

U-FIRST

February 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

Upcoming Worship Services

Sunday Services at 10:00 a.m.

February 1—Ground Hog Day—Rev. John Pastor

Have you finished your Ground Hog Day shopping yet? Wrapped your presents? Sent out your cards? Ground Hog Day arrives tomorrow!

Congregational Forum at 11:30am.

February 8—A Sense of Wonder—Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Strong

The beginning of faith development is a sense of wonder. We wonder about the mysteries of life throughout our lives and it is a vital and central reason for religion and for our faith communities.

The Rev. Dr. Strong is a Unitarian Universalist Minister of Religious Education and was ordained 25 years ago. She has served congregations in Rochester and Syracuse New York, and as the Program Consultant for the Mass Bay District. She is a third generation Universalist UU and currently serves as the Interim Minister at the First Parish Church in Ashby.

February 15—What's Love Got To Do With It?

—Rev. John Pastor



This sermon will examine the origin of Valentine's Day. Bring some of your favorite romantic poems and come share the love.

February 22—A UU Lent—Rev. John Pastor

The word Lent comes from Anglo Saxon, meaning "spring." Spring is a time for planting the seeds that will blossom in the future. What are the seeds of new life we wish to plant this spring?

The Naming and Dedication of Josiah Gerard Pera will take place during the worship service.

March 1—'Tis a Gift to Be Simple—Rev. John Pastor

The Shaker's lessons for living in spiritual simplicity still speak to us today.

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



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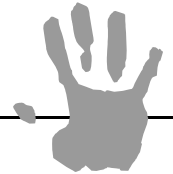
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Spirit of Life:

Exploring Spirituality for UUs

A Tapestry of Faith Program for Adults presented in nine sessions.

The Spirit of Life program belongs to the Tapestry of Faith curriculum series for adults. The series weaves UU values, principles, and sources together with four strands of religious growth: faith development, spiritual development, ethical development, and UU identity.

Each session will take place after Sunday Services beginning at 11:30 A.M. and ending at 12:45 P.M.

Session Dates: February 15; March 1, 15, 29; April 19; May 2, 17, 31.

For more information or to sign-up, contact Rev. John

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.....

I have noticed that there are some things that we don't wait to get done, we do. We raise money through our Fall Fair. We insulate our sanctuary windows from the cold. We give to the CAC Food Pantry. We also give to those in need through our generous donations to the Minister's Discretionary Fund. We don't wait, we do.

On the other hand, in a very real sense, this congregation is waiting. We are waiting for some financial security. We are waiting for more growth, in all of its many forms. We are waiting for our future story to unfold.

The New Year is a time of reflection. And so, I would like to invite all of you to reflect on what the future of this church community means to you. My hope is that you will individually and collectively accept my invitation to reflect. That as we approach the anniversary of our 125th year we enter into a time of consideration about the work that needs to be done, together. My hope is that conversations will take place about moving the spirit, the sense of community, the heart of this congregation, to a place of deeper commitment to the future presence of this spiritual home.



I invite you to celebrate our past achievements and to look ahead to the hope and promise that our future can hold. It's all about *you*.

The Elders of the Hopi Nation speak to this gathered congregation:

You have been telling the people that this is the Eleventh Hour.

Now you must go back and tell the people that this is The Hour.

And there are things to be considered:

There is a river flowing now very fast.

It is so great and swift that there are those who will be afraid.

They will try to hold on to the shore.

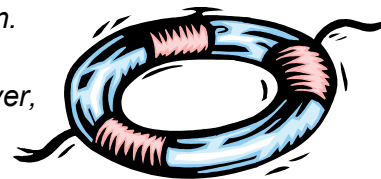
Know the river has its destination.

*We must let go of the shore,
push off into the middle of the river,
keep our eyes open,
and our heads above the water.*

See who is in there with you and celebrate.

The time of the lone wolf is over. Gather yourselves!

We are the ones we've been waiting for.



My friends, our time has come.

With love,

Thank UU!

To those who came in our January storms— we were small but we were mighty:

To Leo Rousseau for moving mountains of snow both days, cleaning cars and clearing paths so that we could enter the church and leave safely

On January 11:

To Vicki Heidorn for shepherding the service into existence and driving taxi;

To Sue Blain for offering a room for the night to our guest speaker;

To Tom and Jean Brady and Vicki Heidorn for providing a coffee hour to welcome our guest and send him on his way well-fed.

In Our Thoughts...

All the family and friends of Don Dattolo, who passed away on January 18th, especially his wife, Terry.

On January 18—MLK Sunday:

To Caleb Pera and his Webkinz pal, Swishie, for greeting those who came;

To Sue Blain for becoming an instant service lay leader;

To Chris Pera for magically pulling Rev. John's service out of an e-mail black hole;

To Rev. John for being so well organized that someone else could lead the service he prepared

On January 24—Don Dattolo's memorial service:

To Nina Vecchi for a beautiful job putting together the order of service;

To Nina Vecchi and Amina Silk for coordinating the luncheon after the service;

To Cheryl and Chip for greeting those gathering for the service;

To Catherine AzoraMinda for printing hymn inserts and for being Rev. John's check-in support.

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".

**The Prophethood of All Believers:
Sermon-Writing and Preaching
for Religious Educators
and Lay People**

February 21st, 2009

The First Church in Belmont, UU

with Rev. Dr. Terasa Cooley
& Rev. Sue Phillips

9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

FEE: \$75 general and
\$50 for seminarians

Religious educators frequently find ourselves in the pulpit, and while many have become experienced preachers few of us have had the benefit of focused training in sermon-writing and preaching. Here's your chance.

Our liberal tradition honors the "prophethood of all believers." Sermons have been used for centuries to teach, implore, convince, praise and prophesy. Preaching is one of the only oral traditions that remain in our culture; it is a gift and a responsibility.

If you suspect there might be a sermon inside you, and if you would like a chance to nurture and focus that voice within, join us for this hands-on sermon-writing workshop. We will reflect on what makes good sermons good, and talk about how to transform kernels of spiritual wisdom into a worshipful sermon.

You can register online at the Mass Bay District Website (www.mbdoua.org) or by e-mailing District Administrator Judy Murray (mbd@mbdoua.org).

For questions about the program, call Sue Phillips, MBD's Acting Director of Program Development, at 617-803-1116.



Habitat for Humanity is pleased to announce that their Re-Store project, under the volunteer management of Ron Leger, continues to grow. Offered via Craig's List Worcester, the Re-Store items now include donated new and gently used cabinets, appliances, flooring, tile and carpeting. The project generates revenue for Habitat and provides moderately priced home building supplies for renovation projects and vacation homes. What a great way to recycle perfectly good housing materials and use the proceeds to underwrite more projects!

To see the current Re-Store offerings, go to Craig'sList Worcester (<http://worcester.craigslist.org/>) and type 'hfhncm' in the Search CraigsList box in the left column.

**HOLLY NEAR
Concert & Talk**
Benefits Habitat for Humanity
Unitarian Church of
Marlborough & Hudson
Friday, February 27, 2009
7:15pm Talk PLUS Concert,
\$35 available only in advance

8pm Concert Only,
\$25 in advance, \$30 at the door

Holly Near's professional career began in her early twenties when she worked as an actress in film and television. She also appeared in Hair on Broadway. Eventually, music returned to become Holly's major focus, especially that music which articulated the social conditions of the world community. She started writing and singing political songs, following in the footsteps of such writers as Pete Seeger, Phil Ochs, Beverly Grant, and Hazel Dickens.

To Purchase Tickets:
Send your payment to UCMH Church,
Attn: Holly Near Benefit Concert
P.O. Box 176; Hudson, MA 01749
or call 978-562-9180

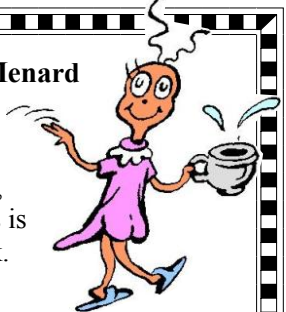
WHO HASH submitted by Cheryl Menard

A modification of my friend Linda's "Broccoli Brownies". You can make all sorts of variations (add ground beef or sausage, use different veggies, use up whatever you happen to have, etc.), but this is how I made the dish we took to the Grinch potluck.

Veggies chopped into very small pieces:
1 bag frozen broccoli (run cold water over it first then chop it),
1 medium sized sweet potato, about 5 stalks of green onions

Mix together and set aside:	Mix together and add to the flour mixture to make a doughy mixture:
1 cup + 1 tbsp flour	2 eggs
1 tsp salt	1 cup milk
1 tsp baking powder	1/2 stick melted butter




Stir all the veggies and the doughy mixture together. Then stir 12 oz shredded sharp cheddar cheese into it. Spread it in a greased 9x13 pan and bake at 350 for about 30-40 minutes.



Date	Coffee Hour Coordinators	Greeters	*****
February 1	David & Leslie Fabian	Terry Dattolo	Your help is needed! Please sign up on the clipboard near the kitchen. *****
February 8	Al & Priscilla Ericsson	Elizabeth Jackson	
February 15	Cheryl Menard & Chip Steward	Catherine Azora-Minda	
February 22	Pera family & Melody Fortier	*****	



UUSG February 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Feb 1 10am Worship Service 11:30am Cong. Forum	2  6:30-8:30pm Yoga	3 9am TOPS	4 6-7:15pm Meditation 7:30 Book Discussion	5 1-6pm Minister's Office Hours	6 10:30am Al-Anon 5-8pm AA	7 10am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA
8 10am Worship Service	9 6:30-8:30pm Yoga 7pm Executive Comm.	10 9am TOPS	11 6-7:15pm Meditation 7:30 Book Discussion	12 1-6pm Minister's Office Hours 7pm Dances of Universal Peace	13 <u>Newsletter Deadline</u> 10:30am Al-Anon 5-8pm AA	14 9am Publicity Comm. 10am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA 
15 9am Healing Service 10am Worship Service 	16 6:30-8:30pm Yoga 6:30-8:30pm Yoga	17 9am TOPS	18 6-7:15pm Meditation 7:30 Book Discussion	19 1-6pm Minister's Office Hours	20 10:30am Al-Anon 5-8pm AA	21 <i>MBD Workshop, Belmont, MA</i> 10am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA
22 10am Worship Service	23 6:30-8:30pm Yoga	24 9am TOPS	25 6-7:15pm Meditation 7:30 Book Discussion	26 1-6pm Minister's Office Hours	27 10:30am Al-Anon 5-8pm AA <i>Holly Near Concert & Talk to benefit Habitat for Humanity, Unitarian Church in Hudson</i>	28 10am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA
March 1 10am Worship Service	2 6:30-8:30pm Yoga	3 9am TOPS	4 6-7:15pm Meditation 7:30 Book Discussion	5 1-6pm Minister's Office Hours	6 10:30am Al-Anon 5-8pm AA	7 10am Peace Sanctuary 12-1pm AA

Bold: UUSG events at UUSG

Plain Text: Rental Groups at UUSG

Italics: Community Events

Boldface Italics: District & UUA events

Just Between UUs

Submitted by Catherine Azora-Minda

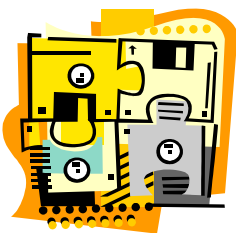
Cheryl Menard

Cheryl Menard came to UUSG two years ago this May, during a time of personal crisis. She was in a process of transition in a relationship that had defined a major portion of her life and was in need of a spiritual community. She first thought about seeking out that community in a Unitarian church because a folk singer she enjoyed and respected spoke about Unitarians as being very accepting and inclusive. So, she picked up on that thread and followed it to our church.



Originally from Rochdale, Massachusetts, a small town in the Worcester area, Cheryl has lived most of her life in Massachusetts. She grew up Catholic, participating fully in church and going through catechism. She found that the teachings and especially the community she found there fit in some ways for her. Music was a strong part of her religious expression and, as a teenager, she sang in a folk group and performed in folk masses. One of the places where she parted ways with the lessons she learned in her Catholic upbringing was with the idea that if you weren't Catholic you were going to hell.

Much as Cheryl has undergone a transformation in her spiritual life, the same is true for her work and career life. She has a BA in linguistics and psychology and turned that into a career doing technical support, technical writing and software development. This all seemed appropriate for Cheryl who is a self professed "computer geek." Eventually she was laid off from a technical job and she found work that was in line with other interests in her life.



Cheryl began working in a chiropractor's office, utilizing her skills in an environment that deals with alternative approaches to health and wellness. It was in working in one of these offices that Cheryl learned about Emotional Freedom Techniques, an energy healing technique that aids in physical and emotional

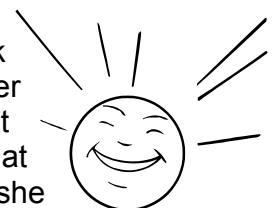
healing and personal improvement. She was trying to help her employer by finding information about electronic funds transfer and, in googling, kept coming up with the personal improvement EFT. She downloaded the manual, learned how to use it for herself and kept getting positive results. Since then she has gone on to teach and share this information with others. With a longtime interest in personal growth and self improvement, Cheryl has taught EFT and yoga and is currently teaching two Pilates classes at All About You in Westminster.

In an earlier part of her life, Cheryl spent six years living outside of Chicago. She has traveled as far as Belgium, landing there in the windstorm of the century – a "long, long, boring flight, followed by sheer terror." She visited Sedona where she enjoyed the heat, the sun and the energy – a place of "beautiful, flowing, peaceful energy." Most of the traveling Cheryl does these days is in this area and on her motorcycle, along with her favorite traveling companion, Chip



Steward. They met through Cheryl's work and began to form a bond around their shared love of motorcycles. Just ask Cheryl what her favorite present was this past holiday season...

Cheryl said she would enjoy the opportunity to have a conversation with Albert Einstein because he was curious about everything. He was a man of contradictions because his theories and scientific thinking led to the creation of the atom bomb and yet he was a humanist and a compassionate person. Cheryl's least favorite thing about living here in Massachusetts is the weather because there is not enough sunshine and warmth. On the plus side, "the earth is beautiful here, the trees, the hills, the lakes." And, going back to where we started, there's a lot of good folk music here, in particular her favorite performer, Don White. It was his praise of Unitarians that brought Cheryl to UUSG where she found what she was seeking and we're glad that she decided to stay.



Unitarian Universalist Society of Gardner

P.O. Box 637

Gardner, MA 01440

TO:

Feb 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.

Trustees for Church Year 2008-09

David Fabian

Rodney Fagan

Melody Fortier

Bob Gifford (Chair)

Vicki Heidorn (Clerk)

Shauna Pratt

Lorna Ulmer



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 March newsletter is FRIDAY, February 13.