



# The BEACON

Oct. 3, 2011

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Binghamton, New York

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

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

### Oct. 9 "For Fixing What is Broken"

Rev. Douglas Taylor

Come hear stories of forgiveness that illuminate what forgiveness is for and how it can work.

### Oct. 16 "Evolving Myth"

Rev. Douglas Taylor

The mythic foundations of religion serve to address basic questions of how to live well and find meaning. Over time, the questions evolve and therefore, the myths evolve as well.

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

#### HOW TO CONTACT US:

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#### 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. 14**

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

## Calendar

Sat., Oct. 8

Sun., Oct. 9

Mon., Oct. 10

Tues., Oct. 11

Weds. Oct. 12

Thurs., Oct. 13

Fri., Oct. 14

Sat. Oct. 15

Sun., Oct. 16

Mon., Oct. 17

Tues., Oct. 18

Weds., Oct. 19

Thurs., Oct. 20

Sat., Oct. 22

NYSCU meeting, 9:15 a.m. keynote address

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

3 p.m., Crones; 6:15 p.m., Parents' SGM

6 p.m., SGM

10 a.m., SGM, 6:30 p.m., SGM; 7 p.m., Worship  
Committee

5:30 p.m., SGM Facilitators; 6:30 p.m., Choir

6:30-9:30 p.m., Threshold retreat

7 p.m., Social Justice Film, "The Economics of  
Happiness"

9-1 p.m., New UU class; 9-6 p.m., Threshold Retreat;  
7:30-10 p.m., Cranberry Coffeehouse

9:30/11:15 a.m., Worship; 12:45 p.m., Zen of Drawing;  
12:45 p.m., Green Sanctuary Committee; 1-6 p.m.,  
Threshold Retreat; 1:30 p.m., Wicca 101

7 p.m., Aesthetics Committee; 7:30 p.m., PFLAG

5:30 pm., Adult RE Committee; 7 p.m., Welcoming  
Congregation Course

6 p.m., RE Committee; 7 p.m., Vets for Peace; 7 p.m.,  
Membership Committee

6:30 p.m., Choir; 6:30 p.m., Board meeting;

7 p.m., CUUPs

1 p.m., Tai Chi

## ***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.*

My colleague Craig Schwalenberg of the UU Society of Oneonta recently reported in their newsletter that “studies of churches around the country have found repeatedly that the more involved people are in their church, the greater their reported satisfaction and the longer their membership.” There are many ways to connect and serve. Our Small Group Ministry program, various Adult Religious Education classes and forums, and the choir are some of the easiest ways to connect. The Children's RE Committee hosts regular events and activities for all ages that new people can attend and even help create.

Ron Clupper helps to coordinate our Sunday morning tasks such as coffee, sound, and ushering. Jeff Donahue manages our website and our various e-lists. If you are interested in helping out, those are a few good places to start. (Next *Beacon*, I will announce a BIG project for digital and web communications where we need more than just a little help - we need to organize a whole new way to doing things. If that is interesting to you, stay tuned!)

Property Committee manages the tasks around the building and grounds, keeping our place looking nice and running smoothly. John Hamlin, Property Chair *Emeritus*, and Scott Clarke are looking for helpers with various projects as well as organizers and visionaries for the committee. Also, on October 23, there will be a brief (30 minute) open Property meeting at 10:35 (between services) in the Library.

Membership Committee focuses on welcoming guests and newcomers, advertising and publicizing our congregation in the community, and coordinating our path to membership (currently, we are creating a clear map of the path to membership.) Christine Smith, Membership chair, could use a few more people on the team to help with the big picture or with discrete tasks.

Worship Committee helps plan and support the Sunday morning worship services throughout the year. The group helps Ron Clupper coordinate Sunday morning tasks, discusses ways to improve the worship experience, and covers the Sundays when I am not preaching. Vicky Gordon is temporarily chairing this committee and she would welcome new people to the group.

Dive in and get involved!

—douglas

## ***REflections***

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

*If you value the whole person, as we do, you want that student to have the affective experience of epiphanies, of belonging, of play, of friendship and of love.*

Daniel R. Porterfield

Yes, this is what I want for our children and youth in our religious education program! These words, delivered at the recent presidential inauguration at my daughter's college, rang true for me with regard to my priorities at UUCB. In fact, this is what I would hope for anyone associated with our Lifespan Faith Development programs, child, youth, and adult alike – the opportunity to experience belonging and transcendence, friendship and love, and a bit of play. I know many who come to our community are seeking just that – a sense of belonging and a glimmer of transcendence. I know there are times when we offer such experiences – perhaps in Small Group Ministry, in an Adult Program, in our Spirit Play class, in youth gatherings, in our social justice work. Perhaps you can remember those moments when you have felt that sense of belonging and transcendence.

I also know there are times when we are falling short in offering a program that allows for such an experience of belonging and transcendence. Currently, we are short on leaders for our program at 9:30, so how are those children and families experiencing a sense of belonging? How does our overcrowded older elementary class at 11:15 create a climate conducive to the experience of a sense of transcendence for the adults and children who gather? How do we build bridges of love and friendship across generations when we are short-staffed?

Many may believe that the care and tending of our children resides with the parents. Most parents do offer leadership in our religious education program; and a growing number of parents are currently offering leadership in our larger congregation that precludes their also serving in our religious education program. I implore you to let our children, youth, and yes, yourself, experience that sense of belonging in our community, and consider co-leading a class. Young adult or older adult, male or female, parent and especially non-parents – join us in religious education for an experience of belonging, play, friendship, love, and even the occasional epiphany!

~in joy, Lynn  
P.S. – See me for more information about teaching in religious education!

# RE Calendar

**October 7-8** - NYSCU Conference

**October 9** – Faith in Action Sunday, Bedding Collection

**October 28 – 30** – Programs with Mark Morrison-Reed

**October 29** – Halloween Party and Haunted House, Youth Lock-in

## ***REgistration REminder***

It was wonderful to see so many of our religious education families at the Religious Education REceptions! Thank you for your questions, your sharing, and your sign-ups, all of which assist us in maintaining a relevant and vibrant program.

All families are reminded that children and youth, Nursery through Youth Group, must be registered each year. This enables us to maintain up-to-date contact information, as well as be aware of special programs in which your child is interested. Our Religious Education Committee views our program as a cooperative effort in which your support is part of our covenant with one another in ministering to our children and youth. At the time of registration, parents are also asked to indicate their commitments and preferences in supporting our cooperative program. If you have not yet registered your child, please see Lynn Garman.

## ***Faith In Action - Bedding Collection***

This year, our focus in religious education is on social action, justice, and ethics, and will include a monthly Faith in Action project on Sunday morning. In response to the recent flood, we will be making blankets on October 9, and collecting new or gently used bedding (pillows, sheets, blankets, etc). The bedding does not need to be new, but needs to be in good condition and clean. Please bring your donations on October 9 to the marked box in the Social Hall, and we will deliver the bedding to the Open Door Mission in Owego. For more information, contact Julie Boyd.

## **COME IF YOU DARE!**

### **Family Halloween Party and Haunted House Saturday October 29, 2011**

Join us for a haunted, chilling evening of fun and games for all ages.

Please watch for further details coming soon!

## ***Do You Have a Talent to Share?***

I always welcome the wonderful musical talent in our congregation, and will continue to feature guest musicians during the services when the choir is not singing. To share your talent, please let me know. I would be happy to provide piano accompaniment.

—Vicky Gordon

## ***Save the Date!***

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

## ***UUCB Meeting Devoted to Games***

The UUCB women will play games at its meeting on Oct. 3., 10 a.m., in the Fireside Room. All women in the congregation are welcome.

## ***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, your own table service and sign up for a task.

## ***Peace, Justice, Film Series***

Friday October 14, *The Economics of Happiness Refreshments 6:30, Film 7 p.m. Discussion to follow*

*The Economics of Happiness* describes a world moving simultaneously in two directions: an unholy alliance of governments and big business continues to promote globalization vs. people all over the world coming together to re-build. *Donations will be used to benefit the United Way Flood Relief Fund.*

## ***CUUPs Corner***

CUUPs (The Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans) welcomes all to participate in our pagan-oriented events. We facilitate a Pagan-oriented discussion night, a ritual night, and a Wiccan based Full Moon celebration 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. **Thursday, October 6** at 7 p.m. in the Social Hall will be a ritual in honor of Samhain. We will honor our ancestors and those who passed away during this year. **Thursday, October 20** at 7 p.m. in the Social Hall will be an open discussion night. The topic will be the similarities of working within Dark moon energies and Samhain.



# GREEN MATTERS

## **EcoDiscussion: Why Did We Get Arrested?**

In August, three members of our congregation were arrested in front of the White House. Come to the roundtable discussion and find out why.  
**Sunday, October 30, 12:45 to 1:45, room 5.**

## **Gobbling Up Our Carbon Footprint**

Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> is currently about 390 parts per million, already far above the pre-industrial level of 280 ppm, and rising at almost 2 ppm per year. We've just experienced two hundred-year-floods in a five year period, typical of the global climate "whacking" that is becoming more common as more carbon enters the atmosphere. What can we do to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions?

One thing we can do is be selective in what we eat.

Environmental Working Group, (EWG), an organization that focuses on the impact of environment on health, partnered with CleanMetrics, an environmental analysis firm, to perform a life cycle assessment of 20 types of meat, fish, dairy and vegetables to determine their carbon footprint (impact on greenhouse gas emissions).

Go to the follow site for the at-a-glance brochure: "Eat Smart: Your Food Choices Affect the Climate".

<http://www.ewg.org/meateatersguide/eat-smart/>

## **Energy Eye-Opener**

Laptop computers draw 15 to 25 watts of electricity during regular use, compared to 150 watts for a conventional desktop computer and monitor. When you upgrade, go with a laptop and take your old computer to an e-waste recycling station.

## ***NYSCU Meeting at UUCB***

"The Religious Left: Universalism Then and Now" is the theme of the New York State Convention of Universalists meeting, to be held at UUCB on Oct. 7-8. Look at the bulletin board for a list of workshops. Topics range from "Social Media 101," to "Marriage in Religion and Law," to "Cyber Bullying," and many more.

The congregation is invited to attend (free) the Fri., Oct. 7 keynote address from 6-8 p.m. Speaker is Mike Lovegreen, district manager of the Bradford County Conservation District, on the community impacts of three years of gas development in his county. Also open to the congregation free of charge is the 9:15 a.m. keynote address on Saturday by Dan McKanan of Harvard Divinity School, "Before Clarence Skinner: Rediscovering Early Universalist Radicals."

## ***Long-Term Growth/ UUCB's SMART\* Goals***

The UUCB has been named a "Threshold Congregation" by the Central East Regional Group of the Unitarian Universalist Association. According to the UUA, "CERG threshold congregations are those that are poised to grow. They are ready to break through to the next level of activity and effectiveness."

In practical terms, being a Threshold Congregation means we will have the help of *UUA experts* in congregational affairs over the course of the *next three years*, while we work to achieve the following five goals, which the Congregation has established for itself:

1. Create and implement a stewardship program that will provide for a balanced operating budget.
2. Articulate and reinforce healthy ways of interacting and engaging with conflict.
3. Expand and deepen membership experience and faith development.
4. Develop more opportunities for shared ministry.
5. Align congregational ministries with a new mission statement.

Begin to think about how our Congregation, our committees, our small groups, and we as individuals can work together over the next three years to achieve the goals we have set and to cross the threshold of growth, and reach the next level of activity and effectiveness.

More to come in the months ahead.

*The UUA requires goals and strategies to meet the SMART\* criteria. That is, they must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely.*



**“On the Road to Tomorrow:  
Discover, Explore, Heal,  
Transform”**

**A Workshop on Racism  
Facilitated by the Rev. Mark  
Morrison-Reed**

**Saturday, October 29, from 9–4 at UUCB**  
Admission \$8 by October 21, \$12 at the door,  
lunch provided. Child care available upon re-  
quest with advance registration. RSVP 607-  
729-1641 or [office@uubinghamton.org](mailto:office@uubinghamton.org)

Every American is wounded by racism. There are no exceptions. However, most Euro-Americans are unaware of the wound. The process of healing can begin only when we notice the wound and the discomfort. In this workshop, Mark Morrison-Reed draws on more than 30 years experience in ministry and human relations to set you on the path to healing, and open possibilities you have not imagined.

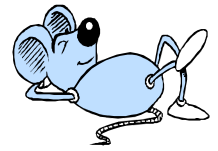
In a gentle approach to a difficult topic, using poetry, storytelling, guided imagery, exercises, lecture and ritual, Mark Morrison-Reed will lead you on an exploration of: The Illusion of Race; Race and Self-esteem; Passing and Soul Sickness; Race, Shame and Avoidance; The Dance of Black Rage and White Guilt; Miscegenation; The Obama Phenomena; The World Tomorrow.

**Mark D. Morrison-Reed**

Mark Morrison-Reed earned an AM in Divinity ('77) from the University of Chicago and a DM in ('79) from Meadville Lombard Theological School. With his wife and co-minister Donna, he served UU congregations in Rochester and Toronto. Morrison-Reed divides his time between speaking, writing, and serving as Affiliated Faculty of Meadville Lombard Theological School. More about Mark Morrison-Reed:

<http://www.uuworld.org/life/articles/128965.shtml>, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXjAMpQ5Jh0>

**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](mailto:office@uubinghamton.org). Thanks to Mary Wahl and Chris Niskanen for bringing goodies for Social Hour.**

**Adult RE Ongoing Groups**

**Crones:** Meets the second Monday of each month at 3 p.m.: Contact: Linda Wiltz

Currently reading excerpts from *Crones Don't Whine*, this group is for women over 45 with a sense of humor.

**UUCB Poetry Group:** Meets the fourth Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Fireside Room  
Co-facilitators: Janet Landow and Kathy Dawn Webber We read poems aloud to share our appreciation and enjoyment of poetry; no analyzing or critiquing. Come read some of your favorite poems (including your own, if you're a poet), or just let the poetry delight you as a listener.

**The Zen of Drawing:** Sundays after service

Facilitator: Warren Thomas

By focusing the mind on the act of drawing, one is able to enter a Zen-like state that silences the chatter of the mind. Drop-ins okay.

**UUCB Book Sale**

**Sat., Oct. 15, 9-5 and Sun., Oct. 16, 9-2**

**Books or CDs. (no magazines or textbooks)**

**At the Center for Innovations and Technology,  
321 Water St., Binghamton**

Drop off books at the south entrance any Tues. from 1-4 or any Weds., from 6:30-9 p.m. Call 723-8600 for more information. Volunteers still needed to sort from 10-5 on Fri., Oct. 14, to cashier and help out on Saturday and Sunday and to deliver leftover books on Sunday. Also need 3 tables. Call Marilyn Coleman or Barb Nordstrom or sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board.

**Welcoming Congregation**

Four Tuesdays, October 18, 25, November 1, 8  
Rev. Douglas Taylor and Denise Rampulla. Twenty years ago, our congregation went through the “Welcoming Congregation” workbook. In 1999, a second edition came out with new sections. This four session course will bring us up to date with the latest edition of the workbook. Included will be the sessions on Transgender Identity, Bisexuality, and Racism and Homophobia.

Sign up on the bulletin board!



The BEACON

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
CONGREGATION OF BINGHAMTON**

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The Unitarian  
Universalist  
Congregation of  
Binghamton is a  
Welcoming  
Congregation.



*Cranberry Coffeehouse Hosts  
Curt Osgood and Friends*

**Our 40th Year**

*Sat., Oct. 15, 7:30-10 p.m.  
in the Social Hall*

*\$8 admission*

*Osgood is joined by guitarist Jim  
MacWilliams, banjo player Rob Siegers,  
cellist Julian Shepherd and others for a fine  
evening of folk tunes.*