson, Director of Religious Education
dre@saratoga-uu.org

The President's Column

Last evening I attended one of the pot luck dinners that were arranged to give everyone a chance to talk about what our new Mission Statement might say. The food was outstanding, as usual, but the conversation was the high point. About half of the congregation has accepted invitations to attend a dinner, and that's a significant show of interest.

The ideas gathered and discussed at the dinners will be sifted to identify those most frequently mentioned and will be crafted into a draft of a short but compelling Mission Statement. The draft will be returned to the congregation for comment before eventually being adopted as our own. This Mission Statement will then be used to create a more detailed vision for the future of our congregation. We will use this roadmap as we travel forward and revise it as necessary in two or three years.

Our updated website is a quick and easy way to communicate when we are trying to gather information. There is a place on it for us to add more suggestions for the new Mission Statement. The list hasn't been used much, although it's been there for many weeks. Check it out! (While you're at it, take a look at our Facebook page and "like" us.)

We have a new and talented Communications Committee that handles the website and the numerous other ways we use (or will use) to get the word out about UUCSS, either among ourselves or to the community at large. Thank you to Chair Laura Crummack, Jillian Ehrenberg, Alan Bartenhagen, Erika Tebbins, Lin Hare, and Ann Hebert for their contributions. They can only do so much, however. The rest of us have a responsibility to look at the website periodically if we want to keep up with the doings of the congregation. The weekly announcements emailed to us each Friday don't contain everything.

If you don't feel sure about how to utilize our website or Facebook page, let us know. If there is sufficient interest, we can arrange to have one or two of the techies from the

Communications Committee teach us how to navigate our electronic media some Sunday after the service.

Because of our increasing numbers, the old ways of communicating important information among ourselves are not as effective as they used to be. The Board of Trustees and the Communications Committee are working toward making access to information easy and timely for all members and friends. For example, news related to our transition in ministry and to the work of the Growth Task Force changes frequently. We want to make sure that our members and friends get the facts, not a third-hand version that may be inadvertently incorrect. Accordingly, we will soon begin to post brief updates on our website about the vital news that concerns the entire congregation.

I am happy to communicate with anyone who has questions. My email address is below. Please use only this one and delete all others you may have used in the past. If a phone call is better for you, my home number is 899-5850.

Faithfully,

Nikki Williams, President
Nikki.uucss@gmail.com

ReveLations

I will be away for three Sundays this month. On February 5, I will speak to the First Unitarian Society of Schenectady on behalf of Rev. Priscilla Richter, who will be on Sabbatical from February through May. Rev. Richter preached here during my sabbatical in 2008. It's something we ministers do for one another. Meanwhile, on February 5, you will hear pulpit guest Barnaby Feder, who is just coming into our ministry.

February 8–15 I will take a week's vacation for a little mid-winter R and R, spending a few days at Kripalu Institute and a few days painting and choosing appliances for our retirement home in the Berkshires.

On February 19, in honor of Presidents Day, Shelley Carter will share something of the Unitarian beliefs of some of our earliest presidents.

I will return to the pulpit on February 26.

May the remaining winter nurture our dreams.

In peace,

Rev. Linda Hoddy

The March Newsletter Lifeline Is February 22

The lifeline is 12 noon on the Wednesday before the last Sunday of the month. Please submit your articles to newsletter@saratoga-uu.org. This newsletter is available by email subscription and at saratoga-uu.org/the-journey.



FEBRUARY 2012

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SARATOGA SPRINGS

UUCSS • 518-584-1555 • saratoga-uu.org
624 N. Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Rev. Linda Hoddy, Minister • minister@saratoga-uu.org
584-1555, Tues–Fri 12–4 PM • 527-1238, Emergencies

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Flute Rehearsal 12:30 pm NA Meeting 7:30 pm	2 EOC Food Pickup 9 am Choir Rehearsal 7:15 pm	3 Meditation Group 6 pm Meditation Group 7 pm	4 Piano Rehearsal 10:30 am
5 Service 10 am Augustine Fellowship 7 pm	6 Flute Class 3:00 Chalice Group 7 pm	7 NA Meeting 6:30 pm Worship Committee 7:15 pm	8 Flute Rehearsal 12:30 pm ASHA Small Group 6:45 pm NA Meeting 7:30 pm	9 EOC Food Pickup 9 am Membership Committee 7 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:15 pm	10 Meditation Group 6 pm Meditation Group 7 pm	11 Piano Rehearsal 10:30 am
12 Service 10 am Augustine Fellowship 7 pm	13 Flute Class 3:00 Communications Comm 7 pm Inquirers Group 7 pm	14 Finance Committee 6:30 pm NA Meeting 6:30 pm	15 Flute Rehearsal 12:30 pm Youth Group Planning 7 pm NA Meeting 7:30 pm	16 EOC Food Pickup 9 am Staff Meeting 12:30 pm Social Justice Comm. 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:15 pm	17 Meditation Group 6 pm Meditation Group 7 pm	18 Piano Rehearsal 10:30 am
19 Service 10 am Augustine Dinner 5 pm Augustine Fellowship 7 pm	20 Flute Class 3:00 Book Group 6 pm	21 NA Meeting 6:30 pm Trustees Meeting 6:30 pm	22 Newsletter Deadline 12 pm Flute Rehearsal 12:30 pm ASHA Small Group 6:45 pm NA Meeting 7:30 pm	23 EOC Food Pickup 9 am Choir Rehearsal 7:15 pm	24 Meditation Group 6 pm Meditation Group 7 pm	25 Piano Rehearsal 10:30 am Baby Shower 12 pm
26 Service 10 am Augustine Fellowship 7 pm	27 Flute Class 3:00 RE Committee 5:30 pm Inquirers Group 7 pm Building & Grounds 7:15 pm	28 NA Meeting 6:30 pm	29 Flute Rehearsal 12:30 pm NA Meeting 7:30 pm	<p>Church Office: 518-584-1555 Tuesday–Friday 11 AM–3 PM</p> <p>Latest Calendar Information: saratoga-uu.org/calendar-4</p> <p>Order of Service Announcements: announcements@saratoga-uu.org by 9 AM Friday</p>		

Meditation for February

Prayer for This Church

May each one among us have skin that longs to touch other skin: fingertips that long for other fingertips or whole hands and even arms; bodies that want to stay next to other bodies, not alone, while singing and bending, stirring soup.

May ones whose skin doesn't cry out for other skin wish it did, and so teach it, so that no one stands alone and no one aches and does not say so.

May our doors be so open it is drafty inside, and people sometimes shout because noises without come also within. May those sheltered here sometimes cry, all at once, letting tear water clean what words by themselves cannot.

In silent times, may every one present hear every one else breathing, and know this is not separate from how the world breathes all night.

May we always have enough room for those many who want to come in. May those who cherish this church be so glad they cannot stop speaking, stop asking, and may that crowding itself be a gladness as we keep adding rooms. May we notice each one who is new and invite her to stay.

May our list of names for the Holy not ever be finished; and may we hear God chuckling with us as we find still more.

—From *Instructions in Joy*
Meditations by Nancy Shaffer



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