



The BEACON

Oct. 17, 2011

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Binghamton, New York

Upcoming Sunday Services, 9:30/11:15 a.m.

Minister: Rev. Douglas Taylor

Moderator: Kate Thorpe

Moderator-Elect: Jason Smith

Director of Religious Education:
Lynn Garman

Music Director: Vicky Gordon

Organist: Gail Elyse Schmick

Office Manager/Beacon Editor:
Lee Shepherd

Oct. 23 “Building Trust,” Rev. Sam Trumbore, guest minister from Albany. Just because we share the same space on Sunday morning doesn’t automatically translate into trust in each other. How do we get there?

Oct. 30 “Dragged Kicking and Screaming into Heaven,” Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed. Is it time for us to return to the message that God’s love brooks no resistance? Universalism re-articulated for the 20th Century.

OFFICE HOURS: 9 a.m. to
1 p.m. weekdays.

HOW TO CONTACT US:

Phone: 607.729.1641

Fax: 607.729.1899

Email:

office@uubinghamton.org

Web: www.uubinghamton.org

Calendar

Sat., Oct. 22

Sun., Oct. 23

Mon., Oct. 24

Tues., Oct. 25

Weds. Oct. 26

Thurs., Oct. 27

Fri., Oct. 28

Sat. Oct. 29

Sun., Oct. 30

Tues., Nov. 1

Weds., Nov. 2

Thurs., Nov. 3

Sat., Nov. 5

1 p.m., Tai Chi

9:30/11:15 a.m. Worship; 10:35 a.m., Property Committee; 12:45 p.m., Zen of Drawing; 1:30 p.m., Wicca 101

6:15 p.m., Parents’ SGM; 7 p.m., SGM;

7 p.m., Poetry Group

4:30 p.m., SGM; 6:30 p.m., Threshold Committee;

6 p.m. Welcoming Congregation; 7 p.m., New UU’s SGM

10 a.m., SGM; 6:30 p.m., SGM

6:30 p.m., Choir

11:30 a.m., SGM; 7 p.m., Mark Morrison-Reed book signing/reading

9:30– 4 p.m., Mark Morrison Workshop on Racism;

6 p.m., Spooktacular Halloween Party/Haunted House

9:30/11:15 a.m., Worship; 12:45 p.m., Zen of Drawing;

12:45 p.m. EcoDiscussion; 1:30 p.m., Wicca 101; 3 p.m.,

Memorial Service for Stuart Naismith

7 p.m., Social Justice Committee; 7 p.m., Welcoming

Congregation; 7 p.m., Finance Committee

5:30 p.m., Digital Media meeting; 7 p.m., Program

Council

6:30 p.m., Choir; 7 p.m., CUUPs;

1 p.m., Tai Chi

TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE:

Please e-mail to the above address, or a leave a hard copy on the office desk by the deadline printed below.

NEXT BEACON

DEADLINE:

**Friday,
Oct. 28**

Items received past the deadline will be included in subsequent issues.

Minister's Column

For pastoral issues, please contact Douglas by cell phone at 607-221-4638 or by e-mail at dtaylor@uubinghamton.org. Offices hours are Tuesday and Thursday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; other days by appointment.

I need some help. I want to do more with digital media – maybe make a blog, maybe have a more active presence on our UUCB Facebook page. Maybe I could post some videos of our worship or classes or other items onto Youtube. Maybe I could post a theological/spiritual question each week for some online discussion. I can probably figure it out, but it would go a lot better if I had some help.

The congregation could use some help along these lines as well. Our website is pretty good but could stand some updating. Our current webmaster, Jeff Donahue, is looking to broaden the field of who pays attention to this and he is ready to turn over certain key responsibilities to the next webmaster or webmasters. But it is a bigger conversation than just finding a new webmaster. Digital media is becoming more important and has more opportunities for us. Here are some of the ideas Jeff and I have generated that could use some attention:

- Creating an "IT" policy and procedure
- UUCB Website management
- In house e-list management
- Electronic Data storage
- Facebook and other social media oversight
- Creating a congregational DVD (membership is wanting this)
- Podcasting and video-blogging

Some of these things we do well, some we could do better, some we're not doing at all and we should start. So Jeff and I are proposing a gathering. Anyone interested and skilled in these areas is invited to join this initial one hour conversation on Wednesday, November 2 at 5:30 p.m. The purpose of this gathering would be to empower a few people to start working on some of these ideas, maybe to generate new ideas we can work on, certainly to generate a list of people who can help the congregation to make better use of digital media. Contact me with your interest if you are not able to attend the Nov 2 gather. (221-4638, dtaylor@uubinghamton.org)

—douglas

Reflections

DRE Lynn Garman will be in the office Sunday, Tuesdays and Thursdays, Call 729-1641 or e-mail dre@binghamton.org.

*The concerned parent must be well fortified with can-teens filled with clarity of purpose and stout shoes of determination.**

A few years ago, there was a calculation making the rounds that estimated a Unitarian Universalist child spends roughly four days annually in religious education; that's an average of four school days or roughly 24 hours each year. I have been thinking about those numbers recently as I ponder the high-reaching aspirations we as parents and a congregation have of our religious education program. We want our children to experience a sense of community and belonging where they can develop meaningful connections and relationships with peers and across generations; a spiritual base founded on a clear understanding of our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values as well as the diverse wisdom traditions of the world; an appreciation of their own individuality and the opportunity to acknowledge, affirm and celebrate differences; expression of their UU values by engaging with the world through social action and service learning; a sense of spirituality, ritual, wonder and celebration; friendship, fun, tolerance, leadership, ethics, safety, worship, fieldtrips, games, and so on. It is a worthy list... and a tall order for four days per year, especially given what our children and families are up against the other 361 days.

Many parents yield to their children's resistance, the need for some unstructured time in an otherwise too full life, or sports activities that seem to be creeping ever earlier on our Sunday mornings. Jeanne Nieuwejaar writes "I would ask parents to look closely at their priorities and to be deliberate in weighing and choosing what is to fill their days...I would ask that they claim for themselves their rightful responsibility to determine how precious time will be used, and not to let unreflected cultural pressures shape their family's values. Is it really religious community that should be relinquished first, when life becomes too full? What would happen if participation in church or temple was held as a nonnegotiable priority and not even considered as an option in easing the pace of life?...With thought and care, with strong modeling, with clarity of commitment and a carefully chosen religious community, parents can minimize the struggle and bitterness surrounding this issue."*

Let us leave no doubt of the value we as parents place on this experience, of the value we see in church peers and a connection to religious community. Let's be above average, reach for a fifth or sixth day in RE, and plan now to add an extra 30 minutes to your Sunday morning at UUCB, or an extra Sunday morning each month at church to support your child's friendships and build community.

—in joy, Lynn

*from *The Gift of Faith; Tending the Spiritual Lives of Children*, by Jeanne Nieuwejaar

RE Calendar

October 18 – Adult RE Committee Meeting

October 19 – RE Committee Meeting

October 19-23 – DRE at LREDA Conference

October 29 – Halloween Party and Haunted House

October Faith in Action

Thank you to all those who contributed to the success of our first Faith in Action project for the year! Our children spent the morning helping to create fleece blankets, and putting together bookshelves. Those items, along with your donations of bedding, were taken to the Open Door Mission in Owego for flood relief, where they were very happy to receive the bedding and bookshelves, and especially the blankets. They had just had a rush on blankets, so it was good timing for the drop off. They were also glad to hear that the blankets were made by the UU children.

Coming up in November, watch for our annual Adopt-a-Family activities.

Save the Date!

Halloween Party and Haunted House

Saturday October 29, 6 to 8 p.m.

Fun, Games, Costumes, and annual Haunted House!

We also need helpers for our party to supervise games and activities. Your ideas are welcome. However, if you need suggestions, we can offer those too. Please see Jan Cohen or Marie Soto to help make our Halloween Party as much fun as it can be!

CUUPs Corner

CUUPs (The Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans) welcomes all to participate to our pagan-oriented events. We facilitate a discussion night a ritual night, and a drum & dance night every month. All levels of experience are welcome, all we ask is that you have an open mind and a willingness to participate with the group. If you have any questions please feel free to call Darin at 761-9139.

Wednesday, Oct 26 at 7 p.m. at the Bundy Museum (129 Main St, Binghamton) -- Fire Circle Spirituality Group (drumming and dancing)

Thursday, Nov 3 at 7 p.m. in Social Hall -- CUUPs Ritual

Thursday, Nov 17 at 7 p.m. in Room 10 -- CUUPs Discussion Meeting

Thursday, Dec 1 at 7 p.m. in the Social Hall — CUUPs Ritual

Condolences...

...to the family of Stuart Naismith. His memorial service will be at 3 p.m. on Sun., Oct. 30.

Save the Date!

May 5, 2012! If you'd like to participate in our UUCB talent show, contact Vicky Gordon.

Talkin' Turkey

We will have a family-style Thanksgiving meal at 4 p.m. on UUCB on Thanksgiving Day here at the church. Organizers are Tom and Dolores Elliot, Susie Ravage, Lisa Heurich and Lee/Julian Shepherd. Please sign up on the bulletin board. Cost is \$5 and turkey will be provided; Bring a side dish and sign up for a task.



Cranberry Coffeehouse

Saturday, November 12:

Anne Hills, a remarkable performer, who weaves musical tapestries of poetry and instrumental beauty. A singer actress, writer and musician. \$8 admission. 7:30-10 p.m., Social Hall.



Sunday, December 4: Nowell Sing We Clear celebrates

Christmas as it was known for centuries in Britain and North America. Pageantry, plus the energetic dance band sound of fiddle, button accordion, piano, drums and concertina with John Roberts, Tony Barrand, Fred Breunig and Andy Davis. 3 p.m., Sanctuary. For tickets, call 754-9437.

Last Chance

...for Dining for Dollars Busy UU Potato Bar Lunch on Sun., Oct. 30. Please RSVP by 10/24 to reserve your spud for \$5. Checks payable to UUCB, dining for dollars in memo. \$5 will get you a baked potato with your choice of toppings, including vegetarian chili, sour cream, and shredded cheese. Sign up on the bulletin board.



Who's Who at the UU

Carolyn Boss has been a member of our Unitarian Church for 30 years. She was brought up as a city girl in West Winfield, near Utica, and raised a Methodist.

Carolyn met Del in high school and married him 52 years ago. They raised two sons, Joel and Thad, and five grandchildren followed, enriching the family gatherings. "I love to watch my grandchildren change and grow," she says, "rounding the circle." Joel is an engineer working in international logistics. Thad, a surgeon, died three years ago of cancer.

Carolyn taught high school English, speech and drama for 24 years at Chenango Valley High School. She also was co-director of summer theater in Woodstock. "I enjoyed teaching improvisation. I also directed plays."

Carolyn is a master gardener. She was in charge of roses at Cutler Gardens on Front Street in Binghamton. They recently moved to the city from a country setting with acreage that provided room for multitudinous gardens, to a minimalist site. So she now has a garden with limitations. This benefitted UUCB, for you will see on sunny days, on her knees in our beautiful backyard garden, patting the earth down with love and watering it.

"I have planted herbs in our new small gardens because the deer don't like them," she says. "They might like some, but not the most fragrant ones, like mint. Now I want to extend my abilities to more than that. I want to experiment in the kitchen and see what happens to a dish of green beans when I put cilantro on them." She said "Our favorite dinner would be considered soul food: fresh codfish, sauteed, sprinkled with dill and lemon juice, a vegetable and blueberry pie for dessert."

If confined to one chair for the rest of her life, Carolyn says she would be content to read and draw and watch good movies on TV. The last book she read, one she'd recommend to UU friends, is *The Sea* by John Banville. She is also taking a Zen of Drawing Class at UUCB taught by Warren Thomas; it's her new passion. "I am a member of Lyceum, and actually submerged myself into it so much that I became program director and later president. On that journey, I learned much and met so many fascinating people and enlarged my scope."

This column, by Millie Crandall, features newcomers and long-timers at UUCB.

EcoDiscussion: Why Did We Get Arrested?

Three members of our congregation were among the 1,253 concerned citizens arrested in front of the White House during a two-week period in August. The purpose: To emphasize to President Obama that he should oppose the proposed Keystone XL Pipeline that would carry 900,000 barrels of tar sands oil each day from Alberta, Canada to the Gulf Coast refineries. Join the discussion and learn first-hand about their experiences, why this issue is so critical, and how you can help.

Sunday, October 30, 12:45 to 1:45, room 5.

For Economic and Environmental Justice, Let's "Occupy" Together

UU Minister Bob Murphy from Falmouth, Massachusetts, says:

"The connections between economic justice and environmental justice should be obvious. Clearly, a healthy economy requires a healthy and sustainable environment. 'Environmental justice' speaks to the needs of the people who have long been disinherited and marginalized and abused in both the economy and in the environment. Think about the people who live in Appalachia, who work on the big farms, who live on Indian reservations, etc. They do a lot of the difficult and dangerous work that makes the industrial world possible. In their homes, they're exposed to a lot of the pollution that big industries produce."

What Should Unitarian Universalists Be Doing Today?

First: Support the local "occupy actions." Get involved. Meet some of your neighbors.

Second: As people in your community outline their program, talk about the need for economic justice AND real environmental justice.

Third: Think about the things that your congregation can do that will be helpful. Individual actions are nice, but individuals can't do all of the things that need to be done to set things right in the economy and in the environment.

I don't expect that most people will join the Unitarian Universalists. However, we can provide some models for grassroots groups. And we can bring economic justice and environmental justice concerns together."



**REV. MARK MORRISON-
REED AT UUCB
OCTOBER 28-30**

Thanks to a generous grant from UUCB's Endowment Fund, the Adult RE

Committee is pleased to present a weekend of activities featuring Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed. Now retired from full-time ministry, Rev. Morrison-Reed has served UU congregations in Toronto and Rochester, is the author of three books and numerous articles, and is an affiliated faculty member of Meadville Lombard Theological School. His area of research and the subject of his books is the role of African Americans in Unitarianism and Universalism. There will be an opportunity to deepen and extend the learning and dialogue that develop during this weekend visit when Rev. Douglas Taylor leads a new UUA class in the spring, titled *Building the World We Dream About*. During his visit, Rev. Morrison-Reed will: host a free book reading/signing at 7 p.m. on Fri., Oct. 28; lead a day-long workshop from 9:30–4 on Sat., Oct. 29. (This event will be open and advertised to the public. Pre-registration by 10/21 is \$8, which includes lunch; \$12 after the 21st and at the door); engage in conversation with UUCB members who can share our congregation's history with anti-racism work.; and deliver a sermon during worship services on October 30.

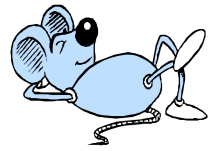
Child care is free to UUCB members and friends if requested by 10/21. We encourage your participation and support for this new initiative. To register, mail your check — made out to UUCB with "Morrison-Reed" on the memo line — to the office, or drop it in the registration box inside the door.

***Adult Religious Education Course
Proposals due October 30***

Interested in leading an adult religious education class or discussion group this winter or spring? If you have a course in mind to lead, either a UUA curriculum or one of your own design, please complete the Course Proposal Form on the ARE webpage (<http://uubinghamton.org/re/are.html>) and return it to the church office, or to the committee via e-mail (are@uubinghamton.org) by October 30. If you would like to lead or co-lead a class, but don't have a curriculum in mind, speak with the minister or a member of the committee for suggestions. Rev. Taylor will lead another Facilitator Training session in January, and the committee provides resources and support for program leaders. Contact committee co-chairs Heather Kirkland or Debby Herman for more information.

The Church Mouse

Your thank-you goes here to the unsung heroes who make UUCB a very fine place indeed. Please submit your items to office@uubinghamton.org.



Thanks to **Mary Wahl** (again!) for bringing goodies for Social Hour. Thanks to the **Youth Group** for moving furniture back down to Room 12, following the flood.

Our UUCB community now has a closer connection to UU Rowe Camp and Conference Center in Rowe, MA. After completing her studies at Temple University in Philadelphia, **Carrie Nordstrom** is working at Rowe as a program coordinator. Carrie attended UUCB throughout her childhood and has many happy memories of her time spent here. If you want information about any activities at Rowe, have suggestions for future gatherings, or just want to say hi, e-mail her at

Registrar@rowecenter.org or call 413-339-4954.

Thanks to **Ed Ware** for electrical repairs in the building and to **Wes Ernsberger** for setting our thermostats to save the maximum amounts of energy.

Help Put Our Garden to Bed

Come and work Saturday, November 5, 10:30 a.m.– noon. **Bring basic garden tools.**

A small group of our UUs have formed a work group to tend our gardens and shrubs. We got through the summer and the flood,; now we need help preparing our grounds for winter. We cannot do it alone, so come and help us work on Sat., Nov. 5 at 10:30. Bring a lunch if you wish. **ALSO at 10:30: Madeleine Cotts, our UU member and a landscape architect, will lead a walk-about and a short discussion of what we need for a Long Range Plan for the gardens.** Get professional information about what is needed. Call Carolyn Boss if you can join us.

Poetry Reading

All are welcome to Poetry Night, the fourth Monday of every month from 7-8:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. Poems are read by those who choose to do so. We read poems aloud to share our appreciation and enjoyment of poetry; no analyzing or criticizing. Read some of your favorite poems (including your own, if you're a poet), or just let the poetry delight you as a listener. **Next Poetry Reading: Monday, October 24, 7 p.m.** For more information, contact Kathy Webber or Janet Landow.



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**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CONGREGATION OF BINGHAMTON**

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The Unitarian
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(Details Inside)***