

U-FIRST

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

September 2011

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Upcoming Worship Services

Sunday Services at 10:00 a.m.

September 11—Water Communion & Ingathering—Rev. John Pastor

As is our custom, we begin our church year by sharing water and stories from our special places of summer. This Sunday also marks the tenth anniversary of the events of 9/11/01, so our church community will also gather with a special prayer for peace, interfaith understanding, and remembrance. Make sure to bring some water to add to our common bowl.

September 18—Gathering Here—Music & Worship Committee

Music and Worship Committee members, Catherine Azora-Minda, Rodney Fagan, Vicki Heidorn, Marion Lyon, and Julie Pera will present a service about bringing together our diverse talents and experiences to create a congregational treasure to share. Perhaps you will find inspiration and confidence to share in creating future worship!

Congregational Forum after worship.

September 25—Ministers All—Rev. John Pastor

Some of the definitions of “minister” are: “to attend to the wants and needs of others,” “anyone authorized to carry out or assist in the spiritual functions of a church,” and “to act as a servant, attendant, or agent; to perform service in any office, sacred or secular.” We are all called to be ministers to this spiritual community. Hopefully this sermon will help you determine how you are called.

October 2—All Creatures of the Earth & Sky

—Rev. John Pastor

In the spirit of St. Francis, our UU Franciscan minister will, once again, celebrate the life of St. Francis.

Note: Rev. John will bless the animals at the Gardner Animal Shelter on October 1st at 10am.



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



We need you!

We will find worship in working together.

Please volunteer in the kitchen or sanctuary for some or all of the day:

Sunday September 4th
(Labor Day Weekend)
10 AM to 4:30 PM

Cleaning cabinets, re-organizing, sorting and cleaning. Something for everyone!



S.O.S.

The Gardner CAC is collecting food for the Stock Our Shelves Food Drive, September 1-30.

All donations will help to restock their shelves and provide food for local families. Donations can be brought to church on Sunday, dropped off at the CAC at 294 Pleasant Street, or there is a drop box at the Stop and Shop and also at the Worker's Credit Union.

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...

Welcome to the beginning of another church year!



Our church year officially begins on Sunday, September 11th. This is our traditional Ingathering Water Communion Service as we return after a summer break to re-form our spiritual community. Please remember to bring some water from a favorite summer place to add to our common bowl.

This Sunday marks the 10th anniversary of 9/11/01, so we also gather to remember with a prayer for peace and religious understanding.



As we begin, I would like to ask for the congregation's assistance. We are a loving, welcoming, and all-inclusive community. We are also a community that encourages spiritual growth. But, do we need to fine-tune anything?

There are some obvious answers like finances and an aging church building that is accessible. There are other answers to this question that you may have from your own personal perspective. But, before you answer, I invite you to come to our church as if for the very first time. Make note, through the eyes of a newcomer, of your first impressions of the worship time, religious education, and coffee hour. What needs to be changed or improved? What draws your positive attention? Then come share your answers at our Congregational Forums; times when we gather with open hearts and minds to speak and to listen.



This will be my fifth year serving UUSG. I've come to know and love you all. Together we have done some great things. I am confident that we will continue to do great things inspired by the faith, hope, and love of this community of seekers.

I'm looking forward to being with you again..

With love,

Contra Dances

on-going church fund-raiser for handicap accessibility

Our fund-raising efforts continue this fall with family-oriented, alcohol-free monthly contra dancing. Last quarter, we raised over \$500 towards the purchase of an elevator for the church sanctuary. We hope to do better this next quarter as word gets out! Your support is deeply appreciated.

The dates for the next three dances (usually the 4th Saturday of the month) are as follows:

**Sept 24th, Oct 22nd, and Nov 26th
7:30-10pm**



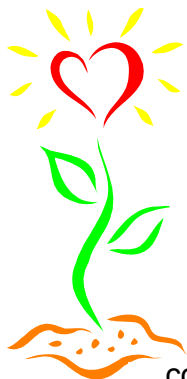
Suggested donation is \$7.00. No partner is necessary and all dances are taught by the caller. Hope to see you there!

For more information, see uusg.net, or contact Terry Dattolo at dattquilter@hotmail.com.

Thank UU

To Tom Brady for taking the lead in organizing our participation in Gardner Days and to Catherine Azora-Minda for organizing the staffing of our booth. To Vicki Heidorn for providing the booth and most of the booth "furnishings" as well as for transporting and helping with set-up and take-down. To everyone who staffed our booth, talked to folks, passed out water & chocolate kisses, and helped a lot of kids fill out raffle tickets hoping to win a backpack filled with school supplies - Boudoin Azora-Minda, Sue Blain, Jean Brady, Terry Dattolo, Lois & Roy Gilbert, Elizabeth Jackson, Marion Lyon, Shauna Pratt, Bill Ruggiero, Connie Thompson and Rev. John. And, for early-morning help with set-up, Bob Gifford and Rodney Fagan.

*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 the newsletter editor via e-mail or "in-box".*



Congregationally-Based Social Justice Ministries

a Learning Congregation Workshop
with Meck Groot, Social Justice Coordinator

October 1, 2011, 9am-2pm
First Parish Church UU, Northborough

REGISTER NOW! (deadline: September 26)

www.cbd-mbd-uua.org/content/congregationally-based-social-justice-ministry

The Church of the Larger Fellowship

Did you know that our church is a member of the Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF)? The CLF is a unique UU congregation without walls that can be accessed anywhere via the internet.

Members of the Music & Worship and the Religious Education committees have found this resource to be very valuable in developing worship and instruction over the past year, but membership is not just for those on committees. As a member or friend of our congregation, you can also enjoy the CLF.



Please speak to a member of the Music & Worship Committee (Catherine A-M., Rodney F., Vicki H., Marion L., Rev. John or Julie P.) to get our username and password.

Start enjoying the bountiful resources the CLF has to offer you, today!

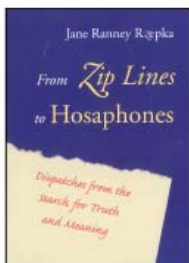
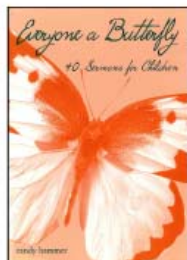
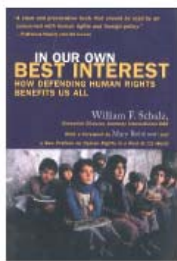
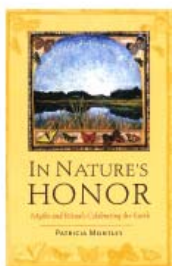
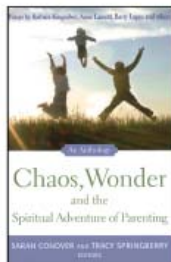
Adult Ed & Online Spirituality

The CLF is offering online courses for all. Some courses are free, some courses have a \$40 fee. Here is a brief listing of topics currently being offered:

- **Theology for Unitarian Universalists, Taught by Myriam Renaud: 9/14/11 – 10/19/11**
- **Economic Justice and the Bible, Taught by Darcey Laine and Amy Zucker Morgenstern: 9/14/11 – 10/25/11**
- **Justice Theology & Justice Practice: Becoming a People So Bold, Taught by John Gibb Millspaugh: 10/17/11 – 11/14/11**
- **Doorways into Prayer, Taught by Amanda Aikman: 11/14/11 – 12/11/11**
- **In Our Mothers' Footsteps, Ongoing (FREE!)**

For information about these courses and more: www.clfuu.org/learn, 617-948-6150 or re@clfu.org

From the CLF Library



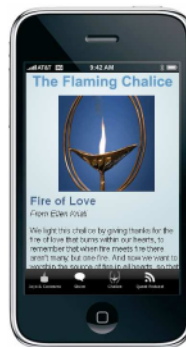
Books from the CLF Library are available for loan to CLF Members. Please browse the library catalog on the website and give a list of any books that you would like to borrow to Catherine. Our church is allowed to borrow up to 3 items at a time for a 6-week loan period. (Books are also available for sale from the UUA Bookstore: www.uuabookstore.org.)

The CLF is now offering a free UU iPhone and Droid app that allows you to light a chalice, share joys & concerns, and read Quest, CLF's monthly worship publication. For more information, go to www.clfuu.org, or call 617-948-6150.

Available on iTunes and Droid Market.

Quest for Meaning - a UU app

A free iPhone and Droid app



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TO:

Your Executive Committee

The Executive Committee usually meets on the third Monday of the month. If you have any questions or suggestions regarding church policies or programs, please feel free to speak with any of the church trustees.

Trustees for Church Year 2010-11

- Bo Azora-Minda ('12)
 - Tom Brady ('14)
 - Melody Fortier ('13)
 - Bob Gifford (Chair, '13)
 - Chris Pera (Clerk/Treasurer, '12)
 - Laura Reichsman ('14)
 - Mike Vecchi ('12)
- (year in parentheses indicates term ending)

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 October newsletter is September 15.

Save the Date!

- September 3—UUSG Kitchen Clean-Up, 8am-2pm
- September 11—Water Communion Worship Service, 10am
- September 13—Kirtan, 6:30pm
- September 18—Congregational Forum, following worship
- September 20—"Zucchini Fest" Vegan Potluck & Cooking Demo, 6pm
- September 24—Contradance, 7:30pm
- October 1—Blessing of the Animals, Gardner Animal Shelter, 10am
- November 5—Fall Fair

