

Unitarian Universalist Church

3 ½ East Main Street

Canton, NY 13617

www.uucantonny.org

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NEWS FROM THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH JULY 2010

Office hours: Monday – Thursday, 8 – 11:30 a.m.

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Interim Minister: Myron Andes

Director of Religious Education: Jan Hutslar

Deadline for next newsletter: Tuesday, July 20

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

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

July 4

Interdependence Day

On this Independence Day, Robin Collen, Viki Levitt, and Jon Montan reflect on the UU principle “Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

Greeters: volunteers needed

Social Hour: Mark Berninghausen

July 11

Godspell – Grasse River Players

Our friends from GRP, who use our space for rehearsal, offer a preview of their production of the seventies musical.

Greeters: Mark Berninghausen, other volunteers needed

Social Hour: volunteers needed

July 18

Life According to Helen Hosmer – Nelly Case

Director of the Crane School of Music for 36 years, Helen Hosmer was born into a Universalist family in 1898 and evinced her beliefs, though perhaps unconsciously, to everyone she encountered till the day she died in 1989.

Greeters: volunteers needed

Social Hour: volunteers needed

July 25

My Turn

Long-time church member Peter Van de Water takes his turn looking at the interdependent web of the personal and the global when he shares his values and thoughts on the state of the union and the major environmental challenge of our time – climate change.

Greeters: volunteers needed

Social Hour: volunteers needed

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ah, summer. So anticipated, so fleeting, so special. Summer is generally marked by a shift of schedules – the sunlight streams in the bedroom window much earlier, the evenings dawdle on much longer, and the kids are out of school at last. You may also notice a shift in schedules around the church over the next couple of months. July is traditionally the minister’s vacation month, and there is generally less activity in the church office. While Diana will still be a regular presence in the office, the church will be quieter in the afternoons. In addition, many (though not all) committees take the month of July off to enjoy the weather, catch our collective breath, and appreciate a pause in our church work before turning our attention to preparing for our next church year.

While Church Council will also take a brief hiatus in July, we had a busy and productive June to wrap up the interim year and position ourselves for the last stage of our transition: welcoming the Reverend David Blanchard as our settled minister. In addition to our regular monthly meeting, Council members hosted the annual meeting of committee chairs. As in past years, this meeting provided each committee chair with an opportunity to showcase activities and events from the past year, share concerns or needs, and listen to others. It is always a wonderful opportunity for cross-pollination and communication

among committees. This year, as the chairs shared the work of their committees, we asked them to reflect on the events and lessons of the interim year and to look back as we to prepare to move forward. In particular, we asked chairs to comment on what they had learned about leadership, discuss challenges they faced and what had been done (or still remains to be done) to meet these challenges, and identify and/or prioritize projects and issues to work on with David.

The conversation was rich, honest, constructive, and made me feel humble and proud to be part of such a committed, caring, smart, and thoughtful group of people. As we were cleaning up afterwards, one of the trustees shared with me how honored he was to serve on Church Council and to be able to witness all that was said around the circle that evening. He was impressed and amazed at the work done by our committees over this last year, the energy and enthusiasm with which folks looked to the future, and the time and talent that is contributed over and over by so many of you. I concur completely!

And so I thank you, and you, and you, too, and wish for all of you a summer schedule shift that allows for rest and repose, or at least a little break in routine. Our church year may be over, but our work is not done. I hope you share my readiness to enjoy the summer and my anticipation of what the next church year will bring.

Margaret Harloe

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

“I would rather live in a world where my life is surrounded by mystery than live in a world so small that my mind could comprehend it.”

This quote by Harry Emerson Fosdick is taken from our 6th and 7th grade curriculum for the fall, called “Riddles and Mysteries.” There is much to look forward to in the fall, but right now join us in the joy of summer and, we hope, a less rigorous schedule and more time to appreciate the amazing mysteries all around us.

We are still looking for a few Religious Education volunteers for both summer and fall. This summer, one-time helpers are needed, and you can sign up on the kiosk for that. In the fall, we especially need childcare providers to volunteer in the nursery five times during the school year. We used to rely on the high school students for that job, but they are happily involved in youth group, so we need more volunteers to staff our nursery. Please call or email the RE office to help.

Happy summer!

Jan & Gina

FROM THE TRANSITION TEAM

On June 19, the Transition Team met with Church Council and David Blanchard. In our two-hour meeting, we identified, discussed, and prioritized issues raised by church members and David, and took action to set some of them in motion.

David summarized his summer schedule: he and his belongings will arrive in Canton in early July. He'll give his first sermon as minister of this church on his first official day of work--August 1. On subsequent Sundays in August, lay persons will take the pulpit twice, and David will preach once - the schedule worked out by David and the Worship Committee.

Between his July arrival and August sermon, one of the items on David's agenda is to work in consultation with Anne and Wade on the covenant between them. A copy of that covenant will be appended to the August newsletter.

At the small ceremony closing our meeting, we each said a word to express how we felt at that moment. Among those words: *gratitude, happiness, excitement, anticipation, thank you.*

JOYS & SORROWS

- † Hearty congratulations to **Carolyn Eilola**, who graduated from Skidmore College in May.
- † Our thoughts are with **Caron** and **Phil Collins** and their son **Richard**, who is living with them while he recovers from some ill health.
- † We are delighted to hear that **Susan Dillon** is recovering nicely from back surgery she had at the end of May.
- † It's great to see **Jim Rudd** up and around again after a *long* stay in the hospital!

THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

- † Warm thank yous to **Judy Gibson, Milner Grimsled, Lois McAllester, Richard Morrow, and Peggy Sperling** for their generous donations to the church's Caring Fund.
- † To **Maggie Wood** and **Jay Kepes** for helping scoop rainbow sherbet at the Dairy Princess festival.
- † For helping at the June 9 Free Will dinner, thanks to **Ed Hildebrand, Pat Glover, Esther Katz, Kathy Curro, Dick Morrow, Mark Berninghausen, and the Corse Family.**
- † Kudos to the Transition Team for throwing another wonderful all-church picnic. A great time was had by all!

WORSHIP COMMITTEE REMINDER

The next meeting of the Worship Committee is Thursday, July 8, at 7:00 p.m. in the Coots Library.

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

I can only conclude, this being the July newsletter, that July is indeed upon us. And July for Stewardship means October is one month closer than it was in June. That just happens to be the way things work. So our planning for the annual canvass continues. We will be contacting members very soon to help us with this year's campaign. This year we are doing a one-on-one campaign. This means we are asking some members to visit other members as part of the process. This is a big effort but a great chance to get to know other congregants. If we get enough volunteers each should only need to visit two to four congregants. The visits will take place in October. There will be training. It will be great. Believe me.

The Generous Spirit Recognition box has not been seeing a lot of action lately. So if you have someone in mind to recognize for his or her support of the church, please take a moment to place your nomination in the box. Stewardship, and the box, will appreciate it.

Scott Shipley

WE HAVE MET OUR FAIR SHARE!

Earlier this year, you received a special appeal from the Stewardship Committee for our "Fair Share" contribution to the St. Lawrence District and the Unitarian Universalist Association. Several years ago, this denomination contribution was built into our annual budget, but this year's budget was stretched particularly thin, necessitating the additional appeal. Thanks to the generosity of all who responded, we have been able to fill the gap in the budget and meet our full Fair Share obligation to both the UUA and the district. In a year when we relied significantly on resources from both the district and the UUA, it is good to know we were able to contribute our share. Thanks to all who helped us meet this goal.

NEW INVESTMENT POLICY

Church Council recently approved the following policy, proposed by the Endowment Committee:

The church endowment will be invested as follows: Guided by the values of the congregation, the Endowment Committee will strive to invest the endowment in a majority of socially responsible funds. These investments will have a mix such that neither fixed income securities (cash and cash equivalents) nor equity funds shall exceed 70 percent of the total endowment. The investment committee will review the performance and allocation of all investments at least quarterly. A review of this policy should take place each year during the first meeting of the new calendar year, and be reported to the Church Council for approval.

The Church endowment currently consists of "endowment" accounts at Morgan Stanley/Smith Barney in Potsdam, the UUA in Boston, St. Lawrence County Housing Council, and the Calvert Fund Micro Loans. It does not include separately managed funds such as operational checking funds (funds used for monthly bill paying), saving accounts, or the Capital Reserve Fund.

For questions on the new policy, please contact Endowment Committee Chair Tom Pynchon at tpynchon@stlawu.edu or call 315-244-3437.

FROM THE COOTS LIBRARY

During July and August, you won't be able to browse the library table during social hour...our faithful volunteers need a break! The library will still be open and eager for your presence. Since we try to put new books on the window sills and in bookends on the big table, you might want to glance over them first. I'll try to change the books on those areas every week or so, (unless all of them have been checked out!) so there's no excuse for a one-time visit.

Joan Kepes

I Just Read...

If you're like me, you are on the verge of tears every day as you hear more news of the environmental impacts that continue to mount in the Gulf of Mexico as a result of the Deepwater Horizon disaster. With this event in mind, I found a small source of hope for the future in reading *Our Choice. How We Can Solve the Climate Crisis* by Al Gore. Thanks to a generous gift from one of our library committee members (thanks, Joan!) our library has acquired the Young Reader Edition of this book, intended for ages 8-14. Although intended for a younger audience, I found myself getting a lot out of this book (as I do most YA books!). This book is good for someone who doesn't have a lot of free time to spend reading and wants to get a lot in a short sitting. Throughout the book, the language is straight forward and bright; engaging photographs illustrate each concept.

Al Gore has a very encouraging, hopeful, and inspirational message for youth: We can change the future if we are willing to make the choice. From this book, I learned about how turbines make electricity, how photovoltaic cells work, what a smart grid is, the possibility of "space electricity" from banks of photovoltaic cells and what "biochar" is. Gore presents examples of innovative technologies and simple methods that are being used around the world to create energy and reduce current carbon emissions.

Beyond technology, he also talks about the politics and social justice issues tied to climate change. In one very eye-opening section, he shows examples of ad campaigns created by political front groups for

the oil and coal industry, which actively denounce scientific evidence for global climate change. He also emphasizes the importance of addressing global population growth and the notion of making plans for the long term future rather than just a single budgetary year or election cycle. I can see how this book might anger those who are most concerned with maximizing the “bottom line” and keeping government out of business, but I found this book to contain a lot of valuable information for the young person (or anyone) who values truth over political or economic ideology.

“Because we don’t see global warming in front of us, we don’t go into high alert. We don’t act,” writes Gore. Perhaps if any good comes out of the oil spill in the Gulf, it may be to provide a very visual reminder of how our deep dependence on fossil fuels has the ability to not only change the climate, but to damage our environment in other ways for a long time. I hope this event will provide the necessary impetus to prompt more people to choose to work toward a carbon-free future. In *Our Choice*, Al Gore has provided us a map of how to take the necessary steps. This may be a good time to check it out for yourself, or share it with your favorite young person!

Lorraine Olendzenski

USHARE UPDATE

Check the church website – www.uucantonny.org – and click on the UShare link on the navigation bar (green, on the left) for information and updates about UShare, our church-wide social action project.

Both gardens – Priest Field Garden in Canton and Cecilie Garden in Potsdam – are growing like crazy. Once harvested, all produce is donated to area food pantries and neighborhood centers.

We could still use some extra hands this summer. Consider adopting one of the gardens for a week. Adopters visit the garden a few times during their week and take care of various chores that need to be done. Direction is provided by the garden coordinators, and we try to pair all adopters up so nobody works alone. Check the website for available weeks or contact Maria Corse, Kathy Montan, Duncan or Lois Cutter to sign up.

If you have questions or would like to learn more about UShare, visit the UShare webpage or contact Jan DeWaters (jdewaters1@twcnny.rr.com).

Visit
www.uucantonny.org
Today!

GREETERS AND SOCIAL HOUR HOSTS FINAL NOTICE!

It’s been our tradition to assign each church member and regularly attending friend a Sunday between September and June to be a greeter and one to be a social hour host. This is a great way to share these tasks and involve us all in the life of the church.

The assignment lists will go out with the September newsletter, so if for whatever reason you are NOT able to take a turn as a greeter and/or social hour host, please call the church and leave a message for Diana or email uucanton@verizon.net. If you have already notified us in previous years, you do not need to do so again. If, on the other hand, you are willing to be called on to do an extra shift when the person scheduled is unavailable, please let us know that, too. Thanks!

SPEAKING OF GREETERS...

...and social hour hosts, too, volunteers are needed for Sundays in July and August and for Labor Day weekend. Greeters hand out orders of service and take the offering. Social hour hosts put out juice and snacks (which the church provides). Making coffee is optional during the summer. The tasks are simple, but important. Summer services generally have a smaller attendance than those during the school year, but our line-up of summer services looks great this year, and we strive to be a welcoming church all year ‘round. Please pick a Sunday or two and sign up on the kiosk.

WATER, STONES, SHELLS

The summer months mean different things for all of us – some travel far and wide, others stay close to home. However and wherever you spend your summer, you’re invited to collect a sample of water or a stone or a shell. Kids, too! Then at our Homecoming service in September, you can join others in placing your water, stone, or shell on the altar. This is a tradition we share that symbolizes coming together in a diverse and loving community.

KEEP IN TOUCH

We plan to continue our regular E-Blast news emails on Wednesdays during the summer. If you have an announcement, reminder, update, or other information you would like to include in the E-Blast, please e-mail your information to Diana Richardson (office@uucantonny.org) by **Monday** evening for the weekly Wednesday distribution.

Dear Friends,

I have a favor to ask. In the interest of getting to know you – individually and collectively – I’m hoping you will take the time to fill out *one more* questionnaire. Don’t labor over it. It’s just between you and me. Just fill it out, fold it, seal it with a bit of tape, stick a stamp on it, and mail it back to me. You can pick up extra copies at church or just photocopy this for multiple responses from your household. Thanks!

-- David

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What’s the best-kept secret of the North Country?

Who was the first person that welcomed you to this church?

What have you brought/kept from your religious past to this church?

If you could invite ANY person, living or deceased, famous or familiar, to preach a sermon in our church, who would it be?

The best advice I ever got was this:

An item from my “bucket list”:

(Circle one of the following indicating preference)

|                         |                 |                         |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Cat/Dog                 | Morning/Night   | Coffee/Tea              | Mountains/Ocean |
| Spontaneous/Predictable | Sergi’s/Josie’s | Roses/Queen Anne’s Lace |                 |

If I still got to have “snow days,” this is what I would do with my “found” day:

Favorite Movie:

Favorite Book/Author:

Favorite UU hymn:

Sermon topics you’d like me to address?

Current spiritual/personal concerns?

What keeps your soul nurtured?

Is there anything you would like me to know?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**David S. Blanchard**  
**62 East Main Street**  
**Canton NY 13617**