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## NEWS FROM THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF CANTON

DECEMBER 2009

### A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

Worship services and religious education for children and youth begin at 10:30 a.m.

#### **December 6** *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* – Interim Minister Myron Andes

We all come from triumph; we all come from disappointment. We come from love and joy, and also from pain and loneliness. Right now, in this moment, we are a complex mixture of things. The future? Well, we can't know much more than that it will be different, and in some ways we can't even imagine today. Let's try, together, to understand these questions in our own particular circumstances, as individuals and as a church. Let us grieve our losses and look forward to the future with excitement and anticipation.

*Greeters:* Carol Gable, Brian and Claire Gardam, Judy Gibson

*Social Hour:* Saravanan, Oscar Sarmiento, Judy and Shaili Singh, Colleen Smith

*Library Table:* Kathy Curro

#### **December 13** *Social Action Sunday* – Robin Collen, lay leader, with members of the Social Action Committee

How do you live Social Action? How do you include Social Action in your spiritual practice? Rajiv Narula and Leo Berger will share reflections on these questions.

*Greeters:* Bob and Irene Gardner, Pat Glover, Milner Grimsled

*Social Hour:* Emmy Stevenson, Mayme Trumble, Louise and Marie Tyo

*Library Table:* Joan and Dick Kepes

#### ❄️❄️❄️ **December 20** *Service is at 4 p.m.; no service at 10:30* ❄️❄️❄️

*Holiday Pageant* – Music Director Nelly Case, Choir Director Carol Strome, Director of Religious Education Jan Hutslar, Interim Minister Myron Andes, and “a cast of dozens”

A multitude of earthly hosts of all ages join to present this celebration of the winter holiday season. Many faiths have stories set in this time of year that give meaning to life. Several of these, including the Christmas story, will be honored in drama and song and a traditional candle lighting ceremony.

*Greeters:* *Volunteers needed*

*Social Hour:* *Volunteers needed*

#### **Thursday, December 24, 7 p.m.** *Christmas Eve Service* – Interim Minister Myron Andes

A quiet, intergenerational service of readings and carols to celebrate the beauty and blessings of Christmas Eve. The service will include a traditional candle lighting ceremony.

*Greeters:* *Volunteers needed*

*Social Hour:* *Volunteers needed*

#### **December 27** *Kwanzaa*

We will appreciate and learn from the African-American tradition of Kwanzaa and its honoring of community.

*Greeters:* *Volunteers needed*

*Social Hour:* *Volunteers needed*

*Library Table:* *Rajiv Narula*

### THOUGHTS IN THE INTERIM

“’Tis the season to be jolly,” but what “season” is that? Hockey season? Family get-together season, with all the joys and frustrations that come with it? The season of warm hearth-fires and cold snow shoveling? The season of winter wonderland, or of Seasonal Affective Disorder?

Unitarian Universalist author Kurt Vonnegut wrote that in a climate such as ours there are really six seasons, not four. July and August are clearly Summer. September and October, or course, are Fall. November and December? Well, they aren't really Winter yet, but not exactly Autumn either. Vonnegut called them the season of, “Locking,” when the world is in the process of freezing in position. Then January and February are Winter.

March and April are “Unlocking,” when the world thaws from its Winter rigidity, followed at last by the fluidity of “Spring” in May and June.

Vonnegut’s interesting additions to our seasonal vocabulary, “Locking” and “Unlocking,” recognize the reality and duration of periods of change. They are, “not that anymore,” “not this yet,” times, and they last as long as the regular seasons we think we know. Hard to categorize, not all that well understood, we spend about one-third of our lifetimes in them. Perhaps we need some songs and poems celebrating the seasons of “Locking” and “Unlocking.” And perhaps it would serve us well to try to understand them better.

Just as we know, in general, what to expect from Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter, with a little reflection and investigation we can attain a useful understanding of these two new seasons. We find they have their own logic, their own typical patterns as they get us from “here” to “there.” And understanding them can help us cope, and navigate successfully to the next season of life.

Transitions take a finite period of time. We live in them often in our lives. By knowing that, we can deal with them and gently adjust to the changes that are beyond or within ourselves: being born, growing up, becoming an adult, changing careers, changing relationships...and so many more.

This church is in such a transition. It is changing ministers. By remembering transition periods in our own lives and learning from ministerial transitions in other churches, we can better understand how to make it through such a time gracefully and successfully. We remember where we came from. We celebrate our gains and grieve our losses. We reassess who we are in the here and now. We look at where we want to go. We take stock of our resources of material, knowledge, and skills. We choose who we want to lead us, and what our own commitment will be. We get to know the friends and mentors on whom we can call for support. And we step wholeheartedly and enthusiastically into the future.

May the blessings of this season be yours. May we all be joyously transformed.

*Myron Andes, Interim Minister*

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

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### FROM THE PRESIDENT

The 2010 canvass is wrapping up and the Budget and Finance Committee is hard at work preparing a responsible and balanced budget for next year. I wish I could tell you that we have met our canvass goal and that our budget is in surplus, but unfortunately that is not the case. A number of events have conspired to reduce pledge income, and at the same time we have had to stretch our budget to meet anticipated costs associated with the transition. Church Council will be wrestling with some very hard decisions this month, and I must say that I feel a certain camaraderie with Governor Paterson.

Vice President Kim Bouchard and I sat in on the last Budget and Finance meeting as they worked through a draft budget and numerous scenarios to make ends meet. I must say I was impressed with the diligence, care, and honesty with which they engage in this important work. Their commitment to our church, our staff, and our future was certain. We talked about various ways to increase income and cut expenses. At one point someone noted that we have approximately 200 pledging units in our congregation, and that if each were to pledge an additional \$50, together we would raise another \$10,000. I know that for some another \$50 is out of the question, but this made me think about my own pledge. With one kid in college, and another heading that way, the Harloe family budget is far from flush. Yet when I think about what this church has meant to me, my family, and the wider community, another \$50 of even \$100 over the course of the year seems a small price.

And then I started to think about what my pledge contributes to, and was struck by the dual feelings of gratitude and pride welling inside. I am so grateful for all that I have received from this church -- a community of friendly, kind, and welcoming folks when we were new to town, religious education that nurtured my children’s spirits and supported my efforts to teach them the importance of being good and kind and true to them-

selves, the balm of peace that rejuvenates and energizes my soul and the spur of engagement that reminds me to act on my beliefs.

But I am also proud of what we have accomplished together. We have built a church home where all children learn that asking questions is important, and that answers are not always neat or clean or obvious. Together we have nurtured these kids as they have grown into compassionate and confident young adults who work to make the world a more just and caring place. Through our on-going support of UShare and the focused work of the Social Action Shared Offerings, we have sown the seeds of social justice. I am reminded anew each season that if we all contribute just a little bit, we can end up with a whole lot of something to share. With our commitment to just compensation for our staff, we have made a priority of honoring their work and, to borrow a phrase used earlier this year by the visiting UUA compensation consultant, of paying what is right not what is left. And together we reached the long-elusive goal of making our fair share contribution to the larger UU movement, which connects us and allows us to extend our reach much farther into the wider world.

Yes, together we have done a lot, but there is so much more to do, which is why I know my family will find a way to increase our pledge. I want to give so that our church will remain a bright flame of liberal religion in Canton, the North Country, and the world, and will continue to offer support for those who need, a voice for what is right, and welcome to all who come.

*Margaret Harloe*

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS**

*For Association Sunday last month I was asked to share my experiences on the district Religious Education Committee. I was out of town, so I include them here.*

The room was buzzing with energy and conversation. Groups were gathered at the tables, on the floor, in clumps of chairs – talking earnestly, laughing freely. Connecting. The members of each group had a commonality – all UUs and all passionate about the importance of youth involvement in our churches and denomination.

We had just heard from our keynote speaker, Katie Parker, a 17-year-old UU from Long Island, who served on the national task force to create the recently approved “Recommendations for Youth Ministry.” Katie was poised, articulate, and enthusiastic about the report and about her experience working with other UUs from around the country – adults and youth who share her values, passion, and vision.

In our small group, we were DREs, youth advisors, high school youth – talking about how to implement the recommendations.

This event took place two weeks ago, at the annual Religious Education Fall In-Gathering, created and implemented by the St Lawrence District Religious Education Committee.

I was asked to join the committee three years ago. The committee offers a one-day fall workshop each September, like the one I described earlier, and a weekend-long training in the spring for religious educators. We work closely with the District Program Consultant for RE, Karen LoBracco, who among many other things, manages a large lending library for use by all the churches in the district.

Why do I take on the extra duties and travel to be a part of this district committee? I am a member of the committee partly because I believe in sharing the work, and it is my turn to step up and be active, to keep religious education strong in our district, and to support the people who are working with children and youth in their churches throughout the state.

But an unexpected benefit, an indulgence of sorts, is the connection with other Directors of Religious Education who have some of the same experiences, joys, and challenges as I do. We share, we laugh, and we inspire each other. We come together to get renewed. The youth and children I meet and talk with are the highlight of these gatherings. Being a thread in the UU tapestry is rich and strong and really does help me see a bigger picture, the design is lovely, and I am so grateful to be a part of it.

### ***A Fond Farewell***

It is again with mixed emotions that I write this thank you and good bye (there have been way too many of these lately for my liking). Thank you to Rebecca Rivers for her time as Assistant DRE, for the energy and humor she brought to the program, for her hard work and dedication. I am happy for Rebecca's step out into the next phase of her life, as she opens her own business, a center focusing on yoga therapy and classes with an

eye toward a wholeness model of health and healing. Good luck and good wishes to you Rebecca. We will miss you as our Assistant DRE.

*Jan Hutslar*

So...we are in need of a new part-time Assistant Director of Religious Education. If you are interested, contact DRE Jan Hutslar by phone – 386-2498 (w) or 379-0427 (h) – or e-mail [janhutslar@yahoo.com](mailto:janhutslar@yahoo.com) .

### *Faith in Action in the RE Classrooms*

An important aspect of our new Religious Education curriculum is the Faith in Action component. The goal is to get our kids to do actual projects to learn UU values and principles. Students in the fifth and sixth grade class have been learning the tools of our faith with actual tools as metaphors (hammer = power, mirror = reflection). They will be continuing their journey to understand UU “tools” by putting the physical tools into action next spring. Erika

Barthelmess, Miles Manchester, and Pete Wyckoff will help the students decide on a project, plan the construction, and carry out the actual project. The students will also decide who will benefit from the completed work. Current ideas include a picnic table, park bench, book case, or bat house. The recipient could be a Habitat for Humanity house, the garden at the Hospice facility, a senior citizens facility, or even our own church. Any additional ideas welcome! Please let Susan Powers, Jan Hutslar, or the construction team if you know of any person or group who could benefit from our faith in action project.

### **JOYS & SORROWS**

- Our thoughts are with *David Fox* as he undergoes treatment for prostate cancer.
- Healing thoughts are with *Milner Grimsled*, who will undergo surgery for prostate cancer in early December. He reports a very good prognosis!

### **THANK YOU, THANK YOU!**

- To the folks who helped PFLAG during Diversity Day in Potsdam, including *Esther Katz* and *Sheila Cerwonka*.
- To the following people who helped at the Free Will dinner: *Ed Hildebrand*, *Jon Montan*, *Mark Berninghausen*, *Carol Strome*, *Theresa Witmer*, and *Judy Gibson*.
- To *Stevie Michaelson* for helping with the Youth Group on short notice.
- To *Ed Clark* for the story *and* the pizza!
- To the *Youth Group* for their excellent work planning and implementing the Children's Chapel exploring the second UU Principle. It was fantastic!

### **STEWARDSHIP UPDATE**

As we approach the holiday season the pledge campaign is winding down. As of this writing we have received about \$183,000 in pledges for 2010. This is down some \$15,000 from last year. The average pledge has gone up by 2.8% from last year but the number of pledgers has gone down. In previous years the average pledge has gone up around 7%. There are still a few pledge cards out there that we expect to arrive but even with all outstanding pledge cards in, it is looking like this will be the first year in many that pledges have gone down.

There are several possible reasons for this: the world financial situation, loss of some longtime, committed members, uncertainty from the transition we are going through, and perhaps something we have yet to identify. All members who have contacted me, in answer to my request for feedback, gave personal financial reasons for pledge adjustments. No one has mentioned any issues with the church itself that have moved members away from commitment. I know in my own situation, financial and family issues have made the near term more uncertain than previous years. So far we have been fortunate enough that this has not led us to reduce our pledge and we have even been able to increase it a little from last year.

Over the next few weeks, barring any unforeseen uptick in pledging, Council and the Budget and Finance Committee will have to begin making hard choices for the short term. You will hear more from them on these issues. The Stewardship Committee will be looking at what trends for the medium and long-term may be going on. We want to understand any trends that may have an impact on future pledging. As always, thanks go out to all those who generously have given what they are able.

### ATTENTION GREETERS!

A new duty has been added to the Sunday greeters' responsibilities. Following the offering, one greeter is asked to take a head count of the congregation. Once you've counted, write the number on a slip of paper located near the collection plate and include it in the plate with the offering. If you have questions about the procedure, please ask Stevie Michaelson.

### DECEMBER CHOIR SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 6 – rehearse at 9:15

Friday, December 11 – rehearsal and potluck at Judy DeGraaff's, 6 p.m. - ?

Sunday, December 13 – rehearse at 9:15, sing in church

Sunday, December 20 – rehearse at 10 a.m., pageant rehearsal at 10:30, rehearse with handbells at 3 p.m., pageant at 4 p.m.

New members are always welcome! For information contact Carol Strome at [elmers@twcny.rr.com](mailto:elmers@twcny.rr.com) or 268-0225 or just show up at a rehearsal.

### HISTORICAL HAPPENING

**Q:** What year was our church founded as the First Universalist Society of Canton?

**Q:** The first building to occupy the site of our current church building was called the Union Church because it was shared with what other denomination?

**Q:** Who was the last graduate of SLU's Theological School in 1965? (Hint: he's a member of the congregation).

**A:** Come to church on Saturday evening December 5, and find out much you didn't know about the history and legacy of our church.

The Transition Team is planning a special event to highlight the history of our church. It's a chance to reconnect with our heritage or learn about it for the first time. This *Historical Happening* will take place on Saturday, December 5, at 6 p.m. in the Social and Romer Rooms. David Weissbard and Karen Wells will provide food for hungry historians of all ages.

We're planning displays of historical material, mostly from our church archives. We want you to contribute by digging into your personal archives and bringing in photos, articles, cookbooks, and mementos of the church from days gone by. You can bring these labeled items to the church and leave them in the designated box in the Romer Room or bring them with you to the event on December 5. If you can bring a card table please contact Pete Beekman.

Join us with family and friends for a one-of-a-kind participatory review of our collective church history. Honoring our past just might be useful in helping us chart a course for the future. (And if you just can't wait 'til then, the answers to the questions above are: 1825; Baptist; David Weissbard.)

### NEWCOMERS COFFEE

The Membership Committee will host a coffee for newcomers before church on Sunday, December 6. If you are new to the church and would like to find out more about us, join us for coffee, snacks, and conversation at 9:15 in the upstairs room.

### EXPLORING CHRISTIANITY

Bill Maher's "Religious" will be shown on Sunday, December 6, at 12 noon in the Youth Group room. A light lunch will be served and all are welcome.

### ANNUAL JEWISH FOOD FESTIVAL

If you want a real treat, after church on Sunday,

December 6, visit Temple Beth El in Potsdam for their annual food festival. Eat-in and take-out of traditional favorites – plus lots of joy and fellowship – are available from 1 to 4 p.m.

Esther Katz

### SOCIAL ACTION SUNDAY

Our congregation will celebrate Social Action Sunday on December 13 in two special ways. During the service, Leo Burger and Rajiv Narula will lead the congregation in exploration and reflection of social action as spiritual practice. After the service, there will be a Social Action Fair where the church community will be able to learn more about the various organizations in our community and greater world that do social justice work. We hope important connections will be made.

### OUR CHURCH'S CARING CIRCLE

If you have been wondering what the Caring Circle is, the answer is simple: it is all of us, but particularly those of us who respond when one of our members experiences special needs and challenges due to illness, birth/adoption, death, or other life changes. The impact of these challenges can be eased by our caring for one another, person to person, family to family.

How does it work? Caring Circle members complete a simple form (which you can get by contacting Natalie Panshin or Esther Oey), indicating which caring actions you would be willing to provide when needs arise. This might be helping with transportation, bringing a meal to a family, visiting a member in the hospital or nursing home, or helping with a memorial service reception. It can be as simple as sending a card to someone having a tough time. When a need arises, you will receive an email or phone request. Please be assured that when you are contacted about a need, you are free to decline if the timing of the request is not good. We also try to match needs and helpers on a geographical basis.

Finally, if at any time you are aware of a church member with a need we might be able to help with, please contact our Caring Circle Coordinators, Esther Oey (386-1518) or Natalie Panshin (mizuna@verizon.net or 379-9915). By letting us know of the needs that are out there, you help us do the work for which our committee was designed, and help us create the type of caring environment that allows our church to live up to our UU values.

### FROM THE COOTS LIBRARY

We've enticed you to the Library Table in various ways. We had library paste brownies and gummy book worms for Committee Sunday. We have Max Coots' book for sale. Here's a new ploy! Each Sunday several books on the Library Table will also have a copy of reviews written by volunteers over the last few years. The reviews not only summarize the text of the book but also offer insights on the reviewer's opinion for you to agree or disagree with. Hope you'll give it a try!

#### *Just Read...*

A couple of years ago I met with ten seventh-graders for a once-a-week book club. The kids all liked to read, but had very different ideas about what constituted a good book. Even so, of the dozen books we read, they were unanimous in their choice of the best one – *The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer.

Farmer takes controversial issues like cloning, borderland security, and inherited wealth and spins them into a fascinating adventure story. The drug lord, El Patron, has a young clone, Matt, who must escape Opiumland to save his life, and rescue many others from servitude as Eejits, complaint slaves kept in control by computer chips implanted in their brains. The book is set in the “near future” and combines ideas about the ethics of modern technology with a compelling coming-of-age story, and lots of fast-paced adventure.

*Betsy Kepes*

#### *And...*

Prior to his recent appearance in Canton as one of the authors in SLU's Writers Series, I read *The Force of Spirit* by Scott Russell Sanders from our church's library. I had promised to write a review but instead I'll tell you a bit about the author and copy some of the quotations from the cover.

Sanders is known primarily as an essayist who often writes about the natural world and environmental concerns, though he is equally at home writing fiction or children's books. He has spent his entire career (so far) as an English professor at Indiana University in Bloomington and he is a fellow UU who has also been a sometimes Quaker. Many of his books have been published or republished by Beacon Press. Here are the quotations from the cover:

“Scott Russell Sanders reveals how the pressure of the sacred breaks through the surfaces of ordinary life – a life devoted to grown-up children and aging parents, the craft of writing, and the natural world. Whether writing to his daughter and his son as each prepared to get married, or describing an encounter with a red-tailed hawk in whose form he glimpses his dead father, or praising the disciplines of writing and carpentry and teaching, Sanders registers, in finely tuned prose, the force of spirit.”

“One of America’s finest essayists. Sanders writes with a rare grace and sensitivity, befriending the reader by being so human himself.” – Phillip Lopate

“Sanders is the writer I turn to when I feel the need to slow down, pay attention, ponder the blessings of life and acknowledge them with due respect, apprehension, joy. [This gathering of essays]...only enhances my admiration for his values, vision, and eloquence.” – Jim Mustick, *A Common Reader*

*Jean A. Thompson*

### **EFFECTIVE MEETING TIPS: CHALICE LIGHTING**

What if every church meeting began with a chalice lighting?

As one of the few symbolic, ritual elements of our liberal faith, the lighting of the flaming chalice can be a powerful event, a tender event, a moving event. We share it with other Unitarian Universalists throughout the continent. It arose from the Unitarian Service Committee in its work with refugees during and after World War II, and so reminds us of the centrality of social action to our way of the spirit. It holds for us the values we share; as we say each week, “...the light of truth, the warmth of community, and the fire of commitment.”

How can lighting a chalice help us have more effective meetings? Isn’t it just something else that takes time away from doing business?

A brief, well done chalice lighting can greatly enhance the effectiveness of a meeting. **Efficient** meetings are to be desired. But having **effective** meetings is even more important.

As a church, we are different from other volunteer organizations. Our religious nature means we seek to touch the most sacred, meaningful parts of our lives. If we don’t do that, there is no reason for us to exist that can’t be filled by civic organizations.

Pausing for a reverent moment and kindling the chalice flame centers our minds on the reason we commit to the work we will be tending to in the meeting. It provides the kind of nourishing, sacred encounter we seek from our spiritual home, and it frames the business we are about to conduct in light of our highest aspirations. The flaming chalice reminds us why these things are worth doing.

Three new small chalices have been distributed to the rooms in the church most often used for meetings. They were dedicated in a Sunday service to help us keep alive the awareness of our sacred purpose.

Will you try opening each meeting by lighting a chalice? Please share with me and with others what difference it makes.

*Myron Andes, Interim Minister*

### **CITING SITES**

UUA Bookstore - [www.uuabookstore.org](http://www.uuabookstore.org)

Beacon Press - [www.beacon.org](http://www.beacon.org)

Skinner House Books - [www.uua.org/publications/skinnerhouse](http://www.uua.org/publications/skinnerhouse)

UniUniques: UU Gifts, Worship Items and more [www.uniuniques.com](http://www.uniuniques.com)

## **HOLIDAY NEWS**

### **CHRISTMAS IS COMING...**

...and so is our annual pageant, which is part of the Candlelight Service on Sunday, December 20, at 4 p.m. This year’s production will feature the famed “talking sheep” in a colorful rendition of the traditional nativity story. Jan Hutslar has posted the sign-up sheet on the kiosk in the Social Room and both speaking and non-speaking roles are quickly being spoken for. As always, the cast calls for both children and adults. Folks are also needed to help the various characters with entrances and exits.

Our first rehearsal will take place immediately after the morning service on Sunday, December 13. The dress rehearsal is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, December 20, the day of the pageant itself, as has been the standard practice for a number of years. Let’s hope this year Mother Nature does not delay the actual performance as she did in 2007 and 2008! HO HO HO!!



### **Singers Needed for Youth Choir For Holiday Pageant**

There is a sign-up sheet on the kiosk in the Social Room for youth 2nd grade and up who would like to be in the youth choir for the pageant.

Youth Choir rehearsals will be:

- December 6 – after church from 12 - 12:45
- December 13 – during pageant rehearsal after church, 12 - ?
- December 20 – during pageant rehearsal at 10:30

### **HOLIDAY SHARED OFFERING**

In keeping with our congregation's tradition, the December Social Action Shared Offering will be taken to support the Church and Community Program and Habitat for Humanity. Each year our annual holiday appeal is targeted to these two important community organizations. The Church and Community Program is a community-supported program that provides emergency assistance and a "safety net" for Canton area families and individuals. Our church is a founding member of the program. Our church also is a covenant member of the Raquette Valley chapter of Habitat for Humanity. The CCP/Habitat SASO will be taken on Sunday, December 20, at the holiday pageant. Holiday offerings may also be made any Sunday or mailed to the church office.

### **HOLIDAY GREETERS AND HOSTS**

Since December schedules are hard to predict, we don't assign Greeters and Social Hour Hosts for our holiday services. This means we need volunteers! If you can help out on December 20, 24, or 27, please sign up on the kiosk or call the church office. We also invite everyone to bring goodies on December 20, for a special social hour after the pageant.

### **HOLIDAY CONCERT & CAROL SING**

We are happy to welcome back Danny Gotham and Barb Heller who will once again herald in the holidays with a concert of acoustic music and holiday carols on Saturday, December 19, at 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Admission is free, but donations will be accepted at the door. Proceeds will be split between the Canton Neighborhood Center and Helping Hands of Potsdam, two organizations that work tirelessly to alleviate hunger in our community.

### **ANGEL TAGS**

Angel tags offer you and your family an opportunity to buy a holiday gift for a needy child in the Canton community. This is an annual tradition sponsored by the Church and Community Program, and we have participated for many years now. Please take a tag off the board in the Social Room and fulfill a Christmas wish for a local youngster. For more information contact Kathy Curro or Richard Morrow, our C&CP Board representatives.

### **WINTER POTLUCKS BEGIN IN JANUARY**

By early January the winter potluck sign-ups will be available on the Information Table. Be looking at your calendars if you are interested in hosting one. These will go into mid-April and are open to all. Watch for more in the January newsletter.



**FROM THE SETTLED MINISTER SEARCH COMMITTEE**

You may have noticed that you're hearing less from and about the Settled Minister Search Committee in the last few weeks. That's because we've wrapped up the more public "Self-Discovery" and "Framing the Search" phases of our work, as defined by the UUA Ministerial Transitions Office's *Settlement Handbook*, and have entered the quiet "Open for Business" phase.

This means our online Congregational Record has been unveiled for searching ministers to see and our packet has been approved and is ready to send out to ministers whose interest in us is matched by our interest in them. By the time you read this, we will have begun reading online Ministerial Records as the first step in the vetting process.

We will have our third and final consultancy with our Ministerial Settlement Representative, Priscilla Richter, on December 5. From that time forward, we will be reading applications, checking references, and whittling the applicants to the three or four we want to meet in person as pre-candidates.

The last two search phases will be "Pre-Candidating" in February and March and "Candidating" in April or May. We'll keep you posted as much as we can, within the bounds of confidentiality. We are always open to questions about process.

For more information about the search or the survey results, go to the church website [www.uucantonny.org](http://www.uucantonny.org) and click on "What's new with the Minister Search" in the middle of the home page.

#### **In the meantime, how can you help?**

Keep coming to church, make a pledge, join a committee, or get active on your committee – in short, keep our church community vibrant and strong so it remains a source of comfort and support for all members and friends and so we will be an attractive church for the best minister we can find!

#### **Settled Minister Search Committee**

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Todd Moe (Treasurer)  
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