



SUNDAY SERVICES

Remember: Daylight Savings Time ends!

Sunday, November 1 10:30a DRE Cathy Seggel and Rev. James Ishmael Ford



Festivals of the Dead - A Multigenerational Service

In the Western religious calendar, the ancient festivals of All Hallows and All Saints are joined in a moment where the boundaries of the worlds of the living and the dead are stretched so thin that holes appear and magic happens.

Young people in grades K and older participate in worship in the Meeting House.

Origins, Play Circle, and Preschool classrooms are open.

Communion Service 11:45a

A genuinely UU celebration of this ancient rite based in the Gospels' account of Jesus' last meal with his friends - a ritual of love and remembrance.

Sunday, November 8 10:30a Rev. James Ishmael Ford

A Meditation on Rosie the Riveter and Other Images of the Divine Feminine

When James first saw Norman Rockwell's version of the ubiquitous heroine of the Second World War, Rosie the Riveter, he thought what an amazing icon of the divine feminine. He will explore a little what that might mean.

Young people begin in classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, November 15 10:30a Frederick Jodry

A Longing for God: Reflections on the Life of J. S. Bach

Our Fall Music Sunday - the choir will sing Bach's Cantata 150, "Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich" (After Thee, O God, My Spirit Longeth) with a chamber ensemble accompaniment. Our Music Director, Fred Jodry, will offer reflections on the spiritual aspects of Bach's life and works.

Young people begin in classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, November 22 10:30a DRE Cathy Seggel and Rev. James Ishmael Ford

Festivals of Gratitude: An Intergenerational Service

On this Sunday before our national Thanksgiving holiday, Cathy, James, and a cast of thousands - okay, maybe five or six - will explore themes of thanksgiving.

Our annual Guest at Your Table program begins today.

Young people in grades K and older participate in worship in the Meeting House.

Origins, Play Circle, and Preschool classrooms are open.

Sunday, November 29 10:30a Rev. James Ishmael Ford

Arjuna's Dilemma: A Reflection on the Commandment to Not Kill

The Hindu classic the Bhagavad Gita centers on a conversation between the prince Arjuna and his charioteer - who is, in fact, the god Krishna. The dialogue takes place against the backdrop of a fratricidal civil war. James will explore the lessons found here and in the world's sacred traditions about killing and war that might be useful in these hard times..

Young people begin in classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Sunday, December 6 10:30a Rev. James Ishmael Ford

The Day before Pearl Harbor: A Meditation on the Work of Peace

Every moment of every day of our lives, we are given the opportunity to make choices. Usually the consequences of those choices are pretty small potatoes. But sometimes these decisions we make and actions we take play out in amazing ways. James will reflect on some of the things we might do before we are forced to make hard decisions.

There will be a child dedication during this Sunday's service.

Young people in grades K and older start in the Meeting House, then go to Sunday School.

Origins, Play Circle, and Preschool classrooms are open.

Please see the flu-prevention notice on page 6.

The Monthly Newsletter for

The First Unitarian Church of Providence

Corner of Benefit and Benevolent Streets

NOVEMBER 2009

ALL PARISH EVENTS

Communion Service

Sunday, November 1

Coffee with the PruComm

Sunday, November 8

All-Parish Supper

Friday, November 13

Thanksgiving Dinner at First Unitarian

Thursday, November 26

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STAFF

- Rev. James Ishmael Ford, Minister
Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
Frederick Jodry, Music Director
Rev. Christana Wille McKnight, Community Minister
Posey Kooris, Administrator
Walter O. Sotelo, Administrative Assistant
Katy Killilea, Membership Coordinator
Jaime Durango, Building Manager
Paul Webber, Evening Security
Jose Urena, Sunday Building Manager

NEWSLETTER

- Posey Kooris, Managing Editor
Susan Fisher, Editor
Carol Pentleton, Designer

Deacons' Corner

The Deacons' activities this fall and winter will promote our Spiritual Development and Community Life ministries.

We will assist James with Communion on All Souls Day, Sunday, November 1, following the worship service commemorating members and friends who died during the past year. The Communion service is in the liberal tradition, non-creedal, emphasizing themes of remembrance, reconciliation, thanksgiving, and interdependence. All are invited to join in this meaningful celebration. There will be two additional Communion services during the church year.

The Deacons will also be conducting our annual telephone check-in with church members over the next three months.

Do you have extra or unused cloth napkins at home? We are starting to collect cloth napkins to use at Parish Suppers to eliminate paper napkin waste. Leave your donations of unwanted napkins (or newly purchased, if so moved) with Deacon Taylor at the Coffee Hour Bakers table any Sunday, or drop in the "Cloth Napkins" box in the Parish House.

—Nancy Weiss Fried, Richard Boober,
Senior Deacons;

Judy Bowden, David Bridgehouse, Mary Finger,
Mary Frappier, Russell Gifford, Robert O. Jones,
Janet Downing Taylor, David Spremulli

Child Dedication Ceremony

Sunday, December 6

Our next community child dedication celebration will take place during the Worship Service on December 6. If you are interested in having your child/ren dedicated, please contact either James Ford (min@firstunitarianprov.org) or Cathy Seggel (dre@firstunitarianprov.org).

Wheel of Life



Joy and celebration for the wedding of Gretchen Earle and Sean Forrest McCloy, son of Steve McCloy.

Condolences to Joan Richards on the death of her sister, Barbara.

Healing thoughts to Ann Daum, who continues to deal with a serious neck injury.

Best wishes to Tadesse Tsega, our former Sunday building manager, who has moved to Seattle to re-unite with his family.

Welcome to Jose Urena, our new Sunday building manager.



Monkey Mind

One of the delightful things I inherited in accepting election as minister here was sharing responsibility with our Deacons for continuing the celebration of Communion from time to time over the church year. Communion has been a rite of this church since its inception not quite three hundred years ago. And while there have been many changes in many ways over the years, we have continued the form and spirit of this rite we inherited from our Christian forbearers.

Now, whether one is a Christian or not, this beautiful ritual based in the account in the gospels of Jesus' meal with his friends on the evening before he was arrested, tried, and executed is inspirational in many ways. And, in fact, I've given a lot of thought to those ways.

We live in a state that is dominated by the traditions of the Catholic Church. And because of that, many of us tend to think the only way one can relate to the rite of Communion is within the mystical theology of that ancient church. But this is not so. Reformed traditions have differing views of communion, and there have been a number of liberal reflections on this rite - including, interestingly, some studies by past ministers of this church.

I actually spent a lot of time exploring the rites of Communion when I was in seminary. In particular, I was taken with the thinking of Benjamin Hoadly, an Anglican bishop, theologian, and politician in the early part of the eighteenth century. The good bishop explored the value of the rite as a purely human ritual, without any need for appeal to divine intervention; rather, it was an exploration of the power and beauty of human memory. This was not, admittedly, normative Anglican Eucharistic thinking at the time. In fact, at some point it was suggested he might make a suitable Archbishop of Canterbury: Queen Anne was said to have remarked that Bishop Hoadly would indeed make a great archbishop, if only he were a Christian.

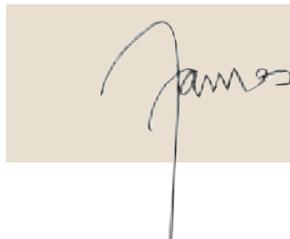
Now, here we are. For many of us, me included, there is a deep emotional connection to the faith of our families and ancestors. But, for it to have value, it needs to be reframed in the light of our larger view.

Over the years, we have explored various ways to attempt to express that larger view in our First Unitarian celebration of Communion. And I've brought my own intensive study to this enterprise, which many of us experienced last year in our observation of a Maundy Thursday Communion. This year, we will be celebrating Communion three times. Two will follow Sunday worship services and the third will be on this year's Maundy Thursday.

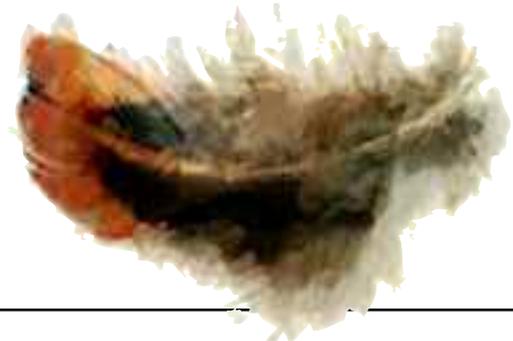
The two services following our regular worship will be brief services beginning about fifteen minutes after the regular service ends. Maundy Thursday will be a larger service, with music and a homily. I hope you will consider attending one or two or perhaps even all three services. Explore the power of memory in a respectful but also genuinely Unitarian Universalist celebration of this ancient rite.

Our first Communion service will be on November 1. The second will follow our Martin Luther King, Jr.-themed service on January 17. And Maundy Thursday this year is April 1.

See you in the Meeting House.



Rev. James Ishmael Ford, Minister
Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday,
9:00a -12:00p Appointments are recommended.
min@firstunitarianprov.org





We Are Our Own Harvest

November brings shorter days, cooler hours, and busy minutes. Yet, annually, I am surprised by its arrival. It takes me a while to remember to close curtains to keep the drafts at bay, to prepare steaming soup for supper, and to admit that it is time to turn on the heat in my home.

I am happy to report that I have moved beyond the shock of autumn. Here's what helped.

On Sunday evening, I baked some yummy cookies, with tons of oatmeal, whole-wheat flour, and very dark chocolate chips. That wholesome version is good for us, isn't it? On Monday morning, I took an extra long walk. Amazing how using those ol' muscles warms up a person. Tuesday found me phoning an old friend to check on the health of her family and to listen to stories of her fun antics. By Wednesday, it was Religious Education Committee meeting night. There, I was greeted by a table full of enthusiastic, inspirational folks, ready to support our programs of faith development for children, youth, and adults. We opened with a Marge Piercy reading, reminding us that connections are made slowly and that harvest only comes after long spells of tending and growth. Next, we focused on a review and planning session for aspects of our Spiritual Pathways Program. The following are just a few highlights:

- ▶ Over 40 volunteers gathered for a spirited teacher orientation last month. An evacuation drill prepared teachers for an emergency. Flu-prevention precautions are in place in our building.
- ▶ The covenanting process has begun in our Sunday School, both in Chapel services and classrooms. We are connecting what we promise to one another with the articulated shared values in the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Stay tuned: that set of promises will be posted for all to see before the new year.
- ▶ After a year's hiatus, the Coming of Age program is in full swing, with parents oriented about the Our Whole Lives (OWL) sexuality curriculum, Spiritual Explorations, Service, and Mentoring components. Mentors from the congregation have been matched with eighth- and ninth-graders and will meet for an orientation lunch. I am grateful that Anne Connor is our Mentor Coordinator.
- ▶ The sixth/seventh-grade class is poised to go apple picking and contribute some of their crop to the Food Share Pantry.
- ▶ The Senior High Youth Group has a "wake-over" planned, and they have been asked to participate in Stewardship Thank-a-thon.
- ▶ Volunteer teachers will gather for a luncheon event this month. The program is entitled "Art from the Heart."

This may be the cycle of the year for dim light and chilly air. It is also the time to notice that our larder is full of the bounty of fall. According to poet Gwendolyn Brooks, we are our own harvest. She may be right.

I look forward to sharing this season of gratitude and hope.

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
401.421.7970
dre@firstunitarianprov.org
Office Hours: Monday Friday and Sunday

Farm City – City Farm: Tales in Urban Farming

November 12 at 7:00p

Join us on Thursday, November 12, for an evening of stories trials, tribulations, and triumphs from two talented urban farmers: Novella Carpenter, author of *Farm City: The Education of an Urban Farmer*, and Rich Pederson, Southside Community Land Trust's City Farm Manager.

Novella and Rich will take turns sharing their urban agriculture experiences with us, offering their unique perspectives influenced by their different environments; Novella's in Oakland, California, and Rich's here in Providence. They'll follow their story-telling with an audience question-and-answer period, which is sure to be entertaining and informative.

Sponsored by First Unitarian's Religious Education Committee, Slow Food Rhode Island, and Southside Community Land Trust.



Welcoming "A Guest at Your Table"

Each year at this time, friends and families in our congregation, and in UU congregations across the country and around the world, participate in the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee tradition of A Guest at Your Table.

By bringing home a beautiful Guest at Your Table box, families and individuals learn about how the UUSC puts our shared principles into action in the United States and around the world. Through a potent combination of advocacy, education, and partnerships with grass-roots organizations, UUSC promotes *economic rights*, advances *environmental justice*, defends *civil liberties*, and preserves the rights of people in times of *humanitarian crisis*. (Learn more at the UUSC Web site: www.uusc.org/content/. Type in any of the italicized phrases.)

Sharing our blessings through Guest at Your Table ensures that UUSC's human-rights work continues, while building UUSC membership. UUSC members are vitally important, as UUSC is an independent, membership-based organization that receives no funding from the UUA or the U.S. government.

In each household, the Guest at Your Table box is placed in a prominent spot, often at the family meal table. When family and friends gather to enjoy their blessings, they can reflect on the contributions of their Guests and share generously. The UUSC booklet *Stories of Hope* connects us with people in the United States and around the world who are working hard to advance human rights - and protect their own rights - in partnership with UUSC. Each week, we can choose a different story to read, bringing our Guests to life and helping to celebrate our own rights.

If you would prefer not to bring home a box, you can take a donation envelope or support UUSC directly online at www.uusc.org.

We will open our Guest at Your Table program at our intergenerational worship celebration on Sunday, November 22. The eighth/ninth-grade Coming of Age students and mentors will shepherd the project.

Members of the Prudential Committee

- Martha Rice Sanders, President
- Stewart Armstrong, President Elect
- Cy O'Neil, Past President
- Gail Brule, Clerk
- Tony Allen, Treasurer
- Pete Peterson, Assistant Treasurer
- Julie Meyers
- Graham Nye
- Rebecca Alberg
- Rita Rossi
- Anne Connor
- Peter Gray

We Are Almost Halfway There. Are You?

As we approach the end of the calendar year (and the halfway point in our church fiscal year), it's a good time to look at your pledge fulfillment and see whether you are "halfway there." This is important for two reasons. You may be able to take a deduction on this year's income taxes. And it is extremely helpful to the church's cash flow. For example, the pledge dollars that come in now are very helpful for paying the heating bills this winter.

Just as we think about our personal budgets at the end of the year, we can also think about the church's operating budget and our important part in it. The church office sends out quarterly reports, telling each of us how much of our pledge we have fulfilled (or you can get this information any time during the year by contacting the church office).

Unfortunately, the economy is making some people more concerned than ever about their money. Everyone's pledge is important to the financial health of the church, and much of our church budget is based directly on the pledges we made last spring. If your situation has changed and you are concerned about fulfilling your pledge, please contact our treasurer, Tony Allen (tonyallen15@aol.com). We would try to plan around any difficulties in pledge fulfillments.

Thanks again to each of you for your contributions. You make everything we do together possible.

-The Stewardship Committee



Sight Lines

By the time you receive this issue of the newsletter, First Unitarian will have held four Ministry fairs (Community Life, Development and Finance, Spiritual Development, and Social Justice) to acquaint us all with our vibrant array of programs and activities. I am sure that the second two will have been as energizing as the first two, with lots of people signing up to help further our mission in all of these areas. The walls have been thrumming with activity!

Meanwhile, the process to determine our core values and what promises we want to make to, and receive from, First Unitarian has been going full tilt in preparation for writing our covenant for this new century. I hope that you participated in one and found it as meaningful as I did. There will be more held this month, as well. I can't wait to see what our writers' circle (James Ford with Margaret Balch-Gonzalez, Stephen Koelz, and Martha Manno) create from that vast pool of potential promises.

And we're growing, with sixteen new members "signing the book" in October following the Path to Membership class! (See below.)

Within the Prudential Committee, as well, there has been much discussion and exploration. We have set goals for ourselves for the year, including further defining and supporting the work of the four Ministry liaisons, working to complete the policy manual, and continuing to improve communication between the Prudential Committee and the congregation at large.

We hope that you look for us at Coffee Hour and elsewhere to talk with us. In particular, I invite you to join us on November 8 following the service for the first Coffee with the PruComm of this year. See you there!



Martha Rice Sanders, President
pres@firstunitarianprov.org

Membership News

On Saturday, October 10, sixteen newcomers became members following the Path to Membership class. You can find their fabulous faces (as well as some adorable babies) pictured on the Membership bulletin board in the Parish House. During the October 18 service, they received official warm words of welcome and chalice pins. Enjoy getting to know them!

Our newest members are: Elke Breker, Colin Brodd, Danyell Brodd, Laura Cuzner, Steve Cuzner, Madelyn Halfacre, Ronelle Halfacre, AJ Johnson, Jim Muro, Tovah Muro, Jen Pedro, Kelly Rehbein, Kathryn Ritter-Smith, Sheila Russell, Paula Semonelli, and Kayla Soares.

The next Path to Membership class will be on Saturday, December 5 from 9:00a to 12:30p. Pick up a bright red flyer in the Newcomers Café, at a welcome table, or on the Membership bulletin board, or contact me for more information.

Meanwhile . . . more Greeters are needed. Join the folks wearing those colorful scarves at Coffee Hour. It's a fun and easy job, and offers the opportunity to meet new people - both newcomers and old/medium-timers. Extra credit: anyone who volunteers without being asked directly will get a yummy prize. Go for it! To volunteer, please see me at Coffee Hour (I'm the one carrying the big "yummy prize" basket) or contact me at mem@firstunitarianprov.org.

-Katy Killilea, Membership Coordinator





Community Life and Heritage

November All-Parish Supper

Friday, November 13

5:45p Social Hour: Bring hors d'oeuvres to share and/or wine for your own party if you wish.

6:15p Potluck Dinner: Please bring a dish to share that serves at least eight people. You can bring a main dish or, alternatively, a vegetable, a salad, or a dessert.

Program: Pearls, Politics, and Power: The Challenges Women Face in Public Life

This exciting and thought-provoking dramatic presentation by a group of Rhode Island actresses known as the Living Literature performers will feature the words of some of America's famous female political figures, such as Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, and Diane Feinstein. How have these women coped with the stresses of public life and how have they made change happen? What are the barriers that make it difficult for women and girls to think of themselves as future politicians . . . or future presidents? A discussion involving the actresses and the audience will follow. Please plan to join us.

Everyone - young and old and in-between - is invited to the All-Parish suppers. Reservations for this event are requested. To reserve your place and sign up for a potluck dish, please fill out the form in the Meeting House Times and leave it at the church office, call the church office at 401.421.7970, or see Jim Estey at Coffee Hour. Childcare is available for toddlers and young children if requested; call Jim Estey at 401.351.1748 to sign up.

Enjoy Thanksgiving Dinner at First Unitarian

Thursday, November 26, 1:00p-5:00p

Members, friends, and their families are invited to join other First Unitarian members and friends in the celebration of Thanksgiving on Thursday, November 26. We will gather for fireside conversations, games, and food from 1:00p to 5:00p and will plan to eat around 2:00p.

All will share in providing and serving the food; there is a suggested donation of \$3.00/adult, \$1.50/child (maximum of \$10.00/family) to cover the cost of turkeys and incidentals.

The Fellowship Committee is organizing the dinner. Please sign up at Coffee Hour on November 8 or 15, or call Mary Frappier at 401.521.7951 to reserve your space and coordinate your food and "labor" contributions.



December Round-the-Table

Dinners: Sign Up Now!

Saturday, December 5

At these small dinners, six to ten people sit around one table for an evening meal and conversation. Each group meets in a different home and groups are assigned to maximize opportunities to meet new people. The host decides on a menu and assigns portions of it to guests.

Building on last year's attendance and the very positive feedback, the Fellowship Committee expects to put together somewhere between 16 and 20 simultaneous dinners around the state this one evening. If requested, some will be child-friendly.

Sign up in the Atrium any Sunday in November. And please sign up early!



December All-Parish Supper

Friday, December 11

Program: A Holiday Celebration!

Be a part of this special holiday celebration featuring the Aurea Ensemble's presentation of *A Child's Christmas in Wales* by Dylan Thomas. This beloved story will be narrated by veteran Rhode Island actor Bob Colonna and will include musical interludes of old English carols and holiday chamber music from the Baroque era. Fred Jodry (voice and harpsichord) and a string quartet led by Charles and Consuelo Sherba will perform.

Saturday Socials in the New Year

Save these dates! January 23, February 27, March 27, April 24 (RTT), May 29, and June 26 (Note: No Saturday Socials will be held in December)

Join the Coffee Hour Bakers Brigade

Those goodies at Coffee Hour each Sunday are provided by people in our congregation who bake or buy the goodies that we all enjoy. You can be one of them by signing up at the table in the first parlor during Coffee Hour. You will go home with a reminder so you won't forget! We're now signing up for November and December, and we need six to eight people each Sunday to keep up with the ravenous crowd.

Coffee Hour on November 22 will be provided by the Transylvania Partner Church Committee in gratitude for that day's offering, to be donated to the steeple project for our partner church in Szentegyhaza, Romania. Any committee in the church can reserve a Sunday Coffee Hour and showcase their committee as well.

See Janet Downing Taylor at the sign-up table for details.



Knitting Connection

Every Tuesday, 7:00p

Join other knitters in the congregation for an evening of knitting and conversation. Share your techniques, skills, and ideas. Beginners are always welcome!



Contact: Julie Meyers (kelmey@cox.net)

Important Parking Alerts!

Recently a car was broken into in our parking lot and cash was stolen. Please be diligent in removing or hiding anything that might be a target for vandals.

Also, please be mindful that the designated handicap spaces in our parking lot (every day) and on Benevolent Street (on Sundays only) across from the Meeting House -Parish House connector are for use only by people with a displayed handicap parking sticker. We have members who need them.

The Lay Ministry and the Care Crew

The Lay Ministry and the Care Crew are always ready to help those in the congregation who are in need. Please call on us if you, or someone you know in the congregation, needs a hand or a friendly word at the time of a death in the family, an illness or injury, or even the happy event of a new addition to the family. While we cannot provide ongoing services, we are able to provide calls and cards, home visits, rides to the doctor's office, emergency babysitting, emergency elderly companionship, and meal delivery.

If you are interested in volunteering to be part of the Care Crew, please email Posey Kooris (admin@firstunitarianprov.org or 401.421.7970) and one of the Lay Ministers will contact you.

Hats Off!



Thanks to last month's Coffee Hour Providers: Susan Harrison, Amy Dolan, Philip Swayze, Mary Frappier, Susan Fisher, Lynne Hoppin Fazzi, Elsie Buffum, Rebecca Whynot, Tom Getz, Jacqui Nye, Anne Connor, Nancy Shand, Kate Menard, Roberta Groch, Erica Hanson, Laura Cuzner, Sharon O'Hearn, Kate Adams, and all of you who brought something in to surprise us.



Community Life and Heritage

Annual Fall Grounds Clean-up

Saturday, November 14

The Building and Grounds Committee is holding its annual fall grounds clean-up on November 14, starting at 8:00a. We need many hands to make light work. No need to sign up - just come along and bring a friend.

Information: Art Lusignan (alusig@cox.net)



The Women's Alliance

Monday, November 2: Program at 11:00a, followed by luncheon

The Women's Alliance is an autonomous society affiliated with and supportive of the First Unitarian Church of Providence since 1882. At its monthly meetings, the Alliance offers stimulating programs, warm companionship, and good food.



Wendy Schiller

Our next meeting will be held on November 2 and is open to all. The business meeting begins at 10:30 (Board members meet at 9:30); program and luncheon follows at 11:00a. Our scheduled speaker is Wendy Schiller, Associate Professor of Political Science at Brown University. Her topic is "Rhode Island Politics Up to the Minute."

Our dues are \$20 per year, and we invite you to become a member if you are not already. If you would like a copy of the 2009-2010 Alliance Directory and Calendar, which includes a listing of the programs for the year, as well as member names and addresses, please call the church office at 401.421.7970.

Artists Wanted for the Return of Art in the Atrium!

First Unitarian artists who are interested in exhibiting their work in the Atrium are invited to contact Chiara Van Erp, who will be organizing exhibits to run for about two months each. Suggestions, ideas, and help from artists and non-artists alike are welcome.

Contact: Chiara Van Erp (romano-vanerp-design@cox.net)



Congregational Life: First U and the Flu

First Unitarian is adopting a proactive philosophy and policy on maintaining the health and safety of our congregation of all ages during the upcoming flu season. James and Cathy will continue their greeting and welcoming practices, including handshaking. As always, all adults, youth, and children are encouraged to pass on handshakes or hugs, as they are comfortable. We will continue to closely follow recommendations from government officials and UUA leaders. Changes in these policies and practices will be communicated in a timely and widespread fashion.

The following message, with specific recommendations for classrooms, were included at teacher orientation for our Church School staff and volunteers. These recommendations apply to infectious disease prevention at all times:

- ▶ Adults, youth, and children should remain at home if they have active cold/cough symptoms, fever, or any sign of infectious disease.
 - ▶ Frequent and comprehensive handwashing is the best prevention technique.
 - ▶ Hand sanitizers will be placed at convenient locations on the church campus.
 - ▶ Choose to pass on handshakes and other contacts, as you are comfortable.
- Here's to a healthy year!

- Cathy Seggel and James Ford



Spiritual Development

Mr. Toad's Wild Ride through the History of Unitarian Universalism

A Film, Talk, and Discussion with Rev. James Ford

Thursday, November 19, 7:00p-8:30p

We will begin with a 20-minute film depicting the history of Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism, produced by the UU Congregation in Rockford, Illinois. James will then spend about 20 minutes rebutting the film, followed by (we expect) a lively discussion about various aspects of the history of Unitarian Universalism.

Contact: Rev. James Ford (min@firstunitarianprov.org)

First Unitarian Women's Chorus

Sunday, November 1, at 12:00p; Sunday, November at 9:00 to prepare for the morning service

This is an opportunity for women of all ages (including teens) to get together to sing. Director Beth Armstrong has years of experience singing and directing choruses of all types and special experience with women's voices. She also has a vast collection of songs that are accessible not only to the experienced vocalist, but also to the beginner.

Music reading is not required, so this is a good chance to grab your mom, your best friend, or your daughter and come to church to sing just for the joy of it. The group will sing in the Sunday service on November 8.

Contact: Beth Armstrong (bestar3@aol.com)

Continuing Programs

Unless otherwise indicated, programs are held in the Parish House and advance registration is not required.

Benevolent Street Zendo:

An Ongoing Zen Meditation Group

Every Monday at 7:00p

Brief instruction is available at 6:45p.

Boundless Way is an interfaith Zen community, maintaining close connections with the Soto Zen Buddhist Association and the American Zen Teachers Association. (All three of its senior teachers, including our minister, James Ford, are also Unitarian Universalists.)

All are welcome. We are a member community of the Boundless Way Zen Sangha; visit www.boundlesswayzen.org for more information.

Contacts: Jan Seymour-Ford and James Ford

(benevolentstreetzendo@gmail.com)

UUMeN

Sunday, November 8, 7:00p 9:00p

Topic: Dealing with Tolerations

What and where are we "tolerating" in our lives? What have we learned to "just live with"? Each of us has resigned ourselves to tolerate certain conditions that cause us discomfort in our jobs, in our relationships, in our homes, in our bodies. When we tolerate these conditions, what part of ourselves are we sacrificing? How do our "tolerations" affect our body, mind, and spirit? Could it be different?

All interested men are welcome to join us.

This month's facilitator: Wayne Peacock (401.885.8488)

Reimagining Religion

Tuesdays, November 10 and 24 at 7:00p

Reimagining Religion is an ongoing attempt to employ the best recent scholarship in coming to grips with issues raised by radically new developments in the study of religion and thereby achieving a fuller appreciation of what religious literacy entails in the twenty-first century.

Leader: Tom Hall



Spiritual Cinema

Sunday, November 22, 7:00-9:00p

Note the date: one week later than usual

Featured film: *Outsourced*

This romantic comedy follows a novelty company manager to India after his company outsources its customer service department. Todd must train his replacement and get the new call-center workers including charming, opinionated Asha "Americanized" before he can go home. But first, he has to navigate constant cultural misunderstandings and, in the process, realizes he has a lot to learn about India, America, and himself.

Contact: Marilyn Eanet (401.433.1299 or meanet@cox.net) or Maureen Johanson (508.557.1173); more information at www.spiritualcinema.com

**Gaia's Hearth CUUPS
(Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans)**

Thursday, November 5, 7:00p-8:30p

Meetings are open and no registration is required.

Gaia's Hearth was formed to promote:

- ▶ Networking among Pagan-identified UUs and providing outreach of Unitarian Universalism to the local Pagan community;
- ▶ Providing educational materials on Paganism for our home congregation, First Unitarian Church of Providence, and the general public;
- ▶ Promoting interfaith dialogue, based on Earth- and nature-centered religious and spiritual perspectives;
- ▶ Encouraging greater use of music, dance, visual arts, poetry, story, and creative ritual in Unitarian Universalist worship and celebration;
- ▶ Providing support for Pagan-identified UU religious professionals and ministerial students; and
- ▶ Fostering healing relationships with our mother Earth and all her children.

Contact: Artemis Ezikovich (nimuix@cox.net)



Spiritual Development

Sunday Flowers



We all enjoy the wonderful floral arrangements at the pulpit on Sundays in the Meeting House. If you would like to honor a loved one or celebrate a special occasion you can order flowers for a Sunday service.

Contact Jacqui Nye (funjac@hotmail.com with "Flowers" in the subject line)

Opportunities to Get Involved



Here are some ways to get involved in the Spiritual Development Ministry at First Unitarian. Contact the committee chair or project leader.

- ▶ Usher on a Sunday
- ▶ Donate flowers for the Sunday service
- ▶ Attend a program
- ▶ Join an ongoing group (Groups are open to new participants any time during the year.)
- ▶ Volunteer to teach or help out in the R.E. program
- ▶ Join a committee
- ▶ Try out for the choir
 - Note: you must be able to sight-read music
- ▶ Consider becoming a Worship Associate
- ▶ Propose a program on spiritual development





Social Justice

Buy Nothing Day – November 27



On November 27, the busiest day in the American retail calendar and the unofficial start of the international Christmas-shopping season, thousands of activists and concerned citizens in 65 countries will take a 24-hour consumer detox as part of the annual Buy Nothing Day, a global phenomenon that originated in Vancouver, Canada. This is a day where we challenge ourselves to switch off from shopping and tune in to life.

Here in Providence, we observe Buy Nothing Day for the thirteenth year in a row by holding a life-affirming winter coat exchange on the State House lawn, directly across from Providence Place Mall from 10:00a to 2:00p. (In case of inclement weather, the exchange will take place at St. Patrick's School, 244 Smith St.) Those who have winter coats to give can just drop them off; those needing a winter coat can pick one up. Coat exchanges also take place in Pawtucket, Newport, Wakefield, and Woonsocket. Volunteers are needed at all the sites.

You can drop coats off in the church office by Monday, November 23 for delivery to the State House on November 27.

Contact for the Providence exchange: Greg Gerritt (401.331.0529, gerritt@mindspring.com) or Phil Edmonds (401.461.3683, philwhistle@juno.com)

Providence Joins Annual Global Write-a-thon for Human Rights

Sunday, December 6, 1:00p-5:00p

Picture a chain of flaming torches stretching across the United States and the whole world. These torches of human freedom began from a matchbox that was tossed into a prison cell during the darkest days of World War II. On the matchbox was written one word "Coraggio" (courage) and the match it contained lit the candle of hope, the symbol of Amnesty International: a single candle, surrounded by barbed wire, burning with a tiny flame.

In lighting our own Candle of Hope on Sunday, December 6, Providence will join communities around the world in the annual Global Write-a-thon in celebration of International Human Rights Day. This year, we celebrate the 61st anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the world's first human rights treaty, adopted by the U.N. in December 1948.

Our guest speaker this year is Albert Rajabu from the Democratic Republic of Congo, where rape has become a standard weapon of war. We will provide all the materials for you to write appeals on behalf of Justine Masika Bihamba, under threat of death in Congo, because of her leading role in protesting violence against women, as well as appeals for prisoners of conscience in other countries.

Our actions work: prisoners have been freed, and human rights abuses curtailed or stopped, because of our letters. Refreshments and prizes make this event festive and fun, as well as deeply meaningful. This event is suitable for young people and families.

Co-sponsored by the World Affairs Committee and the Providence Chapter of Amnesty International

"Let Them Eat Cake" at the UUSC Meeting

November 1, 12:15p

All are welcome to attend the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee at First Unitarian on Sunday November 1 after church. Cake will be served. Discussion will design the projects for the year that will benefit the UUSC and their social justice programs.

Contact: Dianne Mailloux (401.353.0137 or mailloux2@cox.net)

Additional info about UUSC at www.UUSC.org



Global Poverty: WE Are Making a Difference!



The Village Bank, First Unitarian's micro-finance project, is working on its fifth bank this year. We have already established two banks in Guatemala and two banks in Haiti. We have been able to do this through your generous contributions and the sale of fair-trade crafts. More information about the micro-finance movement is available at the website of FINCA, the coordinating organization (www.villagebanking.org).



This small committee would really appreciate the participation of several others in selecting the products and setting up and conducting our craft sale in early December.

Contact: Polly Walker (pwalker41@cox.net) or Marilyn Eanet (meanet@cox.net).

Welcoming Congregation

In June, First Unitarian voted to become a Welcoming Congregation. Potential visitors searching the UUA Web site will find the rainbow chalice symbol next to our church's name. The First Unitarian Welcoming Congregation has plans to publicize our new status by adding the status to our Web site, hanging a banner (or two) on the church building, and reaching out to the community with media announcements. We also plan to host a beautiful photo exhibit featuring BGLT families and to sponsor at least one workshop about transgender issues this year. We're looking forward to a dynamic year, standing for and on the side of love! (See more on the next page.)

Standing on the Side of Love

Standing on the Side of Love (SSL, pronounced "sizzle") is a new program introduced by the Unitarian Universalist Association in General Assembly in Salt Lake City. It challenges UUs to speak out and act for justice against oppression, and bigotry. Specifically targeted are injustices aimed at BGLT people, the immigrant community, and people of color. SSL challenges us to stand up as UUs, and to go further by forging partnerships with other denominations and community groups.



A number of us are enthusiastic about this program, and ideas are starting to crackle. A number of us from First Unitarian participated in the rally for marriage equality at the State House on October 11, National Coming Out Day, which was a great opportunity to come out for love and civil rights. Stay tuned for announcements of upcoming activities; in the meantime, read more about the UUA's Standing on the Side of Love program at www.standingonthesideoflove.org.



Social Justice

It's Peanut Butter Month at Our Community Food Share Pantry

Distribution Day, Monday, November 16

Community Food Share, our First Unitarian food pantry, serves over 125 families a month, and the numbers continue to rise. We always need volunteers for our third Monday distribution to make sure that all phases of our operation run smoothly.

Distribution Day Schedule

1:00p-3:00p	Set-up
3:00p-5:00p	Distribution with our clients
5:00-6:00p	Restock and clean-up

Food Donations

Currently less than 1 percent of the food we distribute comes from direct donations from our congregation. As the demands on our state Food Bank continue to rise, we will be asking the congregation to help out. November is Peanut Butter month. Please leave items in the barrel in the Parish House Atrium. **No glass please!** We transport food several times throughout the month through shuttles and distribution. Glass products increase the risk of injury and clean-up issues that we need to avoid.

To help on Distribution Day, contact Elesa Amand (elesa2@verizon.net)

For larger food donations, contact Amy Webb (amy.webb7@verizon.net)

Transylvania Partner Church News

The Partner Church group has continued its activities with our partners in Transylvania this summer. Marida Hollos and Jim Anderson traveled to Szentegyhaza, where they were lavishly hosted by members of our partner congregation and discussed the plans for the new steeple for their church. Marida and Jim attended the memorial service for Sandor Racz, the former president of the church who visited with us in the spring of 2008,



Marida Hollis (fourth from left) in Transylvania.

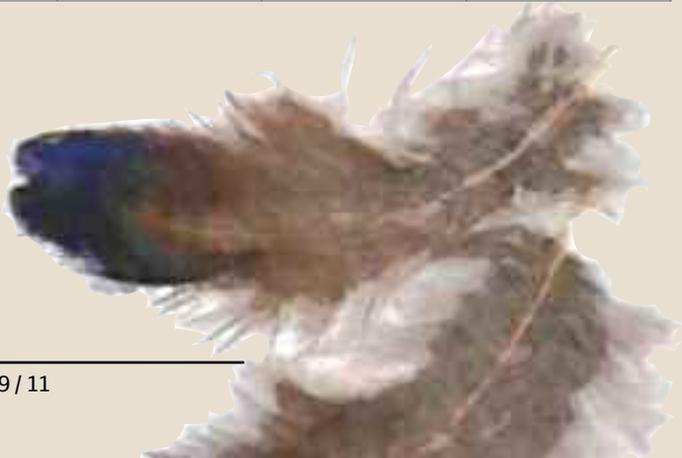
and met his daughter, son-in-law, and baby granddaughter, who came for the service from Budapest. Finally, they were taken on a trip to the beautiful mountains surrounding the valley where Szentegyhaza is located. It was a memorable trip. They returned to Providence with greetings to our congregation as well as presents, among them an embroidered cloth for our Women's Alliance from theirs.

The Partner Church group will continue its efforts to support our mutual relationship. On November 22, the Sunday offering will be dedicated to the Szentegyhaza steeple fund. And we will be selling handmade cloths and crafts from our partner community during Coffee Hour. We are anxious to hear from the young people at the First Unitarian regarding the pen-pal situation. Have they been corresponding with the young people in Transylvania? Is there more we could do to further these relationships? If you have ideas, please call Betty Finn (401.726.1867) to give her feedback and share suggestions.

The Partner Church group is developing plans for a trip next summer to this beautiful and historically rich area. Keep your eyes open for news so that you can participate in the planning.

November 2009

"If you don't make mistakes, you aren't really trying." -Coleman Hawkins

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><u>1</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Communion Service 11:30a Womens Chorus 12:00p UUSC 12:15p BUUUG 7:00p</p>	<p><u>2</u> Women's Alliance Benevolent St. Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p><u>3</u> Lay Ministry 7:00p Knitters 7:00p</p>	<p><u>4</u> Prudential Committee 6:00p Fellowship Committee 6:30p</p>	<p><u>5</u> Deacons 6:00p Gaia's Hearth 7:00p Stewardship Committee 7:00p</p>	<p><u>6</u></p>	<p><u>7</u></p>
<p><u>8</u> Pre-K Parent Open House 9:00a Sunday Service 10:30a Coffee w/PruComm 11:45a Mentor Mentee 12:00p BUUUG 7:00p UU Men 7:00p</p>	<p><u>9</u> Benevolent St. Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p><u>10</u> Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitters 7:00p</p>	<p><u>11</u></p>	<p><u>12</u> Farm City 7:00p</p>	<p><u>13</u> Parish Supper 5:45p</p>	<p><u>14</u> Fall Grounds Cleanup 8:00a</p>
<p><u>15</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Membership Committee 11:30a Teacher Lunch 12:00p BUUUG 7:00p</p>	<p><u>16</u> Food Pantry 4:00p Benevolent St. Zendo 7:00p Nominating Committee 7:00p</p>	<p><u>17</u> Knitters 7:00p</p>	<p><u>18</u></p>	<p><u>19</u> UU History 7:00p Stewardship Committee 7:00p</p>	<p><u>20</u></p>	<p><u>21</u></p>
<p><u>22</u> Sunday Service 10:30a BUUUG 7:00p Spiritual Cinema 7:00p</p>	<p><u>23</u> Benevolent St. Zendo 7:00p</p>	<p><u>24</u> Executive Committee 7:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitters 7:00p</p>	<p><u>25</u></p>	<p><u>26</u> Thanksgiving Day Thanksgiving Dinner 1:00p-5:00p</p>	<p><u>27</u> Church Office Closed</p>	<p><u>28</u></p>
<p><u>29</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Worship Committee 12:15p BUUUG 7:00p</p>	<p><u>30</u> Benevolent St. Zendo 7:00p</p>					

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How Does Our Garden Grow?



In October of 2002, the church's new Parish House addition was dedicated. Everything was new and beautiful and ready to go - with the exception of the garden on Benevolent Street. In the summer of 2002, before the new building even opened, church member Nancy Weiss-Fried, a trained landscape architect, drew her first plan for that garden. After much discussion and many ideas and several variations on the plan, she submitted her final drawings to the Pru Comm in November of 2008 and they were approved. In May of 2009, an estimate for the hardscape (stonewall) foundation for the garden was received; the cost was \$5,200. Now all that was needed was enough money to build it.

Nancy had raised money, during the two previous summers, offering multiple-course gourmet dinners for church members and friends at her home. Proceeds from the 2002 sale of a book of poems by our former minister, Tom Ahlburn, were also dedicated to the garden project. But the project was still short on funds. So Nancy re-started the selling of bricks for the Meditation Garden, between the church and the Parish House.

With sufficient funds in hand, the installation of the hardscape was begun and completed in October. Just take a look outside the Atrium glass wall as the many years of planning and hard work unfold.

Nancy will continue to sell bricks throughout the winter in order to complete the project, in the spring, with plant material.

Much appreciation to Nancy and all who have (and will) so generously participate in financially supporting the creation of our Atrium Garden.