

U-FIRST

May 2009

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Gardner

66 Elm St. — P.O. Box 637, Gardner, Massachusetts 01440
(978) 632-0222 — www.uusg.net

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Upcoming Worship Services

Sunday Services at 10:00 a.m.

May 3—I Think I Can—Chris Pera

Chris will share some reflections on how attitude and intention can make a difference in big and small situations.

May 10—Bridging Ceremony for Shauna Pratt

A bridging ceremony is a worship service that celebrates the transition from youth to young adulthood, with the emphasis on the new community. Participants, known as bridgers, are typically between the ages of eighteen and twenty. The central ritual is that of crossing a bridge, symbolizing the transition from youth into the young adult community. This Sunday there will be a ceremony in which our congregation honors, welcomes, and pledges to support Shauna in her new stage of life. Come celebrate in this special worship service!

May 17—What I Believe

UUSG members Sue Blain and Al Ericsson share their theologies with us.

May 24—Memorial Day Service—Rev. John Pastor

In this service we will remember those loved-ones who have died; we will recall that love is stronger than death.

May 31—GLBT Pride Service—Rev. John Pastor

Rev. John is a charter member of the National Gay Task Force founded in 1973. We've come a long way since then. Come hear the story.

June 7—Hymn Sing followed by our Annual Meeting

Everyone is invited to join us for coffee and conversation in the fellowship hall downstairs following worship.



May today there be peace within. May you trust that you are exactly where you are meant to be. May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith in yourself and others. May you use the gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you. May you be content with yourself just the way you are. Let this knowledge settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love. It is there for each and every one of us.



Minister: Rev. John Pastor — Office Hours: Thurs. 1-6pm,
Call for an appointment or to arrange another day or time.
For pastoral emergencies — 508-277-6113

Emeritus Minister: Rev. Neil Bakker

U-First Editor: Julie Pera — uusg.newsletter@gmail.com

Church Office: Catherine Azora-Minda, Secretary — 978-632-0222

Pastoring.....

My Call to Ministry

Ten years ago I was called to ministry. This was not my first call, but it was the strongest; it brought me to where I am today.

In November of 1999 I was working for a travel company that had fifty-two passengers that died in the crash of Egypt Air Flight 990 off the coast of Newport, RI. I was asked to contact the relatives of the victims to inform them of the tragedy. I also went to Newport to be with these loved-ones. During the week that I was there, I provided as much comfort as possible; the grief was overwhelming. It was on my drive back home that I had what I would describe as a "Divine Eruption."

As I approached my hilltop hometown of Petersham, I was bathed in the soft orange glow of a late



autumn day. I suddenly was compelled to stop. I sat in the car and I looked up to see the steeple of my home church. I heard a voice inviting me into ministry. In this moment I experienced a strong felt sense of God's presence. I wept tears of joy in the acceptance of my call to ministry. The following year I enrolled in theological school.

My call to Unitarian Universalist Ministry has been, and continues to be, joyful, mystical, challenging, and filled with discovery.

The Executive Committee has voted to extend my contract to serve you, yet another year. I am honored and humbled to be continuing our journey of formation together. A journey of discovering growing edges and internal places of peace, hope, and love.

With love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James".



When to Call the Minister

- ◆ When you would like to talk about your faith or your religious values...
- ◆ When you would like to talk about joining the church, or finding a place here to contribute your gifts, time and talent...
- ◆ When you want to get acquainted or introduce yourself to the minister...
- ◆ When someone close to you has died or is critically ill, and you would like to talk...
- ◆ When you are to be hospitalized, or know someone who is and would appreciate a visit...
- ◆ When you are confined to your home and would appreciate a visit...
- ◆ When you are planning to be married or to have a commitment ceremony...
- ◆ When you would like to have your child dedicated...
- ◆ When you would like to discuss memorial service planning...
- ◆ When you have personal or family problems you would like to discuss... with your job, children, relationship, or anything else where a sympathetic ear might help...
- ◆ When you are faced with an important decision and would like someone with whom to talk...
- ◆ When you would like to learn more about Unitarian Universalism...
- ◆ When you have an idea for adult religious education programming in the church...
- ◆ When you are disappointed with the church or excited about the church and would like to talk about it...
- ◆ When you are upset with someone and would like some coaching in how best to address the person directly...
- ◆ When you are either upset with the minister or pleased with the minister and would like to share your thoughts, feelings and ideas...
- ◆ When you feel called to offer your talents and energy to the church and its larger purpose, and seek help finding the right place to serve...







Thank UU!

To Bo AzoraMinda and Chuck Heidorn for preparing our past ministers pictures for hanging, and to Mike Vecchi for hanging them along the stairwell.

Thank UU, CongratUUlations, In Our Thoughts & Welcome

If you know of a contribution, concern, or accomplishment that deserves mention in this column, please be sure to send a note to one of the newsletter editors via e-mail or "in-box".

UUSG May 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
26 10am Worship Service	27 6:30-8:30pm Yoga	28 9am TOPS	29 6-7:30pm Meditation 7:45 Book Discussion	30 1-6pm Minister's Office Hours Music & Worship Comm, 7:30pm 	May 1 10:30am Al-Anon 5-8pm AA	2 10am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA 3pm Visioning Session & Potluck Supper
3 10am Worship Service 11:30am, Spirit of Life, Adult RE	4 6:30-8:30pm Yoga	5 9am TOPS	6 6-7:30pm Meditation 7:45 Book Discussion 	7 1-6pm Minister's Office Hours	8 10:30am Al-Anon 5-8pm AA	9 9am Publicity Comm. 10am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA
10 10am Worship Service 	11 6:30-8:30pm Yoga Exec. Committee, 7pm	12 9am TOPS	13 6-7:30pm Meditation 7:45 Book Discussion	14 1-6pm Minister's Office Hours 7-9pm Dances of Universal Peace	15 10:30am Al-Anon 5-8pm AA <u>Newsletter</u> <u>Deadline</u>	16 10am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA
17 9am Healing Share 10am Worship Service 11:30am, Spirit of Life, Adult RE	18 6:30-8:30pm Yoga	19 9am TOPS	20 6-7:30pm Meditation 7:45 Book Discussion	21 1-6pm Minister's Office Hours	22 10:30am Al-Anon 5-8pm AA	23 10am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA 3pm Art Projects
24 10am Worship Service	25 6:30-8:30pm Yoga 	26 9am TOPS	27 6-7:30pm Meditation 7:45 Book Discussion	28 1-6pm Minister's Office Hours Music & Worship Comm, 7:30pm	29 10:30am Al-Anon 5-8pm AA	30 10am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA
31 10am Worship Service 11:30am, Spirit of Life						

Bold: UUSG events at UUSG

Plain Text: Rental Groups at UUSG

Italics: Community Events

Boldface Italics: District & UUA events

Unitarian Universalist Society of Gardner

P.O. Box 637
Gardner, MA 01440

TO:

May 09

Your Executive Committee

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding church policies or programs, please feel free to speak with any of the church trustees.

Save the Date!

May 2—Visioning Session 3-8pm with Potluck Supper 5:30pm; childcare provided.

June 7—Annual Meeting

Trustees for Church Year 2008-09

David Fabian
Rodney Fagan
Melody Fortier
Bob Gifford (Chair)
Vicki Heidorn (Clerk)
Shauna Pratt
Lorna Ulmer



Dean's Beans Coffee Orders are due by the 15th of the month for delivery the last Sunday of the month. Order forms available at the UUSG website or in the Fellowship Hall. Phone or e-mail orders also accepted. Contact Julie Pera.

Spirit of Life
Adult RE Series Continues:
May 3, 17, 31



Newsletter Contributions

The deadline for newsletter contributions is usually the second Sunday of the month. Send your contribution via e-mail to uusg.newsletter@gmail.com; or on diskette, typed or *neatly* handwritten in the newsletter "in-box" located on the bulletin board downstairs. No phone submissions, please. Contributions may be edited for length or content at the discretion of the editors.

The deadline for the June newsletter is FRIDAY, May 15.