

U-FIRST

May 2010

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Gardner

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Upcoming Worship Services

Sunday Services at 10:00 a.m.

May 2—Children's Sunday—Vicki Heidorn

Come celebrate as our children help us take a closer look at our religious community.

May 9—Come As You Are—Rev. John Pastor

This sermon will examine what we bring to this church, what strangers may be bringing, and why people may be attracted to a spiritual community like ours.

May 16—Membership Sunday—Rev. John Pastor

During this service we will welcome new members to our congregation.

May 23—To Be of Service—Gwen Morgan

Gwen is a young adult from the Ashby Congregation who has been to New Orleans to volunteer with a group from her school. She will share the experience of this trip including her assessment of how much is still needed to clean up from Hurricane Katrina.

May 30—The Ultimate Sacrifice from Guns to Gandhi—Rodney Fagan

Although we cannot choose the time and place of our death we can choose those values we are willing to make the supreme sacrifice for. We honor those who gave their lives for our shared beliefs and causes.

June 6—Annual Meeting

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



Where the Wild Things Are

We are in the midst of our Spring Pledge Drive. This is the time to declare our financial commitment to UUSG which will help with preparing our budget for next year. Financial Commitment forms are available at the church or on the website. Please talk with a member of the Executive Committee or the minister if you have questions or would like to personally discuss your financial commitment.

On Saturday, May 8, we will celebrate together with a potluck supper at 6 pm and view the movie "Where the Wild Things Are" beginning at 7 pm.



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...

Invitation Accepted

As I announced at our Commitment Sunday service, the Executive Committee has invited me to serve you for another year. I have accepted their invitation; an invitation extended on your behalf. During that service I signed my new contract and proclaimed my own commitment to the growth and welfare of this congregation.

Those who attended that Sunday may recall the Rita lit a candle for me. She shared her observation that I had changed since I arrived here. She is right, of course. I have changed. I have grown and been transformed by my ministry at UUSG. You are largely responsible. I know that we, as a congregation, have changed as well. New folks have joined us with new ideas. Money is being raised in fun, community-building, ways. Our budget deficit has been reduced. There is a positive energy flowing through this spiritual community that is uplifting and hope-filled.

I'm proud to call myself your minister and look forward to continuing the journey with all of you.

With love,



Adult Bible Study

The Bible Study Group usually meets on the third Thursday of the month at 7:00pm.

May 20 - *Non-canonicals, Thomas and Peter*. These are two of the books that did "not make the cut" and were not included in the Bible. Thomas is often referred to as the secret gospel.

Jun 17 - *Non-canonicals, Judas, Mary of Magdala*. Continuing the theme of books not included in the Bible. One by the so-called traitor and one by a woman!



Multigenerational Ministry



The faith formation of children is too hard for most of us as parents to do alone. The individual family is too small a unit. A larger We is necessary - families coming together in community.

—Dr. William J. Doherty, Unitarian Universalist, Marriage and Family Psychologist

Unitarian Universalism is at a cultural crossroads. Are we, as a faith institution, relevant? Is our commitment to theological diversity, personal freedom, and justice making enough? It may be for those of us sitting in the pews on Sunday mornings. But, ironically, it may not be for our children and parents working hard in our religious education programs.

American families today live in a world encumbered by too much information, too many choices, and too little time together. Both the families in our midst, and potential seekers - those searching for a religious home - hope for support and affirmation for the push-me, pull-me, do, do, do craziness of their daily living.

While it is one of our great aspirations as Unitarian Universalists to give hope and comfort to struggling people, the reality is that we dismiss the children and youth from our midst regularly, and soon after ask parents to join their children, as volunteers in RE.

We do this from a place of best intentions. We want our children and youth to be religiously educated, well equipped to engage in spiritual discovery and discernment, to articulate their values, to understand and integrate the richness of diversity, to work for fairness and justice in the world, and to be just and peaceful people. The opportunity to do this has been realized, for the most part, through children and youth religious education programs. And these programs need volunteer staff to make them a reality, thus our plea for parent help.



Here's the rub: there is a deep longing on the part of parents (and others) for their own faith formation, as well as support for their role as chief religious educators to their children. Families long for deep connections with other Unitarian Universalists both for themselves and their children.

A commitment to multigenerational wholeness may be an answer. Congregations with a commitment to multigenerational ministry are intentionally working to connect our people to the wisdom of other age groups

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UUSG May 2010

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
2 10am Worship 	3 6:30pm Yoga	4 9am TOPS	5 6pm Meditation	6 1-6pm Rev's Office Hours 5pm Healing Breath CDs	7 10:30am AI-Anon 5-8pm AA	8 8:30am Zikr 9am Peace Sanct. 12-1pm AA 6pm Potluck & Movie (Where the Wild Things Are)
9 Mother's Day 10am Worship	10 6:30pm Yoga 6:30 Executive Comm. Meeting	11 9am TOPS	12 6pm Meditation 7:15 Book Group	13 1-6pm Rev's Office Hours 5pm Healing Breath CDs 7pm, Dances of Universal Peace	14 10:30am AI-Anon 5-8pm AA	15 8:30am Zikr 9am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA
16 9am Healing Share 10am Worship 12n Publicity Committee	17 6:30pm Yoga	18 9am TOPS Film & Potluck, "FRESH" 	19 6pm Meditation	20 1-6pm Rev's Office Hours 5pm Healing Breath CDs 7pm, Bible Study	21 10:30am AI-Anon 5-8pm AA	22 8:30am Zikr 9am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA
23 9am Healing Share 10am Worship 4pm Kirtan 5:30pm Vegan Potluck	24 6:30pm Yoga	25 9am TOPS	26 6pm Meditation 7:15 Book Group	27 1-6pm Rev's Office Hours 5pm Healing Breath CDs 7:30pm Music & Worship Comm.	28 10:30am AI-Anon 5-8pm AA	29 9am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA
30 10am Worship	31 6:30pm Yoga	June 1 9am TOPS	2 6pm Meditation	3 1-6pm Rev's Office Hours 5pm Healing Breath CDs	4 10:30am AI-Anon 5-8pm AA	5 9am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA

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and to help bridge the phases of our lives to the generations before and after us. We cannot easily access what the people who have gone before us have learned. We are losing that wisdom across all generations. Imagine parents sitting with others and talking about spirit, struggle, appreciation, love, and loss. Imagine an old-timer congregant, advanced in age, partnered with a young family or a young adult, just talking about life, just connecting through sharing stories of faith.



Faith communities may be the only places left in our society where multigenerational intention is still acceptable. Other than within our own families, where else can we find multi-generations sharing their stories, wisdom, perspective? It's counter cultural. Multigenerational community is essential congregational witness in a cultural storm.

I look forward to continuing to work with the good people of the Clara Barton District. I am hungry for your ideas and concern about how our faith communities can be relevant and vital for all UU, current and potential.

*by Deborah Levering, Program Consultant
reprinted from Clara Barton District Newsletter April 2010*

Unitarian Universalist Society of Gardner

P.O. Box 637
Gardner, MA 01440

TO:

Don't you just love Coffee Hour?

There are several openings to host coffee hour and to greet at the service between now and the end of the church year.

To volunteer, please contact Marion Lyon.



Newsletter Contributions

The deadline for newsletter contributions is usually the 15th of the month. Please send your contribution via e-mail to uusg.newsletter@gmail.com, or provide a typed or *neatly* handwritten copy to Julie Pera. Contributions may be edited for length or content at the discretion of the editors.

The deadline for the June newsletter is May 15.

Open Mic Kirtan

Sunday May 23rd at 4pm

Come join this relaxing method of meditation filled with songs and chants. Bring an instrument, poem favorite reading, quote, or scripture to share if you like!



Vegetarian Potluck & Presentation

Sunday May 23rd at 5:30pm

Sustainable Eating For Our Health & The Health Of The Planet (part 2) Join us for a brief film and presentation looking at the health benefits of a plant strong diet. We will start with a potluck of vegan and vegetarian dishes; please be sure to list the ingredients for your dish.