



St. Lawrence District Chalice Lighter Grant Award

**Clifton Park – Emerging SLD Congregation
(December 2010 # 45 – First Grant for FY 2010/11)**

Dear Chalice Lighters,

The St. Lawrence District Growth Committee is so very pleased to announce that the District Board of Trustees has approved our recommendation that the entire amount received for the Fall 2010 Chalice Lighter Call be awarded to the new congregation being established in the Clifton Park area north of Albany.

The new congregation is being started with the help and support of the Capital Region of Unitarian Universalists of New York (CRUUNY) a group of four congregations in the Capital District: the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany, First Unitarian Society of Schenectady, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Glens Falls, and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Saratoga Springs. The project coordinator and the organizing Minister is Rev. Linda Hoddy who will spend at least 16 paid hours per month on this effort. The founding is already well on its way. Groups and individuals from all four of the congregations are highly committed to various aspects of the effort. CRUUNY has been meeting and planning for several years and they have named this project as their highest priority. They have laid a foundation for sharing Unitarian Universalism in the area with a major media campaign in which Chalice Lighters played a part last fall. We are very excited now to offer to our Chalice Lighters the unique opportunity to be a part of the actual founding effort.

The CRUUNY group explains their project as follows:

“We propose to establish a new congregation near the Northway, I-87, between exits 6 and 11. This area was identified in the report of the New Congregations Task Force (2003) as the most promising area in New York State for a new UU congregation. It will be a suburban congregation, serving the communities of Clifton Park, Halfmoon, Waterford, Cohoes, Green Island and Latham. It will be located approximately half way between our current congregations in Albany and Saratoga Springs. These congregations are 37 miles apart.

A recent Percept Demographic Study tells us there are 84,246 person in the study area, with a slightly higher than average preference for UUism. The study estimates 1.4% of the population, 1,176 persons, might be interested in Unitarian Universalism. If only half of those persons join this congregation, it would still be a congregation of more than 500 people, larger than all of our current congregations, except for one.

These funds Chalice Lighters give will be used for the start-up costs of this new congregation. The money will be used to purchase equipment, rent space, buy supplies, a very part-time salary for the organizing minister (16 hours per month), guest speakers and musicians for the services. The funds represent an investment in the future of Unitarian

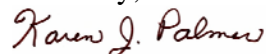
Universalism. Saratoga County is the fastest growing county in New York State. A new computer chip- manufacturing facility is under construction on the northern edge of this catchment area. It will employ 1100 people. Saratoga Springs is already welcoming new people who are moving to the area to work at this facility. However, the 37 miles between Saratoga Springs and Albany congregations mean many people in between are underserved. We hope to fill in this gap with this new congregation. No new congregation has been started in this area since 1997, when the Saratoga Springs congregation was organized.

We are a unique faith, in that we honor truths in all religions, and that we can feast at the banquet of all the scriptures of the world. We can help heal the pain of those who are being excluded and condemned for the color of their skin or their sexual orientation. We can offer an alternative to the empty materialism of our secular culture. This will be a congregation which honors the many paths we can take on our spiritual journey. We will seek to be multi-faith and multicultural.”

We hope you share the Growth Committee's excitement for this opportunity to support the birth of a new UU congregation in upstate New York State. We believe that professional leadership and the support of four neighboring congregations create tremendous potential for this new congregation to be a success. Every dollar contributed to this Chalice Lighter Call will go to the new congregation, and we thank you for your generosity.

The SLD Growth Committee: Amy Lent, Chair; Eileen Hamlin, Chalice Lighter Coordinator; Rev Lynn Ashley, Jennifer Hamlin-Navias, Jerry Kent

Sincerely,



Karen J. Palmer
District President



Amy Lent
Growth Committee Chair



Eileen Hamlin
Chalice Lighter Coordinator

Kindly make your **checks payable to the** *ST. LAWRENCE DISTRICT*
and mail to **PO Box 1045**
Buffalo, NY 14240-1045

Please note “**Chalice Lighters – “CP”**” on the memo section of your check.

Please notify the District Office (sldadministrator@verizon.net or 716.882.0430) with any changes in address, pledge, etc. regarding your participation in the Chalice Lighter Program. Thank you!

