



The BEACON

Oct. 31, 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.

Nov. 6 "Charter of Compassion"

Rev. Douglas Taylor

Compassion is a theme in all the world's religions. It is at the heart of the Golden Rule. But what is compassion? And what can we do to promote more of it in our world?

Nov. 13 Pathways in the Darkness

Eric Cotts

While we begin most comfortable in the dark, often we must journey far before we find this comfort again. In-between, how do we chose the light to let in to our journey? Special Collection for A New Hope Center.

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

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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,
Nov. 11**

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

Calendar

Sat., Nov. 5

10-2, Labyrinth party; 10:30 a.m., Garden

Clean Up Party; 1 p.m., Tai Chi

Sun., Nov. 6

9:30/11:15 a.m. Worship; 10:30/12:15 p.m.,

UU Basics; 12:45 p.m., Zen of Drawing;

12:45 p.m., YAC meeting; 2 p.m., Wicca 101

Mon., Nov. 7

10 a.m., UUW; 7:30 p.m., Library Committee

Tues., Nov. 8

Election Day — UUCB is a polling place;

4:30 p.m., SGM, 6:45 p.m., Peace Action; 7 p.m.,

Welcoming Congregation; 7 p.m., New UUs SGM;

7 p.m., Personnel Committee

Weds. Nov. 9

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

7 p.m., Worship Committee

Thurs., Nov., 10

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

Fri., Nov 11

11:30 a.m., SGM; 7 p.m., Peace Film Series

Sat., Nov. 12

10-2, (rain date) Labyrinth party; 1 p.m., Tai Chi;

7:30-10 p.m. Cranberry Coffeehouse

Sun., Nov. 13

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

10:30/12:15 p.m., Town Hall meeting; 12:30-2 p.m.,

Green Sanctuary Committee; 12:45 p.m., COA meeting;

2 p.m., Wicca 101

Mon, Nov. 14

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

Tues., Nov. 15

7 p.m., Adult RE Committee; 7 p.m., Book Discussion

Weds., Nov. 16

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

7 p.m., Process Theology course

Thurs., Nov. 17

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

7 p.m., CUUPS

Sat., Nov. 19

3-10 p.m., Holiday Craft Fair/Sale; 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.

Threshold? What is Threshold? You may have wondered this. There has been a lot of promotion about the program from our Threshold Committee, but a new idea like this takes time to sink in. First: UUCB has been named a "Threshold Congregation" by the Central East Regional Group or "CERG". (CERG, is a four district region including our Saint Lawrence along with the Ohio-Meadville, Joseph Priestley, and Metro NY districts.) Nine congregations in the region were named "Threshold Congregations" meaning they are on the threshold of growth, "poised to grow."

The Threshold Program is not a set package – it is a commitment from the region to provide resources to help a congregation achieve the goals specific to that congregation. How do we come up with these goals? Leaders in our congregation have been in conversation with CERG staff and experts about what we want to become, what would help us get to the next level, and what to we keep tripping over or stumbling on.

Here are the five goals we narrowed in on for this year: 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.

Over the three years we are in this program, these goals will change. As we accomplish some things, new goals (which we've already begun talking about but were not pressing enough to be on the first year's list) will be brought forward.

There are two things I like best about the Threshold Program. First: how we create a plan and package that fits us, not something prepackaged that we have to fit our needs around. Second: that it last three years, the experts and CERG staff will stick with us for three years while we establish new patterns that serve us well.

I love serving this congregation. These are exciting times and we are looking to grow wisely with good foundation and to the end of serving our mission and our covenant more fully.

—douglas

Reflections

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

The center of our work as religious educators is belief in the transformative power of educating through our Unitarian Universalist faith.

—from the LREDA homepage

Last week, I had the good fortune to attend the Fall Leadership Conference, *Sustainability – A Framework for Action*, sponsored by LREDA, the professional organization for liberal religious educators. Thanks to the support of this congregation in both funding Professional Development and providing study time, I spent five days in Portland, Oregon. I look forward to these opportunities to gather with other religious educators and leaders in our faith; to share ideas, learn and develop as both a UU and a leader; to renew collegial relationships; and to gather in worship. Here are some of the highlights of my experience this year:

Good Officer Training - Good Officers support LREDA members with professional concerns in order to facilitate health in congregations and to assist religious professionals to integrate that role with a healthy personal life. With eleven years experience as a DRE and the blessing of working within a healthy congregation such as ours, it is a joy to support others in this work.

Worship – The opportunity to participate in joyful, spirited, and inspiring worship services led by leaders in our movement, including Bill Sinkford, former UUA president and senior minister at First Unitarian Church in Portland.

Keynote Addresses exploring ways to sustain our work as teachers and learners, and the importance of "trusting the chrysalis of the invisible."

Emerging Technology – This workshop provided an invaluable overview of the various resources available to our congregations, leaders, and staff, including cloud storage for access to church documents and calendars, QR, Blogs, use of social media, remote meetings, e-book media and audio editing, RSS feeds, and more than I can begin to implement, yet encourage our congregation to use more fully.

Adult Religious Education workshops sharing both new resources and congregational models. I learned about some new programs, and that we are on the leading edge of developing our lifespan learning framework.

Portland – An hospitable city, whose great restaurants focused on local food, light rail, Occupy Portland encampment, and 1,000+ member UU congregation rounded out my trip.

~with gratitude for this opportunity, Lynn

RE Calendar

November 6 - Youth Adult Committee (YAC)

November 9 – Religious Education Committee

November 13 – Faith in Action Sunday

November 13 – Coming of Age Informational Meeting

November 20 – Thanksgiving Worship Service, No RE classes, Nursery Open

Coming of Age Program

One of the most important messages we give our children and youth in the Unitarian Universalist faith is to tell them “You Matter!” and no program exemplifies that message more than the Coming of Age program. We recognize the transition from childhood to young adulthood as a formative time and offer ourselves to help our youth figure out who they are and what gives their life meaning. We share with them our religious tradition, the history of our movement, and let them know they are now a part of that movement. We share our ideas and welcome theirs, affirming their inherent worth and dignity in the process. We let them know they are a vital part of the interdependent web of this community and all existence.

This year’s Coming of Age program will begin in January, under the leadership of Cary and Vince Fox. Generally, this program is intended for our 8th grade youth, around the time of their 13th year, a time when many faith traditions celebrate a rite of passage. Older youth who have not previously participated in a Coming of Age program are also invited to join. The program includes group meetings, working one-on-one with an adult mentor, and writing a personal credo to be shared with the congregation at the annual recognition worship service in May. Traditionally, this group has met monthly on Sunday afternoons. Interested parents and youth should attend an informational meeting about this year’s program on Sunday, November 13 at 12:45 p.m. If you have questions, please contact Lynn Garman, Director of Religious Education, at 729-1641.

Faith in Action News

Again this year, the Religious Education program will adopt some families for the holidays. We will begin our preparations on November 13, and by November 20, you may find Market Bean Soup for sale and gift tags available to support our efforts.

Middle School Youth Happenin’s

Finally, after discussions through the last five years, we have are hosting regular monthly fellowship gatherings for our middle school youth! They met in September to brainstorm ideas and share pizza, went to a corn maze together in October, and are making plans for a November outing. As soon as we are done with flood remediation in the basement, the youth hope to begin decorating room 12 downstairs. If you are a middle school youth or parent and wish to be included in these activities, please contact Elena Greene or Lynn Garman, dre@uubinghamton.org, and we will get you added to our list!

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. Limit 60. Cost is \$5 and turkey/gravy will be provided; Bring a side dish (we need stuffing!) and sign up for a task.

Cranberry Coffeehouse

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 talented troubadours John Roberts, Tony Barrand, Fred Breunig and Andy Davis. 3 p.m., Sanctuary. You can support the concert by purchasing ads in the program too! For tickets or ad information, call 754-9437.



Earn free admission to the concert by staffing the kitchen. Call the office to volunteer. Baked goods also needed with proceeds going to UUCB.



GREEN MATTERS

Mark Your Calendar

Eco-Forum: "Nature's Way to a Humane and Sustainable World"

Tim Wolcott will discuss eleven lessons that dominant (Western) Society should learn in order to rebuild a more compassionate society and sustain our planet.

Sunday, Nov. 20, 12:45 to 1:45 p.m., Fireside Room

Gardeners' Gold

You already do curbside recycling. That's great because it keeps stuff out of the landfill and instead transforms it into something useful. Home composting is the next logical step. It keeps plant waste out of the landfill and instead turns it into highly prized compost that you can use in your garden or give to a gardening friend. It is surprisingly easy to start and maintain a compost pile in your back yard. Cornell Cooperative Extension has created a useful flyer that tells you more and helps you get started. You can pick one up at the Green Sanctuary Bulletin Board located right next to the Social Hall entrance.

Heavy Industrialization Headed Our Way

Broome and Tioga Counties are in "the sweet spot" for gas drilling. Many thousands of wells are planned for this area, that will bring 1,000 large truck trips per well and risk our air, water, land and further impact climate change.

Unitarian Universalists have a history of standing up for their beliefs and principles ... one of which is "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part".

We have until December 12th to submit our comments on DEC's draft Supplemental Generic Impact Statement (SGEIS). These are the only guidelines that industry would be "requested" to follow, as regulations are sketchy and few. If you have time to make only one comment, please do so. If you can write more, that's even better. Go online to:

[www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=DSGEIS_Responses)

title=DSGEIS_Responses. Select a topic, copy it, change it to become yours, and follow DEC's directions for submission at **www.dec.ny.gov/energy/76838.html** .

Election Day Volunteers Needed

On Nov. 8. UUCB is a polling place and we would



like at least one person on site to answer questions and assist Election Board members (also to staff a bake sale table). Volunteers

are need for serve for two-hour shifts: 2-4, 4-6, 6-8 p.m. Please sign up on the bulletin board. to work and/or donate baked goods.

Friends of the UUCB Labyrinth

It's time to resurrect our labyrinth before it disappears back into the earth. Our highly popular, semi-annual, labyrinth refurbishing party will be convened on Saturday, November 5, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Rain date is November 12, at the same time. Join with us for a hands-on renewal of this icon of our congregation. Pizza and refreshments provided. Contact Ron Clupper.

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 and 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 Goldenberg.

Thursday, Nov 3 at 7 p.m. in the Social Hall -- CUUPs Ritual - Creating your inner sanctuary.

Thursday, Nov 17 at 7 p.m. in the Social Hall -- CUUPs discussion night. Preparing for the Dark time of year.

Wednesday, Nov 23 at 7 p.m. at the Bundy Museum (129 Main St, Binghamton) -- Fire Circle Spirituality Group (drumming and dancing)

Thursday, Dec 1s at 7 p.m. in the Social Hall - CUUPs Ritual (topic to be decided).

November 13 Special Collection

A New Hope Center in Owego offers free and confidential comprehensive services to all crime victims. The needs of A New Hope Center following the September flood include non-perishable food, paper products such as paper towels and diapers, dish and laundry soap, desk, living room and bedroom lamps, silverware, pots and pans, cooking utensils, table dishes, glasses, etc., area and throw rugs, bathroom and kitchen linens, twin bedding, and cash to pay for repairs. Please be generous with your \$\$\$ donation and bring supplies to the Social Justice Table in the Social Hall on Sun. Nov 13.

Book Discussion Group is Forming

The first meeting will be on Tuesday, Nov. 15, at 7 p.m. in the UUCB Library. This will be an organizational meeting, to decide what books to read, and when will be the best time to meet. If you are interested and can't make the meeting, contact either Janet Landow, landowjanet@yahoo.com, or Christine Niskanen, chris6nisk5@yahoo.com. Their telephone numbers are in the congregational directory.

Town Hall Meetings

The Nov 13 Town Hall meetings, between and after second service in the Fireside Room, are opportunities for people to learn more and ask questions about the Threshold Congregation program. We'll share the growth plan goals and talk about our plans to achieve them and what we've already accomplished.

CRAFT SHOW and SALE ***Sat Nov. 19, 3-10 p.m.*** ***and Sunday after services***

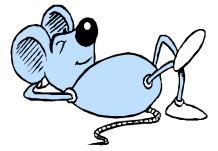
Featuring fine crafts and art from fellow congregants with a share of proceeds to benefit the congregation

In recent years, there have been two annual opportunities to enjoy and support the creative and skillful craftwork and fine art of fellow congregants; The annual UUCB craft sale and the Future Relics and Friends Holiday Craft sale and party.

This year, instead of two events, Rachel Light and Bill Thorpe have organized a single Craft Sale and Party during the weekend before Thanksgiving. Join us in spirit of gratitude and abundance and in support of friends, local artists and your congregation. (33% of sales to benefit the UUCB general budget). Music and refreshments, of course.

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 and Shawn Stekete
for bringing baked goods for Social Hour
and to all who organized and contributed to
the reception after Stuart Naismith's memo-
rial service.**

Mission Accomplished!

On Oct. 20, your friends and fellow congregants sent the following mission statement draft to the board: "We offer a spiritual home where we explore, celebrate and cherish our interconnectedness, encourage growth and transcendence, and act with justice and compassion." It was met with unanimous approval by the board and will be offered for your formal approval at a Congregational Meeting **between services** on December 4 in the Sanctuary. A meeting to discuss the statement will be held at 7 p.m. on Sat., Dec. 3 in the Sanctuary.

— Kate Thorpe, moderator

The UUCW To Hear Actress

The very talented Meg Hilton will give a dramatic reading to the UUCW at its next meeting, at 10 a.m. on Mon., November 7 in the Fireside Room. All women in the congregation are invited.

Peace, Justice, and Sustainability Film Series

Friday, November 11. Refreshments 6:30, Film at 7. *Countdown to Zero* traces the history of the atomic bomb from its origins to the present state of global affairs: nine nations possessing nuclear weapons capabilities with others racing to join them, with the world held in a delicate balance that could be shattered by an act of terrorism, failed diplomacy, or a simple accident. It makes a compelling case for worldwide nuclear disarmament, an issue more topical than ever with the Obama administration working to revive this goal today.



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The Unitarian
Universalist
Congregation of
Binghamton is a
Welcoming
Congregation.



Cranberry Coffeehouse

Saturday, November 12

Anne Hills

***Singer, actress, songwriter and
musician***

\$8 admission

7:30-10 p.m., Social Hall