

OCTOBER 2009

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Interim Minister: Myron Andes
Director of Religious Education: Jan Hutslar
Deadline for next newsletter: Friday, November 20

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

Worship services and children's programs begin at 10:30 a.m.

October 4 Stillness - Charlie Bradt

Spiritual teachers throughout history have spoken of the gifts to be found in stillness. We'll explore some of those gifts and some of the pathways to this place in ourselves. The lay leader will be Peter Van de Water.

Greeters: Gary Berk and Bryan Thompson; Kim Bouchard and Ed Clark
Social Hour: Miles Manchester; John Marson and Al Wioskowski; Marilyn Mayer

October 11 Association Sunday— Interim Minister Myron Andes (and others)

Several members of this church will speak on their involvement with the wider UU movement, both in the UUA and St. Lawrence District. It is amazing the ways we are connected, even when we may feel distant. We will share a Harvest Thanksgiving—please bring produce from your garden to share, and take some home when you leave.

Greeters: Bill Biggers; Dave Bradford; Matt Bullwinkel and Beth Robinson
Social Hour: Todd Moe; Jon and Kathy Montan; Denise Montroy

October 18 Celebration Sunday – Stewardship Committee and Interim Minister Myron Andes

Today we celebrate the generosity of this congregation and all your generosity enables us to do. Please bring your completed pledge forms to this service. After, join us for a "Thank You" meal of soup, bread, and other treats.

Greeters: Leo Burger and Lisa Thomas; Sheila Cerwonka; Robin Collen
Social Hour: Celebration Sunday Luncheon

October 25 History Is In The Past: (It's Not Like It Is Real!) – Interim Minister Myron Andes

With these words, singer/songwriter Ann Reed raises the question of our relationship to our past and the accounts of it. We will consider some of our Universalist and Unitarian history, its meaning, and its relevance for us here, now.

Greeters: Tedra Cobb and Scott Shipley; Caron and Phil Collins
Social Hour: Dick and Peggy Mooers; Dick Morrow; Rajiv Narula

THOUGHTS IN THE INTERIM

It is a pronounced blessing to an interim minister to begin work with a congregation that is efficient, effective, and made up of people of good will. In the short time I have been with you I have found the many comments I've heard from folks who have had dealings with UUC to be born out: this is an amazing, mature, functional, loving church. It is a privilege and a pleasure to be working with you. As the regular life of the church (worship, religious education, stewardship) and the search for a settled minister (a major enterprise that involves everyone) go on, we also have work to do together that is essential to the successful navigation of the transition. Studies and accounts from those with long experience indicate that a congregation that does not complete certain tasks during its interim period is very likely to have a difficult time as the new minister begins. Often, this results in an unhappy year or two for everyone, followed by the new minister's departure and a new search. What are these important tasks, these things we can do to increase the church's chances of finding a good long-term match with a minister? These are the five interim tasks in which the congregation needs to engage this year:

1. Claim and honor its past and engage and acknowledge its griefs and conflicts.
2. Recognize its unique identity and its strengths, needs, and challenges.
3. Understand the appropriate leadership roles of minister(s), church staff, and lay leaders and navigate the shifts in leadership that may accompany times of transition.
4. Make appropriate use of District, UUA, and other outside resources.
5. Renew its vision, strengthen its stewardship, prepare for new growth and new professional leadership, be ready to embrace the future with anticipation and zest.

We will all be engaged in these tasks for the rest of this church year. The Transition Team will work with me, the Church Council, and every other part of the church toward realizing these goals. You will be hearing more about each of these in coming days. For now, you can begin thinking (and talking) about the five tasks. Opportunities for involvement in the work will be forthcoming. Let us engage together in this happy quest, this step toward the future.

Myron

Myron's office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., and other times by appointment.

Email: myronandes@earthlink.net
Church phone: 315-386-2498
Home phone: 315-714-2332
Cell phone: 812-228-9013

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I had a moment of epiphany recently, or maybe just a moment of stark realization. A couple of weeks ago I went to get my hair cut. When I walked into the salon, I noticed a baby car seat, which I thought was an unusual accessory for my hairdresser who was married only last December. With my tongue well-positioned in cheek I asked "havin' a baby?" Her rather cool and very unexpected response was, "as a matter of fact, yes." She then went on to tell me an amazing story of friendship, living one's values, and change. In a nutshell, her husband's friend knew a young woman who had a baby, and after four months was realizing that it was in the best interest of the child to consider giving it up for adoption. My hairdresser and her husband of eight months had been discussing and planning for this adoption, but it was still potential and in the future until the previous evening. They had visited the young mother, and by the end of the evening the woman had not only made the decision to give up the child, but she was sure that it had to happen that evening. My hairdresser had left work on Friday a newlywed, and come into work on Saturday the mother of a four month old child! My response to this story was "wow," and I remember commenting on what a transition she had experienced, making an analogy to transition labor, which, for those of you who have not experienced it, is the most difficult, painful, and often fastest part of the birthing process.

That's when my epiphany occurred, as thoughts of church flooded into my mind. We too are in transition, and while we have known for months it was coming, we are now experiencing first-hand and viscerally what transition feels like. You may have noticed it too as the regular rhythms are being jostled, and some gears are grinding in the smooth weekly operation of the church. Personally, I have become starkly aware of just how much Anne and Wade did in ways large and small, public and behind-the-scenes, to keep the ship of church sailing smoothly forward. While there is no doubt that they changed the culture of our church and developed a model of shared ministry, they still did a lot, and after 16 years had developed routines and an institutional knowledge and memory that acted as both a glue that provided stability and a lubricant that allowed for smooth communication and interaction between various facets of the congregation. Is it even possible that they did too much? Yep, it is.

At our January retreat, Church Council prioritized ten focus points or tasks that we wanted the interim minister to help us with over this year. Number one on this list was to retain current congregants and welcome newcomers, and a close second was to help us understand the workload of a minister (particularly an individual minister). It is unrealistic, and probably not in our best interest, to think or expect that Myron will be able to fill all the gaps left by Anne and Wade. As frustrating, hard, or just sad as it might be to not have things run as they did not so long ago, this is a necessary and important part of learning who we are and what we want in our next settled minister.

And now comes my pitch of how you can help. I am currently working with Myron and our extraordinary vice president Kim Bouchard to review the list of tasks previously attended to by the co-ministers with an eye toward redistribution. Certain committees will be asked to pitch in, and there will undoubtedly be new volunteer opportunities for individuals as well. To paraphrase the oft-used quote, it takes a congregation to run a church. From clipping news items about folks in our congregation for the kiosk, to helping assemble the newsletter on a monthly basis, to chairing the moth-balled Social Events Committee, there is no shortage of ways you can plug in, contribute, and support your church through this year of transition and into the next settled ministry.

Plan to attend the Committee Fair on October 4 to learn more about the work of the various committees in the church and which ones routinely provide chocolate at meetings (hint: check out

Stewardship!). But most of all, come to church! While it is necessary to fill committees, it is most important to fill our sanctuary on Sunday morning, to welcome one another and to share with each other what it means to be a community, a congregation and the UU Church of Canton.

Margaret Harloe

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

“This is how change happens, though. It is a relay race, and we're very conscious of that, that our job really is to do our part of the race, and then we pass it on, and then someone picks it up, and it keeps going. And that is how it is.” I read this quote by Alice Walker with a light heart, knowing that even though all this change we are in the midst of is difficult, and at times overwhelming, we do it as a relay. We each take parts, pass them on, pick them up, keep it going.

When I see how much work the members of our church are doing to keep things going, to continue with our work and play, I am heartened. During the recent Teacher Orientation, we had a very open conversation about our spiritual journeys, our feelings and thoughts about this trip we take together—partners with each other across the generations. And this place, now, is part of that amazing journey of growth and discovery. I am glad to be on the road with you all!

It is with mixed feelings that I report that Natalie Panshin will be leaving the job of Assistant Director of Religious Education. I am happy for her new job as a school librarian in Morristown. I am sad to have her leave the position to which she gave so much of herself—her wonderful organizational skills, her genuine caring, her conscientiousness and deep presence. Fortunately, we will still see Nat in the pews on Sunday morning. Natalie, thank you so much for everything!

Jan and Rebecca

HELP WANTED

We are in need of a new Assistant Director of Religious Education! This five-hour-per-week position is under the supervision of the Director of Religious Education. Interested individuals should contact DRE Jan Hutslar by phone—386-2498 (w) or 379-0427 (h)—or e-mail janhutslar@yahoo.com for further information.

JOYS AND SORROWS

- Our condolences to Rich Welsh and Mary Graham on the loss of Rick's father.
- Loving condolences to Kim Richards who recently lost her mother.
- Our thoughts go out to Sue Cypert who lost her sister in early September.
- Congratulations to Dr. Boris Jukic who has been named the Director of the MBA program for the Clarkson School of Business.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

- Thanks to all our greeters, social hour hosts, altar decorators, and chalice lighters who kept our summer services running smoothly!
- Thank you to Peggy Sperling for the beautiful mums that welcome us on our front steps.
- Thanks to Heather Rousell for coordinating the lovely luncheon before the Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshop, to Dave Weissbard and Karen Wells for the delicious lunch, and Natalie Panshin and Erika Barthelmeß for helping with arrangements.
- Thank you to all who made our Religious Education Teacher Orientation a great success:
- Sarah Bentley-Garfinkel, Barbara Beekman, Kim Bouchard, Sue Powers, Rajiv Narula, Carol Gable, Natalie Panshin, and Rebecca Rivers for facilitating a team meeting and offering information and enthusiasm for the coming year.
- Esther Katz and Pam Short for organizing all the food, and Bill Short and Esther Oey for helping them feed us all.
- Sue Powers, Kim Bouchard, and Rajiv Narula for all their time and energy on the Curriculum Subcommittee, and all the work that entailed.
- All the members of the RE Committee for their hard work and dedication.
- All of you teachers, assistant teachers, childcare providers, and youth group advisors for signing on for a great year with our children and youth.

TRANSITION TEAM

One of my favorite bumper stickers is “Change is inevitable; Struggle is an option.” To me that means change will happen and I can either run with it or resist. I am almost always happier with the end result when I approach change with an attitude of “what can I make that is good from this change?”

And so, I am running with the change our church is experiencing and contributing what I can to make the process respectful, productive, and nurturing. Luckily for me I have the opportunity to work with the Transition Team, which is chaired by Kathy Wyckoff; other members of the Transition Team are Walt Conley, Tedra Cobb, Jon Montan, Judy DeGraaff, and Pete Beekman.

The Transition Team worked to offer a variety of ways for our congregation to say goodbye to Anne and Wade. During that process we heard from many people and incorporated as many needs as possible into the plans. Now our focus has shifted to working alongside Rev. Myron Andes as he leads us through our process of Interim Ministry. In short that means facilitating a process for our church community to take stock of who we are, where we came from, and where we are going. Soon we will be meeting with the Church Council and Tom Chulak, the St. Lawrence District Executive to map out some of our church's transition. During the coming months we will work to support to our interim minister and our congregation.

Here is how you can help: Talk to us--tell us how you are doing with all the change you are experiencing. Remember that this is a time for us to try new things. Make connections with others and try to see the change from their perspective. Most of all, keep participating in this church community.

Kelly Johnson-Eilola

SOCIAL ACTION SHARED OFFERING

September—Supporting Our Troops

Thank you so much for your generosity. We may never know how much what we have done will mean to a soldier on the other side of the world. Your generosity, your willingness to see our troops as part of the whole, connected to you and me, means a lot to me.

Mark Berninghausen

October—North Country Children's Clinic

The Shared Offering on Sunday, October 11, will be taken for the North Country Children's Clinic, which provides uninsured and underinsured children and their families access to health care services. Their patient-centered primary care medical, nutrition, mental health, and dental efforts keep children healthy and out of the expensive hospital emergency rooms and inpatient beds. Health care services are provided right where the children are—in school-based health centers and in convenient community clinics.

In 2008, 34,064 children and young adults made 91,059 visits to all of the NCCC programs across St. Lawrence, Lewis, Jefferson, and Franklin counties. Last year, 94 percent of all visits made for primary care, dental, mental health, and school-based health were made by children from families where at least one person was employed. Members of the military numbered 6,900, at least 21 percent of all individuals seen at the Children's Clinic. Approximately 2,000 uninsured and underinsured children made over 4,000 visits for medical, dental, and mental health programs. The Children's Clinic incurred \$458,000 in uncompensated care and uncollectable patient charges during this time frame. This means those 2,000 received free care at the Children's Clinic.

North Country Children's Clinic was founded in 1971 and is the only private, not-for-profit, multi-service agency of its kind in northern New York. The agency has grown in response to community needs to include a four-county service area, 118 employees, and six vital programs: pediatric medical care, primary dental services, mental health counseling, special supplemental food program for Women, Infants, & Children (WIC), adolescent pregnancy program, and facilitated enrollment (assistance with enrollment in Medicaid and Child/Family Health Plus). Doctors, nurse practitioners, dentists, dental hygienists, and mental health counselors in the Children's Clinic programs provide primary care and preventive health care services helping keep children healthy and out of expensive emergency rooms and costly hospital beds. They estimate that their programs are saving thousands of dollars, not only in state and local Medicaid and Child Health Plus expenses, but also for our local citizens who would pay higher taxes to help cover emergency room and inpatient hospital health care costs for thousands of uninsured children and families living in rural areas.

STEWARDSHIP

The 2010 Stewardship Campaign is now in full swing. We are making final plans for the culminating event – Celebration Sunday—on October 18. This service will be a chance for us to celebrate our wonderful church community and all it brings to us and we to each other. The service will be followed by a soup and bread luncheon. If you are a soup maker and like to show your stuff, please sign up on

the kiosk to make a pot of soup for 12. We are looking for both meat and vegetarian soups. We hope as many of you can attend as possible.

Around the time you read this, pledge information will begin arriving in your mailboxes. We would love to have everyone bring their pledge cards in on Celebration Sunday but we know not everyone will be able to make it that day. If you are unable to attend, please send in your pledges before October 18 so we can add them to those we collect on Celebration Sunday. It is very important that we wrap up our campaign as soon as possible so the Budget and Finance Committee and Church Council can create the budget for 2010. Our budget is based on what our members and friends pledge. In order for the budget to be reviewed by all the requisite committees, we hope to complete the campaign by mid October.

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee I want to thank all of you for all the many ways you support the church. Please join us October 18 for Celebration Sunday, fellowship, and a meal.

Scott Shipley

COMMITTEE FAIR

Celebrating & Sustaining Our Community

The Committee Fair will take place on Sunday, October 4, during the social hour immediately following church services. The annual fair is an opportunity for members and friends to determine how they want to contribute their time and talents so that together we sustain and nurture our vital congregation, our beautiful facilities, and our important work in community. Everyone is encouraged to take this opportunity to join a committee. Committee members and chairs will be available to answer questions about their work. During our transition year there is a greater need for all of us to contribute however we are able. Every member and friend of the church is encouraged to serve on at least one church committee. Committees currently recruiting for members are:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Social Events | Religious Education |
| Stewardship | Outreach |
| Social Action | Building and Grounds |
| Membership | Staff Relations |
| Worship | Endowment/ Investment |
| Library | Budget and Finance |
| Memorial | Church and Community |
| U-Share Gardens | |

For information on the work of a particular committee feel free to contact Church Council Vice President Kim Bouchard, at [bouchaka@ potSDam.edu](mailto:bouchaka@potSDam.edu).

NEWCOMERS' COFFEE

The Membership Committee will be holding a Newcomers' Coffee on Sunday morning, October 4, at 9:15 in the church library. Anyone new to the church or wanting to learn more about us, please come for coffee, breakfast treats, and conversation. Also, please check the information table for potluck opportunities to socialize with each other and with Interim Minister Myron Andes and his companion Shelley Page.

EXPLORING CHRISTIANITY

Let's try it again! The first fall meeting of Exploring Christianity Group will be Sunday, October 4, at noon. We will reintroduce ourselves, especially to any newcomers, and discuss suggestions of topics for future sessions. Please read the cover article, "The Gospel of Inclusion," in the latest issue of UU World. This will be the topic for our first meeting.

CHOIR

New members are always welcome! Contact Carol Strome at 268-0225 or elmers@twcny.rr.com or just show up at rehearsal.

SOCIAL JUSTICE TALK AT SLU

The keynote address for the inauguration of St. Lawrence University president and UU minister Bill Fox will be given by Peter J. Gomes. His topic is "Civil Rights and Social Justice," the lecture will be held at Eben Holden on the SLU campus on Wed-nesday, October 21, at 7:30. No tickets are necessary, and the lecture is free of charge. We have purchased one of Gomes's books for the church library.

A PERSONAL INTRO TO TRANSGENDER AND NON-DICHOTOMOUS GENDER EXPRESSIONS

I thought the Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop was very well presented and thought provoking. I was surprised by the number of people who wrote that they had very limited understanding of transgendered experience, intersexuality, and other gender variant identities. The facilitators assured the participants that resources for better understanding those identities would be given to the Search Committee. I would like to share part of my firsthand perspective.

In our society, most people believe there are two genders that can be assigned by perceived biological sex at birth. People with male sexual anatomy are presumed to be masculine. People with female sexual anatomy are presumed to be feminine. People with ambiguous sexual anatomy are intersexed. Intersexed individuals are usually socialized as male or female. (The rate of incidence of intersexed births is estimated to be 1 in 100.)

“ Transgender” is an umbrella term used to refer to sexes. Transgender people feel a deep psychological need to break gender conventions despite the resulting social repercussions. I am a transgendered member of the congregation. The idea that personality can be determined or predicted by the type of sexual anatomy a person has always seemed nonsensical to me. I felt neither [male]/ nor [female] during my childhood and adolescence. I felt paralyzed by the assumptions being made about me on the basis of perceived gender throughout my early adulthood.

I became a transgender activist in my early thirties (the early 1990s). I changed some gender-related aspects of my life. I felt like I freely chose how I embody and express genders. Giving myself that permission was instrumental in my being comfortable in public.

I would be happy to talk to anyone about trans-gender, intersexed, and other gender variant topics. I am also available to coordinate a workshop or discussion on these topics if requested.

Arthur Freeheart

FALL CHALICE CIRCLES

Chalice Circles are ongoing groups of 8 to 10 people who meet monthly to share ideas and experiences around topics meaningful to them. Chalice Circles differ from other kinds of small groups in that each has a facilitator and they follow a simple format that is designed to enable everyone to participate equally. The focus is on listening to each other, not on debate or discussion. The goal is to deepen our relationships, foster respect and caring, and provide an avenue to exploration of spiritual and ethical issues.

This fall at least four groups are meeting, two of which—one on Saturday morning from 10 to noon and one on Thursday evening from 7 to 9—have spaces available. If you are new to Chalice Circles and would like to join one of these groups, fill out a Chalice Circle registration form at the back of the Sanctuary, or talk with Chalice Circle facilitators Joan Collins and Kathy Montan (Saturday group) or Pam Short (Thursday group).

FROM THE COOTS LIBRARY

The church library is back on its schedule of volunteers at the book table after services and interesting book reviews in the newsletter. Thanks to all who are helping. For those who wish to help and haven't yet, we will have a booth at the Committee Fair listing various opportunities to volunteer in the library – book suggestions (or donations), volunteers for the book table or a book review, etc.

Several very interesting children's books have been purchased or donated over the summer. They will be on the windowsill for the next several weeks. They include: *The Hippie Grandmother*, *Hope is an Open Heart*, *Inside the Beagle with Charles Darwin*, and, a full-length movie DVD, *The Velveteen Rabbit*.

Joan Kepes

I Just Read...

One of my favorite authors is Pema Chodron, a Buddhist nun who is the resident teacher at Gampo Abbey, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. She speaks movingly to me about meditation, and her struggles, like mine, with the practice: “Don't worry about achieving. Don't worry about perfection. Just be there

each moment as best you can. When you realize you've wandered off again, simply very lightly acknowledge that. This light touch is the golden key to re-uniting with our openness." Chodron acknowledges that all of us are human, and we all have jealousy, anger, hurt, regret, shame, and guilt. She says, "In order to feel compassion for other people, we have to feel compassion for our-selves. In particular, to care about people who are fearful, angry, jealous, overpowered by addictions of all kinds, arrogant, proud, miserly, selfish, mean, you name it. To care for these people means not to run from the pain of finding these things in our-selves. Instead of fending it off and hiding from it, we could open our hearts and allow ourselves to feel that pain, feel it as something that will soften and purify us and make us far more loving and kind." In "Getting Unstuck" Chodron talks about the itch of cravings, or the itch of anger and how to get past the "sticky feeling" that get us hooked into things that are bad for us. I am donating four books and an audio CD to the Coots Library: The Wisdom of No Escape, When Things Fall Apart, Start Where you Are, Practicing Peace in Times of War, and the CD, "Getting Unstuck." It's not that I don't love these books; I do, but I want others to enjoy and learn from Pema Chodron as I have.

Peggy Mooers

JOINING THE CHURCH

If you feel you have found a spiritual home in this religious community, we invite you to sign the Membership Book and becoming an official church member. By signing the book, you indicate a deepening commitment to this congregation and its values and a desire to offer some of your time, talent, and treasure to help us shape our vision and become the beloved community we strive to be. If you have questions about membership or would like to join the church, talk with Interim Minister Myron Andes or President Margaret Harloe.

PARKING LOT REMINDER

Young and able-bodied? Older and still pretty spry? Then take a parking spot at the back of the lot or over by the bank, leaving the closer spots for some of our members who have more difficulty getting around. Particularly as winter weather sets in, it can be treacherous crossing the parking lot, and especially for those who are a little unsteady on their feet for whatever reason. Just one more way we can take care of one another.

LUNCH BUNCH

For some time now, members of our church have made it a practice to go out to lunch together after the Sunday service. It's a nice way to help people feel connected, and helps old-timers get to know new-comers. We have decided to formalize this process, which we are labeling "The Lunch Bunch." If you have an interest in eating lunch with some people from the church, get in touch with either Lila Hunnewell or Peggy Mooers after the service. We will try to meet in the Coots Library or a corner of the Social Room and we might even have a sign saying "lunch bunch" so you can find the group. Both Lila and Peggy have been having lunch at other churches and meeting their church members and find it is a wonderful way to feel connected and welcomed. So join us, if you feel like it. We will decide together as a group where to eat, and have a nice lunch.

GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE AT CANTON HS

Former Canton school board member and current Seaway Tech counselor Mary Ann Ashley and Kimber Petrie, resource teacher, are working to start a gay-straight alliance club at Canton Central High School. The purpose of the club is to provide peer support and discourage intolerance through education and positive community participation. On October 1, at the regularly scheduled Board of Education Meeting, there will be a brief presentation primarily to share the group's mission statement. Anyone wishing to support this cause is invited to join us at 7:00 pm in the high school library. The club is seeking community representatives to assist on the advisory committee. If interested, please contact Kimber Petrie at kpetrie@ccsdk12.org.

FREE WILL DINNER

The Church and Community Program is looking for volunteers to help with the free will dinner at the Methodist Church on the fourth Wednesdays of each month. If you would like to seize this opportunity to contribute to the greater community contact Dick Morrow, 265-5783, trom@northnet.org.

NEW FRONT DOOR

For those of you who noticed our beautiful new front doors, they were custom made by Chris Smith, of C.M. Smith Woodworks of Canton. There is no longer a combination lock on the door, so a key is

needed to unlock the door. The same key is used for all the exterior doors of the church. If you already have a key to the side door you are all set but, if you used the combination lock for entry to the church you must pick up a key during church office hours.

A PERSONAL THANK YOU

There is no way to properly thank so many of you who have helped us in the last year and a half. Rides, food, phone calls, cards --you have been wonderful. I am back to full activity and it feels so good. Thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.

Marilyn and John Ross

IN THE WIDER UU WORLD

New York State Convention of Universalists (NYSCU) Annual Meeting, October 16-17, First Universalist Church of Rochester. The Keynote Address by Rev. Dr. Richard S. Gilbert: The Missing U in Unitarian Universalism: Our Universalist Heritage, Its Meaning for Today and Tomorrow.

St. Lawrence District Social Justice Conference, November 6-7, UU Church of Amherst.

Doing Justice in an Economic Tsunami, November 7, UU Church of Amherst. Speaker: Rev. John Buehrens.

Youth Conference, November 13-15, First Unitarian Church of Rochester.

Youth Conference, December 11-13, First UU Society of Albany.

UUA General Assembly, June 23-27, 2010, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

More information on these events is available at www.sld.uua.org.

**CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY
OF UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM**

"It Happened at Syracuse," a district conference celebrating the birth and growth of Unitarian Universalism, is coming to Syracuse October 30-31.

Fifty years ago, shortly before noon on Saturday, October 31, 1959, a very important vote was taken in the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel Syracuse, in Syracuse, New York. After years of discussion, representatives of what was then the American Unitarian Association (AUA) and the Universalist Church of America (UCA) overcame the final obstacle and voted to adopt a common statement of purpose and a formal Plan for Consolidation, creating the new "Unitarian Universalist Association."

Exactly 50 years later, we will gather in the very same ballroom where they did to examine what they accomplished, how far we have come since 1959, and how far we have yet to travel.

More information at: [www.sld.uua.org/
50thanniversary/50thanniversary.html](http://www.sld.uua.org/50thanniversary/50thanniversary.html)

CITING SITES

Some interesting web sites for this month:
UU World magazine online, with weekly updates
www.uuworld.org/index.shtml

Interconnections: A Newsletter for Congregational Leaders
www.uua.org/publications/interconnections/

How to Save the World, featuring the Purple Alien
www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJCf4VgnkBk

If you would like to receive periodic news and information from the church via email, please send an email to uucanton@verizon.net and write "e-news mailing list" in the subject line.

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If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, send an email to the same email address with "email newsletter" in the subject line.

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If you'd like to be on both electronic mailing lists, write BOTH (or something else clever) in the subject line to let us know you're online and would like to receive all the church news that's fit to "print" electronically.

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE NEWS

[The task before this church in the coming year] will be the selection of a minister who can meet the major expectations of our people and not wilt in the shadow of the previous minister. To do that you will need to select carefully, making sure that he or she has the strengths and abilities you need. To do that you will have to take the time to discover just what those strengths and abilities are. In the final analysis, you will have to be patient with the search process, loyal to the church in the transition and supportive of whomever you choose. To do less than that would be to negate everything we have done together over the years.

The above is excerpted from the annual report of Max Coots in 1977. The fact that Max was planning to leave Canton for another church 17 years or so into his ministry here may be a surprise to you. It was to me. Reading some of those old reports also made me realize (surprise, surprise) that it was not always smooth sailing with our beloved Max. His ministry was not 34 years of congregational bliss. There were bumps, missteps, disappointments, wrong turns, and disaffections. But he stuck with us, we stuck with him, we all worked hard, and we all grew together in spirit and in love. What we mostly remember, because in the end it's what mattered most, is the good stuff.

It's probably fair to say we experienced some bumps and missteps on both sides with Anne and Wade, as well. But once again, the spirit of this wonderful and imperfect church community, in partnership with committed, talented, beloved, and imperfect ministers enabled us to negotiate the missteps and smooth out the bumps so we could grow spiritually, financially, programmatically, and as a beacon of liberal religion and social justice in the wider community. We worked hard, laughed a lot, and in the end what we remember is all the good stuff.

We'll have a few bumps and missteps in this transition year and probably in the course of our time with our next settled minister....no matter how fantastic a minister that person is. But let's heed Max's 30-year-old advice to "take the time to discover...those strengths and abilities" we need in a new minister. Let's "be patient with the search process." Let's remain "loyal to the church in the transition" and be supportive of the person we eventually choose. Because, as Max said, "To do less than that would be to negate everything we have done together over the years." In the end, we all have confidence that there will be lots and lots of good stuff, and that's what will matter the most.

- Thank you to the 60+ people who attended and participated thoughtfully in the Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop. It was a very long session on one of the last beautiful days of summer. We are grateful to be serving a congregation willing to commit that kind of time to ensuring that hidden fears and biases with respect to race, sexual orientation, physical ability, or a host of other "categories" don't stand in the way of bringing us together with the best possible minister for our church. We hope to provide opportunities down the road to constructively engage with some of the things that surfaced during that conversation.
- Listening Circles are coming up. There will be at least one almost every day from September 27 through October 4. Please sign up to attend one of these. We know we've been asking for a lot of participation from you these last couple of months with the survey, strategic interviews, the BCT workshop, and now Listening Circles. But we want you to know that the Listening Circles are the last organized opportunity you will have to contribute ideas and concerns to the search until we bring a candidate before you next spring. We will always be open to your questions and concerns on an individual basis, but this is the last search "event." In small Listening Circles you will have an opportunity to talk about what you see as the challenges facing our church and the strengths we have to meet them, the most important goals for the next few years, and what is important for you that we find in a new settled minister.
- We could use some help with The Packet. If you would like to help create the packet that will describe our church to potential ministers, here are a couple of ways you can do that.
 - We need some good photos that convey the life and spirit of our church. If you have some you'd like to submit, contact Laura Foster at lafopearl@gmail.com.
 - We need short statements from some of you describing what this church means to you. Please submit your statement to Laura Foster. We may not be able to include all submissions, and we may need to edit for space, but don't let that deter you! Dig deep and let the creative juices flow. Deadline is October 15.
- Survey results will be shared with you just as soon as we get them compiled. We're sure you will find them interesting and, in some cases, quite thought provoking.

- What's coming up? By the end of October, our Congregational Record will be ready to go live, and our packet will be completed. In November we will begin to receive names of ministers who have expressed interest in our church. We'll exchange packets with them, conduct phone interviews and reference checks and, ultimately, set up pre-candidating dates in February and March. During this time, you will not hear much from us, but don't let that stop you from continuing to feed us your thoughts and ideas. We want to hear from you, and we will make sure you are as informed about what's happening as we can.
- How else can you help? Stay actively involved in the life of the church during this transition. Volunteer for those "one-time" jobs when you can. Contribute your ideas and constructive feedback to Myron, Church Council, the Transition Team and us. And, of course, come to church on Sunday whenever you can. WE are the church and always have been. It's up to us to keep it vibrant and forward moving.
- Talk to us! And thanks for all of your support. It means a great deal to the entire Search Committee.

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