



The BEACON

Jan. 30, 2012

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

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

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:

February 10

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

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

February 5 "Of Minstrels and Ministry: Building Vocal Community" **Rev. Douglas Taylor**

The songs we sing together tell us who we are and who we long to become. They lead us to be a community of a particular type, empowered by our values.

February 12 "Wonder and Chaos: Adventures in Childhood" **Rev. Douglas Taylor**

Parenting is heartbreaking and breathtaking. Children in our homes and in our communities can be both precious and frustrating. For me, parenting has been as much a calling as ministry.

Calendar

Sat., Feb. 4

1 p.m., Tai Chi

Sun., Feb. 5

9:30/11:15 a.m., Worship; 10:30/12:15 p.m., UU Basics;
12:45 p.m., Young Adults; 12:45 p.m. Zen of Drawing
10 a.m., UUW

Mon., Feb. 6

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

Tues., Feb. 7

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

Weds., Feb. 8

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

Thurs., Feb. 9

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

Fri., Feb. 10

Sat., Feb. 11

9-1 p.m., New UU Class; Tai Chi cancelled

Sun., Feb. 12

9:30/11:15 a.m. Worship; 10:30 a.m., Property
Committee; 12:45 p.m., Zen of Drawing; 12:45 p.m.,
Rainbow Alliance; 1-3 p.m., Coming of Age

Mon., Feb. 13

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

Tues., Feb. 14

4:30 p.m., SGM; 7 p.m., New UUs' SGM;

Weds., Feb. 15

7 p.m., Personnel Committee

Thurs., Feb. 16

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

Sat., Feb. 18

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

1 p.m., Tai Chi; 7:30- 10 p.m., Cranberry Coffeehouse

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 have several irons in the fire. Last week, I mentioned how busy and vibrant the congregation has been this past fall. I also have been hopping! But let me tell you some of what I have been doing that most people don't see, because I do these things outside of the congregation.

I am in my last of three years as president of the Saint Lawrence chapter of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association. I also serve on the design team for the four-district "UULTI" leadership retreat and last summer, I served as one of the main presenters. The third district UU group I am involved with is the Spiritual Deepening Advisory Council of the district. I am co-leader of that group and this summer we are planning a district-wide spirituality retreat. I have preached in three other UU congregations this fall and will preach in the Utica UU church in March and the Schenectady UU church in May, which is about average for me each year.

Locally, I involve myself with the interfaith groups such as the Clergy Lunch group and the Children of Abraham group. I have been an active part of creating the "Home Gatherings" program for the Children of Abraham. The Home Gatherings are a little like our Small Group Ministry, but specifically for Jewish, Christian, and Muslim gathering and sharing.

In January, I am participating in two classes. I traveled to Boston from January 16-19 for a class on "The Art and Ministry of Staff Supervision" taught by a member of the Alban Institute. I also am taking an online called "Sexuality Issues for Ministry Professionals," led by the Religious Institute.

Connecting with the Anti-Fracking and Occupy Binghamton groups along with other social justice activities also feeds an important part of my call. I tell you all this because most of you are not aware of it. I do it mostly because I love to do all these sorts of things: teaching, creating good programs, connecting with colleagues. I also do it as a representative of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Binghamton, because a significant part of who we are is how we are in the world beyond our walls. It is important to me to be involved beyond the four walls of our congregation.

—Douglas

Reflections

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

We strive to provide a variety of opportunities for congregants and community members of all ages to explore and develop their faith through resources that assist in each person's search for meaning.

Draft Mission Statement Lifespan Faith Development

On January 28, members of the Religious Education Committee, Adult Religious Education Committee, and Lifespan Visioning Team met for a day-long retreat facilitated by Pat Infante of the CERG Staff (Central East Regional Group of the UUA). This retreat followed several years of discussion, focus groups, visioning, and gathering committee input in an effort to move towards lifespan programming. During this time, our staffing has grown slightly, as we added first an RE Assistant, and then increased hours for the DRE position to allow the Director of Religious Education to support programs across the lifespan, not only programs for children and youth. However, we found our structure limiting in developing and supporting programs. For example, does our Religious Education Committee for children and youth programs support our multigenerational programs, or is the Adult Religious Education Committee responsible?

When we have a course proposal, such as one recently brought to the Adult RE Committee that suggests a program for youth and adults together, who oversees and supports such a program? How can we best support our emerging Young Adult program? We tried joint bi-monthly meetings, but found this cumbersome and overwhelming for both groups, and then we spun our wheels for a few months.

This retreat allowed our ideas to again gain some traction. While we anticipate that most congregants will notice little change in the coming months, we hope our committee members and leadership will gain greater clarity, a renewed sense of purpose, and increased efficiency as we make some shifts to support our vision. We began to imagine two multigenerational committees that oversee programming for all ages based on **when** programming is presented, not which age it is intended to serve – one committee for Sunday morning programming, and one for programming throughout the week. And, we envisioned a third committee, which would work with Membership, on events like our UU Pals celebration. Over time, we hope this allows our programming to grow in breadth and depth, and to grow all of us as Unitarian Universalists.

~in joy, Lynn

RE Calendar

- February 5** – RE Classes resume
February 5 – Last Day for Adult UU Pal sign-ups
February 12 – Coming of Age Meeting
February 19 – Faith in Action field trip
March 4 – UU Pal Brunch



New Religious Education Assistant Welcome Karen Armstrong!

The Religious Education Assistant Search Committee is thrilled to announce the appointment of Karen Armstrong as our next RE Assistant! Karen comes to us with a wealth of experiences in the local community with organizations such as the Ferro Institute where she continues to work part-time, in addition to past employment with Southern Tier Aids Association, and the Health Department. Her knowledge of local agencies is extensive, and will assist us in our outreach work. She is a recent graduate of Binghamton University, and also received an Associates degree from Broome Community College in Graphic Design, so Karen's computer and design skills are exceptional and fill a gap on our staff. She and her family have occasionally attended Vestal United Methodist, but have more often spent their Sunday mornings volunteering at a local nursing home. Karen has a positive, can-do attitude, and easy sense of humor that will be a real asset to our congregation. Please join me in welcoming Karen! additional support from our congregational home base.

Please sign up on the bulletin board or contact Lynn Garman or Julie Boyd if you are interested in helping out or need more information.

Parents as Spiritual Guides Thursdays, March 1 through April 5, 2012

6:30 to 8:30 pm

Childcare available upon request

This six-session course is based on the premise that parents are the primary religious educators of their children, and religious education should not and cannot be restricted to Sunday mornings at church. This program will assist parents to bring spiritual growth into the home, where the communion and rituals of family life can support the "dynamic process of faith development."

In the preface, Bobbie and Chris Nelson, authors of the curriculum we will use, describe their goal "It is our hope that we will all make a covenant with the children in our lives to be their companions and guides on a magnificent journey in which they know the meaning of *transcendence* – literally the act of "climbing over" - a process of moving over or going beyond real or imagined limits or boundaries."

Participants will explore their own spiritual journey, ways to provide spiritual experiences for children, and companion one another. This class is open to parents, grandparents, RE teachers, and all lovers of children. For more information, contact Lynn Garman, DRE.

February Faith in Action Needs YOU!

Each month, during our Sunday morning religious education program, we give our time and service to a local outreach effort. This coming month, we will support the efforts of Trinity Church in serving a meal to those in our community who are hungry.

This is an ambitious undertaking, as it will take us off-site and into the local community. Please join us in making this venture a success!

Youth in our middle school and Coming of Age groups will volunteer their time on February 19 to prepare and serve a meal at Trinity Church in Binghamton. Teams of about 8 volunteers will work a one-hour shift between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m., 11 a.m. and noon, or noon and 1 p.m.

We are looking for youth and adults to sign up for one hour of their time to help out. We are also looking for drivers to shuttle the volunteers from UUCB to Trinity Church and back. Younger children will be preparing dessert for the lunch during the 9:30 program, and our elementary children will provide additional support from our congregational home base. Please sign up on the bulletin board or contact Lynn Garman or Julie Boyd for more information.



GREEN MATTERS

THANK YOU to all who brought T-shirts for the T-bag workshop on January 15th! Those shirts that didn't reach T-bag status will have another chance in the future. They are beautiful and deserve this second life in the form of reusable bags! Thanks also to Amy Parker for her sewing talents!

Other T-shirt Tidbits:

From Stuff: The Secret Lives of Everyday Things, by John C. Ryan and Alan Thein Durning

Polyester: If your T-shirt contains polyester, it released 10 times the polyester's weight in CO₂, not to mention nitrogen and sulfur oxides, hydrocarbons, particulates, carbon monoxide, and heavy metals.

Cotton: If it contains regular cotton (as opposed to organic cotton), it joins its other cotton friends in accounting for 10% of the world's annual pesticide consumption which has found its way into many of the apple and grape juices we consume today. Look for organic, undyed cotton. Better yet, buy your T-shirt from a used clothing store.

Laundering: After wearing your T-shirt several times, wash it as part of a full load of laundry, using cold water.

Drying: Hang your T-shirt outside to dry. The U.S. receives more energy in the form of sunlight in 40 minutes than from all the fossil fuels we burn in a year!

Tired of your T-shirt? Save it from the landfill and donate it to the T-Bag Workshop at UU. Oh...you did!

Thanks again!

Stop unwanted mail with your iPhone:

<https://www.catalogchoice.org/mailstop/mobile>

Emergency Alerts:

During the recent flood, many people received early warning to leave their homes via landline phone, but what if you have no landline? You can receive information about severe weather warnings, significant highway closures, hazardous materials spills, and many other emergency conditions via the web, your cell phone, or email by signing up here: <https://users.nyalert.gov/>

Cranberry Coffeehouse

Mike Agranoff

Sat., Feb. 18

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

\$8 Admission

Equally at home in the contemporary and traditional camps of the Folk world, he is a fine musician and storyteller. His prime instrument is the guitar, upon which he shines with intricate finger-style arrangements of anything from Tin Pan Alley tunes of the '20s to fiddle tunes to his own music. He also plays concertina, piano, banjo, or sings *a capella*. He can be uproariously funny, contemplative, and powerfully emotional in the space of a few minutes. The man will capture your attention, and then your heart.

Attention All 20 Somethings!

If you have graduated from high school or bridged out of youth group but haven't turned 30 yet, you are a Young Adult! Come hang out with the cool peeps!

We are having a Young Adult gathering on Feb 5 after the second service for discussion followed by lunch at Cyber Café. All Young Adult newcomers are welcome. Check us out on Facebook at UUCB Connecting Young Adults. For more information, text or call Katy Beam at 607-201-2078.

Peace, Justice, and Sustainability Film Series

Fri., Feb. 10, 7 p.m., *It's Elementary*. Social Hall, refreshments at 6:30 pm and discussion to follow. The documentary film takes the camera into classrooms for a child's eye view of LGBT issues. See how students from first to eighth grades respond to learning about gay issues. The film series is a project of the UUCB Social Justice, Green Sanctuary, and Rainbow Alliance Committees and Peace Action and Veterans for Peace of Broome County.

SGMs are Topic of Next UU Women's Group meeting

The UUwomen will learn more about Small Group Ministry at their next meeting, Mon., February 6 in the Fireside Room. All women in the congregation are welcome.

New Adult RE Course

"The Way of the Warrior." 7-9 p.m., Tuesdays, March 6-April 10. Facilitated by Jeff Martinez and Adria Wilson. More information coming.

Save the Date

On March 4, Iroquois Studies Association annual meeting in the Social Hall, featuring a 2 p.m. public program on Iroquois storytelling, about owls. Co-sponsored by Iroquois Studies Association and UUFAIR. Live owls displayed by Barb Cole, the local wildlife rehabilitator. More details to follow.

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. Call Darin at 761-9139 with questions.

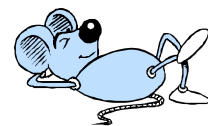
Thursday, February 16 at 7 p.m. in the Social Hall — CUUPs discussion night. “Dreamtime” A discussion on working with Dreams and Astral Projection; **Wednesday, February 22** at 7 p.m. at the Bundy Museum (129 Main St, Binghamton) -- Fire Circle Spirituality Group (drumming and dancing); **Thursday, March 1** at 7 p.m. in the Social Hall -- CUUPs Ritual night. Preparing the soil and seeds of New Projects. (Please have an idea to work toward in the spring.)

New Adult RE Course: “Harvest the Power”

Rachel Light and Jeff Donahue will co-facilitate a new course, Harvest the Power. This course will deepen and enrich the experience of our members and leaders, and by extension, the ability of our congregation to live out its missions and values. We'll begin with a theological grounding for faithful leadership that leads into an exploration of each participant's own faith. Power, authority and differences between management and leadership will be featured. And we'll offer time to discover your own turning points and moments of grace and see how congregations can have similar experiences.

These four workshops will be followed by another four in the fall, and a final four next winter. It's advisable to take all of these workshops, but not mandatory. Wednesday evenings, 7-9 p.m., Feb. 29, March 14, 21, and 28 (we skip March 7). A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. This is a UUA Tapestry of Faith curriculum.

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 Scott Husted for the donation of a set of large-print hymnals for use by our keyboard players.

Thanks to George Cowburn, for ringing our bell to summon us to services.

This from Marie Soto:

I'd like to send a warm and sincere thanks to all those anonymous little mice who have left gifts for my grandchildren. I want the mouse to know that all the gifts were well received and much appreciated. The books are read and are favorite bedtime stories, the vest fit, the pillow's comfy, the ornaments appreciated and the art work is hung. Thank you, one and all.

Thanks to Lois Einhorn and Don Karn Jr. for filling in as ushers and to Mary Wahl for bringing our Sunday bagels every week!

Flood Update!

Many thanks to the team of people helping Scott Clarke clean and repair our church basement after the flooding. New doors, cabinetry, and molding have been installed. A new futon was added. Professional cleaning was done. We spent between four and five thousand dollars; and we saved a considerable amount as well thanks to members who pitched in with their time and skill.

I have this exciting news to add: We have received checks of support totaling over three thousand dollars from congregations in the Saint Lawrence District and from a Chalice Lighters call put out by our neighboring district, Ohio Meadville. It is inspiring to receive such help and support from our neighboring congregations!

Newcomers: Take Note!

“The New UU”! On Saturday, February 11 in the Fireside Room from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (lunch provided) Douglas Taylor and Rachel Light will lead people through an introduction to UUCB, our Unitarian Universalist history and way of faith, how to get involved, and other topics. This four-hour workshop is the perfect place to ask your questions and learn more about this congregation. Childcare is available upon request. Sign up on the bulletin board. (This workshop will be offered again in May).



The BEACON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CONGREGATION OF BINGHAMTON

183 Riverside Drive
Binghamton, New York 13905

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Binghamton, NY
Permit No. 62

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Visit our Website and get
Your newsletter online:
<http://www.uubinghamton.org>

The Unitarian
Universalist
Congregation of
Binghamton is a
Welcoming
Congregation.

Cranberry Coffeehouse

***Singer, songwriter,
Storyteller, humorist***

Mike Agranoff

Sat., Feb. 18

7:30-10 p.m.

\$8 Admission