



SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER

Sunday, September 5 Jesus Was a Carpenter: A Meditation on Labor
10:00a Rev. James Ishmael Ford

James finds himself wondering about work and dignity and how each relates to a fully formed spiritual life.

Sunday, September 12 Life-Giving Waters – A Multigenerational Service
10:30a The Congregation, Cathy Seggel, and Rev. James Ishmael Ford

We regather to begin our church year, but, in fact there has been no break in our shared life: nearly a hundred people have attended just about every summer service. That said, there was a pause to catch the breath, and many of us did. And now, rested or not, we're back. Bring a bit of water from your travels, back yard, or kitchen tap and think of a word or two or three that captures the spirit with which we enter our "new" church year.

Origins (birth-2 years) and Play Circle (2-3 years) open for our youngest children.

Sunday, September 19 The Door of Peace: A Yom Kippur Reflection
10:30a Rev. James Ishmael Ford

James has thought a lot about Jerusalem as a metaphor for our lives. The name *Jerusalem* means door, gate, or abode of peace. And within that door or gate or abode lies all the turmoil of our lived lives and divided hearts. James will reflect on the nature of peace.

Our Community Collection will be for the Peace Flag Project.

Grades K-7 begin in the Meeting House for the first portion of the service.

Origins, Play Circle and Pre-K (birth-4 years) begin in classrooms.

Sunday, September 26 Four Quartets: A Meditation on T. S. Eliot and the Spiritual Quest
10:30a Rev. James Ishmael Ford

Today is the birthday of T. S. Eliot, who was born a Unitarian, explored Buddhism, died a high Anglican. James thinks his life and his poetry has much of value for us. Come and see if he is right.

Young people begin in their classrooms and worship in Chapel.

Our All-Church Ice Cream Social follows the coffee hour.

Sunday, October 3 Fifty Years of Liberal Religion
10:30a Rev. James Ishmael Ford

This year marks fifty years since the consolidation of the Universalist Church of America and the American Unitarian Association. James will reflect on what that has meant for himself, for the larger association, and perhaps for you.



The Monthly Newsletter for

The First Unitarian Church of Providence
Corner of Benefit and Benevolent Streets

SEPTEMBER 2010

ALL PARISH EVENTS

All-Parish Supper
Friday, September 10

Women's Alliance Yard Sale
Saturday, September 11

Church School Registration
Sunday, September 12

Church School Begins
Sunday, September 19

All-Church Ice Cream Social
Sunday, September 26

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STAFF

Rev. James Ishmael Ford, Minister
 Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
 Frederick Jodry, Music Director
 Posey Kooris, Administrator
 Walter O. Sotelo, Administrative Assistant
 Katy Killilea, Membership Coordinator
 Jaime Durango, Building Manager
 Paul Webber, Evening Security
 Henry Colpa, Evening Security
 Pedro Vasquez, Sunday Building Manager

NEWSLETTER

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



Wheel of Life

Congratulations to: Our Sunday Building Manager, Pedro Vazquez, whose son Juan graduated in our Meeting House, first in his class, from Brown Medical School on Memorial Day weekend.

Welcome to: Dorothy Dolores Karl, daughter of Jen and Philip Karl and baby sister to Eleanor, born on July 2.

Condolences to: Stacy Allen on the recent death of his grandmother in Texas.

Passages: First Unitarian recently lost two prominent members.



Alma Sanderson, a member of the church for 40 years, died on June 9 at the age of 97. Family members and friends, including her son, Richard, spoke movingly at her memorial service on June 19. An article in the *East Side Monthly* called her "a living legacy, . . . an integral part of not only her neighborhood, but of everyone who was lucky enough to cross her path. Her resolute determination for self-sufficiency was legendary. A lot of us knew her well by sight, though perhaps not by name, but her presence over the years provided part of that intangible 'glue' that makes the East Side a community in the true sense of the word. RIP. We'll miss you."



David St. Germain started the Neighborhood Social Justice Committee at First Unitarian and publicly fought against "homelessness, foreclosures, failed health care, sexual inequality, misguided wars, mistreated immigrants and troubled veterans." Dave took his own life on July 23. Jim Ryczek, executive director of the R.I. Coalition for the Homeless, said of Dave, "When he got hold of an issue, he was like a dog with a bone, he spoke from personal experience" (*Providence Journal*, July 27). A memorial service in celebration of his life will be held at First Unitarian on Sunday, September 12 at 2:00p. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to First Unitarian Church, David St. Germain Social Justice Fund.



Monkey Mind

On a Friday mid-August, Jan and I drove off for upstate New York, leaving Auntie in charge of the cats and fish. We meandered through Rhode Island, across Connecticut, cutting up to Interstate 84, drove into New York, crossed the Hudson River, turned south, and eventually ended up in a small-town bed and breakfast in Windsor, not terribly far from the New Jersey border.

Jan's sister, Karen, is married to Doug. Forty-one years ago, Doug was eighteen and a photography student. Somehow he managed to get a press pass to the big shindig in Bethel, New York, that would come to be called Woodstock. He took his pictures. A few months later, there was a small showing. Then the negatives went into glassine wraps and were stored. Forty years later, he stumbled upon them, thought they weren't that bad, and sent jpegs to the museum at the Bethel Center for the Arts.

So, there we were, to see the show "Collecting Woodstock," mostly featuring Doug's work.

Once we made it to the museum and grounds, we were met by Wade Lawrence, the museum's director, who gave us the two-dollar tour; that is, we got to see lots. And very much felt like VIPs. Then he took us to the show.

What can I say? Doug's pictures are amazing.

I hope anyone who is interested in that bit of American history gets to the show before it closes at the beginning of January.

However, what set me to ruminating was, of the large number of guys with white hair (those of my generation who still have hair), how many sported small ponytails. Fewer of the women present from the same age bracket were in tie-dye, but still enough to set me to thinking. Well, that and the ubiquitous wafting sent of patchouli oil.

Flash from the past, we call it.

I found myself thinking of those tumultuous years. Of hopes and dreams and fears.

And how precious our ideals are.

And how easy it is to forget the rain and mud, all the hard parts.

I think our project as human beings is to treasure the moments of our lives.

But to not fetish-ize them.

The moments pass. Appreciate.

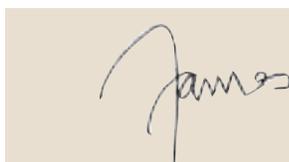
The memories are lovely. Enjoy.

Don't forget the hard parts.

And throw it all into the great enterprise of this moment.

No big lesson.

But worth remembering, particularly as we launch into our new church year.



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

Lay Ministry and the Care Crew

First Unitarian's Lay Ministry responds to referrals or requests for its services. The monthly "on call" Lay Minister asks members of the Care Crew to call, send notes, cook meals, provide transportation, or respond to the emergency needs in our church family.

The on-call Lay Minister for the month of September is Rick Richards. Referrals or calls to the church will be passed on to Rick.

The Lay Ministry Team is Mary Frappier, Mary Frey, Martha Manno, Kate Menard, Rick Richards, and Bill Twaddell.

Volunteers for the Care Crew are always welcome.

Contact: any member of the Lay Ministry Team



Spiritual Pathways

A Summer of Shalom

As fall approaches, I realize that this summer led me to gather new resources for educating to build a healthy, welcoming, multigenerational, multicultural, anti-oppressive faith community. It began at UU General Assembly in Minneapolis, where I was able to take early morning strolls along the Mississippi River before workshops and plenary sessions that offered tools for taking advantage of social networking in congregations and wisdom from Dale McGowan about Parenting Beyond Belief. The work continued in July, at Star Island Lifespan Religious Education Week, challenging me to expand my goals of educating to counter oppression. I dove into chilly ocean waters as well as a new adult education curriculum entitled "Building the World We Dream About" (see an excerpt below). Daily theme talks, Ministry across the Generations, explored the changing context of religion in America.

Along the way, I participated in several Standing on the Side of Love events. While marching with many of you in the RI Pride Fest, standing with hundreds of UUs in Minneapolis, or glued to my computer to follow live feed of colleagues waging peaceful protest of immigration law in Arizona, I was further called to justice-making.

Then, I read *Walking Papers*, the autobiography of Francisco Clarke. His story opened me to the unlimited possibilities of human courage and the serious need for access and equal rights for the disabled.

The inspirational writer Brian Nelson reminds me that the fall season, enriched by the celebration of the Jewish Days of Awe, is a fitting time to reflect on the meaning of the Hebrew word *shalom*, often translated as "peace," but which actually means "wholeness." "When you wish people 'Shalom,'" Nelson writes, "you're wishing them a fuller sense of themselves, a reconnection with nature, or a sense of renewed harmony with the world around them."

As we gather this September, I hope you will join me in embracing new connections and moving toward wholeness by looking through a freshly polished multigenerational, multicultural, counter-oppression lens of faith development.

Shalom,

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
401.421.7970
dre@firstunitarianprov.org

From *Building the World We Dream About*, UUA Tapestry of Faith Adult Curriculum

Guidelines that promote multicultural dialogue: These suggestions intend to slow down the flurry of assumptions that come into play when we talk about the stories that shape our lives.

- Assume positive intent on the part of fellow participants.
- Ask questions from the standpoint of curiosity, rather than arguing or debating another's point of view.
- Use "I" statements when sharing experiences, feelings and opinions.
- Withhold unsolicited personal judgments.
- Speak from personal experience; avoid generalizing your experience to include others you perceive to be similar to you.
- Consider the implications of asking people of color and other people marginalized by race or ethnicity to speak as "experts" on their particular culture, race or ethnicity.
- Set your own boundaries for personal sharing. Ask yourself, "What parts of my life story am I comfortable sharing?"
- Be willing to examine and grapple with the ways personal assumptions shape your "truths."
- Speak personal "truths" in constructive and civil ways.
- As a speaker, consider how your individual communications style affects others.
- As a listener, be willing to sit with your discomfort with other people's personal "truth/s."
- Speak personal concerns directly with that person, not about them.
- Recognize that the work we do together is sometimes difficult and that our overall goal is to stay "at the table" together. This will involve taking risks.
- Laugh a little!

The Church School Year

Please see the 2010-2011 First Unitarian *Resource Book*, mailed to all households, and the church website for Church School program details, map, and calendar.

Contact: Cathy Seggel,
Director of Religious Education (401.421.7970
or dre@firstunitarianprov.org)

Schedule of Opening Events

Sunday, September 12

10:30a Multigenerational Homecoming / Water Communion Service

Origins (birth-2 years) and Play Circle (2-3 years) open for our youngest children

11:30a Church School Registration during Coffee Hour in the Atrium

Tuesday, September 14

7:00p Teacher Orientation in the Parish House Atrium and classrooms

Sunday, September 19

9:30a Kickoff session for YMODE in the Parish House auditorium (see below). Parents, please come to sign children up. Junior and senior high youth are urged to participate.

10:30a First Day of Sunday School classes
Grades K-7 begin in the Meeting House for the first portion of the service
Origins, Play Circle, and Pre-K (birth-4 years) begin in classrooms

About YMODE

Sundays 9:30a-10:15a

Youth are invited to bring voices and instruments as we con-spire (that is, breathe together) to make wonderful sounds to share with our UU congregation. (Children under age 8 may join with permission of the Youth Music Director.) Plan on singing and, if you have an already developed instrumental skill, bring that along as well. We also engage in theatrical storytelling from time to time.

Youth Music Director: Marcia Taylor

(mtaylor@lincolnsschool.org)

Piano Accompanist/Assistant Leader:

Michael Dawkins



Deacons' Corner

The Deacons welcome you back from summer and to the beginning of a new church year.

We again thank Richard Boober and Nancy Weiss-Fried, our outgoing Deacons, for their service. We also thank Nancy and her crew, Jaime Durango and Gerry Boone, for their work on the Atrium and Memorial gardens.

We will begin our work this year with the Path to Membership class on Saturday, October 30 and with the Deacon Calling program.

For several years the Deacons have been calling all members and friends of the church. Last year, we established a new system for calling. Each Deacon has a list of members and friends that he or she will keep in touch with for the entire five-year term. We hope this will enable us to establish a rapport with the people on our lists.

*-Janet Downing Taylor, Robert O. Jones
Senior Deacons;
Judy Bowden, Mary Finger,
David Bridgehouse, Russell Gifford,
Mary Frappier, David Spremulli,
Jacqui Nye, Ruth Arellana*

100% and a Surplus!

The United States and Rhode Island should run so well - in short, they should close out their fiscal years as well as First Unitarian did.

Our income for the year ending June 30 came in just as budgeted, with pledge income at 100% of the amount anticipated when the budget was drawn up and approved in the spring of 2009. Some sources of income did even better: both the fundraising auction and support from planned giving were over their budgeted amounts. These offset income from areas that didn't quite come up to expectations.

It was more important than ever that we meet our budget for last year, since we are operating with an endowment that, like most funds, lost value during the Great Recession. It is still down in value from its 2007 high.

While income came in as projected, our expenses were reined in tightly, coming under the amount budgeted for the year.

In summary: our budget for Fiscal Year 2010 was \$597,035. Total income (from all sources) was lower than projected by \$2,706, but total expenses were lower still, by \$9,829. Isn't this a great way to end the fiscal year at First Unitarian?

-Tony Allen, Treasurer



Sight Lines

It is with great excitement and anticipation that I begin my year as your President! We have a very busy year ahead of us as we work together to continue developing our church into the "flagship" church of southern New England. Soon we will solidify our long-term plan for the next five years. Some of our major goals are to:

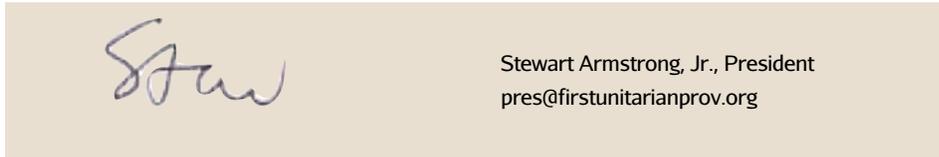
- seek financial stability
- plan for continued growth
- become a "teaching church"
- prepare for the upcoming celebrations of our church anniversaries
- continue planning and funding for capital improvements

Personally, I look forward to continuing the fine teamwork tradition here at First Unitarian. I am thrilled to be working with the "Three Presidents" and our wonderful Minister. This will be a year to continue the growing strength of our ministries and committee structure. Hopefully, it will also be a time to expand our Social Justice activism.

This church is your church. The work of the church is the work of all of us. Find your niche and plunge right in!

Let's have a great church year!

See you in church!



Stewart Armstrong, Jr., President
pres@firstunitarianprov.org

First Unitarian Church Covenant

We, the members of the First Unitarian Church of Providence, with respect for the worth and dignity of each person, with wonder at the light we know by many names, and with gratitude for our deep connection to each other and to the larger web of existence, covenant to walk together in our search for truth, seeking the paths of wisdom, compassion, and justice.

(adopted by a vote of the congregation, April 2010)

What's in a Name?

The Stewardship Committee has been renamed the Canvass Committee.

This will seem a trivial change to many congregants, but it is a significant step for the committee. Our focus will be on communicating with you about church finances in ways that relate your daily experiences in this spiritual family to the commitment you make during the annual fund drive (a.k.a. the canvass). Our purpose is to raise everyone's awareness of the vital role that our financial contributions play in all of the wonderful things that this congregation is able to do. If we all remain aware of the reality that none of this is possible without money, then we all feel a connection between the act of giving and the joy which that giving helps to create in our community.

Every single penny of your contribution is incorporated into a careful process of setting priorities and goals. Nothing here happens by magic. Every dollar makes a difference in what we as a community are able to do, and missing a few dollars means missing out on a few things that we might have been able to do.

We hope that you will take the time to reflect on the ideas that we offer in the newsletter, and continually rediscover how important you are to this community.

-Neil Bartholomew, Chair



A New Church Year Begins

Ice Cream Social, Music, and Friends Old and New

Sunday, September 26 after Coffee Hour

Plan for a fun afternoon on the front lawn of the Meeting House on the last Sunday in September. Joe's Backyard Band will perform, ice cream and brownies

will be eaten, and friends will be reunited for a grand new church year. See you there!

Brought to you by the Religious Education and Membership Committees

Atrium Bookstore

Most Sundays during Coffee Hour from September through June

The Atrium Bookstore will reopen for the new church year on Sunday, September 12. You'll find books on a wide variety of subjects: inspiration, daily meditation, Buddhism, Bible studies, environmental concerns, children's stories, poetry, family life and rituals, and more. Profits benefit the church.

Access and Parking

As more of us return to the church after a summer hiatus, it's a good time to remind ourselves about the parking rules. Reserving space in our parking lot for the vehicles of visitors and the handicapped is part of what makes First Unitarian a warm, welcoming church. Please leave the spaces marked for Visitor Parking and Handicapped Parking for those who need them. There are two of each in the church parking lot, and more handicapped space is available (on Sundays only) in the posted area on Benevolent Street across from the breezeway. When using any of the handicapped parking spaces, be sure to display your handicapped placard to indicate your eligibility for the parking spot.

Thanks for your continued cooperation.

-The Membership Committee

First Unitarian Energy Project: The Parish House Heating System

A lot has happened over the summer on the installation of a new heating system for the Parish House. Three contractors recommended by our HVAC engineer, Steve Wilkinson, were invited to do a walk-through in June and submit bids for the work. Of the three - Aero, Arden, and Phalanx - only Phalanx showed up for the walk-through. Steve Wilkinson provided the name of another contractor, Environmental Systems, who received the documents and submitted a bid.

Two bids came in on July 2. The low bidder, by about \$30,000, was Phalanx Engineering, with a price of approximately \$140,000, which will bring the total project cost (including engineering fees, asbestos abatement, etc.) to \$175,000. Phalanx did the boiler installation on our Parish House addition (in 2002) and has the service contract on our systems. They also provided a lot of valuable input during the scope-development phase of this project, including preliminary cost estimates and suggestions for ways to bring costs down. For all of these reasons, not just the lowest bid, we are confident that they will do a good job.

Phalanx has been working since mid-July on the installation, aiming for completion by mid-September. The old cast-iron radiators are being replaced with baseboard fin-tube heaters. The new boiler will be in the same basement location as the old one. Programmed thermostats in each room of the old Parish House will create a far more efficient system that translates to lower energy costs.

The bulk of the funding for this work will come from a \$150,000, ten-year loan. The loan will be repaid with annual payouts from the church's Lippitt Trusts, set up at the Rhode Island Foundation by long-time members Fred and Mary Ann Lippitt. Another \$18,000 will be drawn from our Building Reserve Net Asset account. The remaining balance (up to \$7,000) will come from proceeds of Brown University's lease of the Meeting House for its medical school graduation exercises.

-The Energy Project Committee: Art Lusignan, Cy O'Neil, and Posey Kooris



Hats Off to...

Nancy Weiss-Fried and Gerry Boone for their many hours of mulching and working in the Atrium and Memorial gardens during some very hot weather this summer.

Mary Frappier for emergency phone coverage while the office was closed for summer break.

Herb and Nancy Weiss-Fried for their annual summer gourmet dinners to support special projects at the church.

Our Summer Sunday Service speakers: Raffaele Gianfrancesco, Clif Odle, Philip Swayze, Rick Richards, Joan Richards, Daniel Lawlor, Melissa Guillet, Ginny Fox, Dianne Mailoux, Claudia Ford, Martha Manno, Len Cabral, and Bucky Rogers.

Especially for Newcomers

Path to Membership

Saturday, October 30, 9:00a-12:30p

The Path to Membership class is for anyone who is interested in membership in the church or who just wants to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and First Unitarian. The session is led by our minister, the Rev. James Ford, Director of Religious Education Cathy Seggel, and Membership Coordinator Katy Killilea and includes a delicious brunch made by the Deacons.

Please register before Friday, October 22. Childcare will be provided for those who request it by Monday, October 18.

Contact: Katy Killilea, Membership Coordinator
(mem@firstunitarianprov.org or 401.421.7970)

The Return of the Newcomers' Café

Every Sunday during Coffee Hour

First Unitarian's Newcomers' Café will reopen on Sunday, September 12. Held in the elegant and intimate Paneled Parlor, the Café is hosted by a rotating cast of church celebrities and offers coffee, goodies, and fellowship. If you're new to the church, this is a great place to meet people in a less daunting setting than the regular Coffee Hour. If you've been around for a while, this is a great place to help new folks get acclimated. To sign on as a café host, contact Katy Killilea.

Contact: Katy Killilea, Membership Coordinator
(mem@firstunitarianprov.org or 401.421.7970)

Women's Alliance

The Women's Alliance is offering two events this month as part of its mission to support the church and local charities.

Women's Alliance Yard Sale 🌍🌱

Saturday, September 11, 8:00a-12:00p

The Women's Alliance is preparing for its second yard sale of 2010 as part of its ongoing support of the church. If you have items you would like to donate, please bring them to the Parish House beginning September 7 (space is not available until then). Items should be marked with suggested price.

Then come by the church on September 11 to see what treasures and bargains await you!

Women's Alliance Quilt Workshop

Sunday, September 19, 12:15p-1:30p 🌍🌱

Box lunch provided

As part of its annual giving to local charities, the Women's Alliance plans to make a quilt to sell as a fundraiser in December. This workshop will assist those interested in decorating a block for the quilt. Janet Downing Taylor will lead the workshop. All are welcome.

Registration is requested.

Contact: Nancy Libby Fisher (401.751.4298)

October All-Parish Supper 🌍

Friday, October 12, 2010

Our after-dinner program will be about "Transgender Issues."

How do the issues of gender identification affect all of us? In a recent survey, most members of our congregation were accepting and comfortable with gays in our midst, but admitted to some ignorance and confusion about transgendered persons. This event, sponsored by the Standing on the Side of Love Committee, will provide information, build understanding and insight about transgender issues, and help us become a truly welcoming congregation. The program will feature a major speaker and a panel. Please join us.



Community Life

Welcome Back All-Parish Supper 🌍🌱

Friday, September 10

Note the early date - before Homecoming Sunday. Please sign up in August or in early September. Everyone, young and old and in between, is welcome at the All-Parish suppers.

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 - a main dish or, alternatively, a vegetable, a salad, or a dessert. Also please bring a can of tomato sauce (no bottles!) for the Food Pantry.

7:45p Program in the Auditorium: "Our Spiritual Growth in the Summer of 2010"
An Evening with the Rev. James Ford

Our after-dinner program will provide us with an opportunity to connect once again with the people in our church community both old friends and new. The main speaker will be our minister, the Rev. James Ford, who will give us a brief report from the UUA General Assembly meeting in Minneapolis, focusing on the Arizona immigration controversy and other social justice initiatives that may be of interest to our congregation. He will also touch upon several recent milestones in our congregational life.

For most of the evening, James will reflect on his own spiritual journey this summer, including personal anecdotes about special moments and events that helped him to grow spiritually. Opportunities will be provided for members of the audience to respond and perhaps to share briefly about their own journeys. What a great way to start our church year! Please plan to come.

Reservations are strongly requested. You can fill out the sign-up sheet in the Sunday Meeting House Times and drop it with the collection plate, see Jim Estey at Coffee Hour, or call the church office in advance (401.421.7970).

Childcare for infants and children up to age ten will be available for parents who request it in advance. Call Jim Estey (401.351.1748).

Atrium Art Gallery - September Exhibit



Peace is the theme for our September Atrium Gallery exhibit. The exhibit is anchored by several pieces from Christiane Corbat's Globalheart Project. Works by other First Unitarian artists will be on display as well. With this exhibit, we are participating in a Month of Peace in Providence event, sponsored by our own Peace Flag Project and several other local organizations.

The Corbat pieces were the opening exhibit for our Atrium Gallery several years ago. Sadly, Christiane passed away in 2006, but First Unitarian has been blessed with several of her exquisite works. Her husband, Dr. Robert Westlake, is still a member here.

This exhibition honors Christiane's work for peace on Earth. An amazing artist whose work brought together healthcare and artists. she was the co-founder of Waking Dreams and Warrior Women, a nonprofit organization of healthcare professionals, artists, and community leaders, based on the concept that the arts are a place of transformation and healing. The Globalheart Project is a multimedia installation/performance piece that suggests the potential for peace on Earth through making peace within our own lives. Christiane's work has been exhibited nationally in galleries, museums and medical venues and is featured in numerous books and publications on art and healing.



Spiritual Development

Chalice Circle Sign-up and Drop-ins

Sign-up: Sundays, September 12, 19, and 26 during Coffee Hour

Drop-ins: Tuesdays, October 26, November 30, and December 28, 7:00p-9:00p

Chalice Circles is our small group ministry program for those seeking connections as part of an intimate community that lifts people out of the everyday, offering opportunities to reflect on and deepen their spiritual and ethical journeys. Each group is led by a trained facilitator. Groups meet at the church or in a member's home.

To sign up to participate in a Chalice Circle this fall, please stop by the Chalice Circle table in the Meeting House following the services on Sundays in September and fill out an information card. Please be aware that there is an eight-session commitment in order to enhance the experience for all group members.

If you don't have time to commit to a full series, there will be three "drop-in" Chalice Circle meetings on Tuesday evenings in October, November, and December at the church.

The Chalice Circle Steering Committee plans, promotes, and oversees the program and recruits, trains, and supports church members as group facilitators. Currently, eight groups of six to ten participants meet twice a month.

Contact: Dianne Mailloux (401.439.6827), Ruth Arellana (rkarellana@yahoo.com), or Jean Lawlor (jeanlawlor@cox.net); or leave your contact information with the church office (401.421.7970)

The Nature of Mind and the Spiritual Life

Monday, September 27, 7:00pm

The Benevolent Street Zendo will turn over its regular meditation time on September 27 to a presentation by Dr. James Austin, Clinical Professor of Neurology at the University of Missouri and Professor Emeritus of Neurology at the University of Colorado. Professor Austin is also a long-time student of Zen (as well as a long-time friend of our minister, James Ford) and author of the seminal study *Zen and the Brain* among other books on the Zen and the nature of human consciousness.

The talk is free and open to all.

UUMeN

Second Sunday, September 12, 7:00p-9:00p

This is the seventeenth year that First Unitarian's UUMeN's group has been meeting together for discussion, fellowship, and the building of a liberal spiritual community of men. Facilitation of our meetings is shared by the members.

We will reconvene on September 12. After an extended check-in covering our lives this summer, we will be talking about "New Beginnings." Sometimes we feel like we are stuck in old habits and unchanging routines, and life has lost some of its promise. September (and other months, too) often offer us new opportunities and choices. What is happening with each of us that is interesting and new? What revitalizing changes might we make in our lives to enhance our life experience?

All interested men are welcome. Please join us.

September Facilitators: Phil Smith (401.699.4029) and Jim Estey (401.351.1748)



Continuing Programs

Benevolent Street Zendo:

An Ongoing Zen Meditation Group

Every Monday at 7:00p

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.)

Everyone is welcome. Brief instruction will be available to those who come at 6:45p. We are a member community of the Boundless Way Zen Sangha (www.boundlesswayzen.org).

Leaders: Jan Seymour-Ford and James Ford
(benevolentstreetzendo@gmail.com)

Reimagining Religion

Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7:00p

After a lengthy study of the Gospel of Thomas, we will continue with an examination of Ecclesiastes, seeking insights from a recent translation by Lloyd Geering, for many years a professor of Hebrew and Old Testament, and from the introduction to his forthcoming book on his favorite Wisdom sage. Come and discover why this famous scholar has frequently translated the Hebrew *elohim* as "nature" rather than "God."

Texts for downloading may be requested from Tom Hall.

Contact: Tom Hall (twh2nd@aol.com)

Natural Wisdom and Compassion Meditation

Every Wednesday at 7:00p

These guided meditations of love and wisdom from Tibetan Buddhism have been adapted into new forms that can touch the hearts and minds of people from all backgrounds and faiths, to help each of us bring out the best in ourselves within our relationships, service, and social action.

Contact: Ken Bent (kenbent@cox.net)



First Unitarian Senior Choir 🌍🌱

The first Senior Choir practice will be on Homecoming Sunday, September 12 at 9:00a. All returning members: please come at 8:45a to pick up music and have a chance to greet your fellow members after the summer break before rehearsal begins promptly at 9:00a.

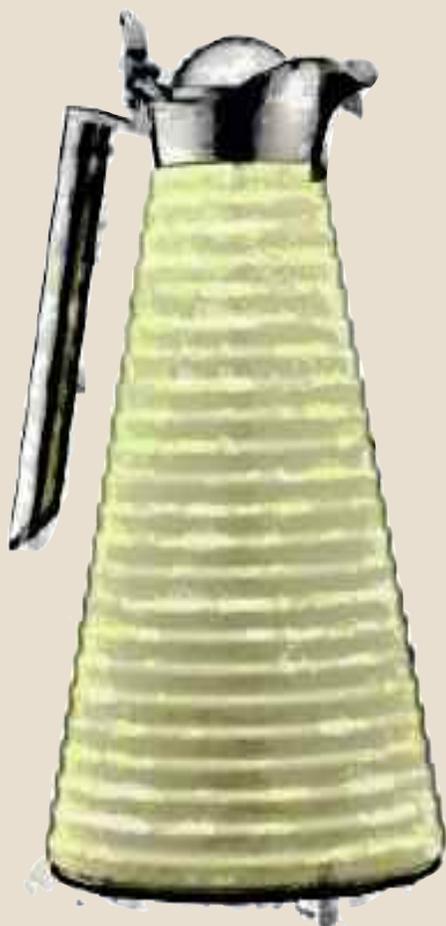
Interested new singers: if you have some musical background and decent music-reading skills, please contact Fred Jodry, Music Director, for a discussion of how to join the choir.

Contact: Fred Jodry (Fred_Jodry@brown.edu)

Sunday Pulpit Flowers 🌍🌱

We all enjoy the wonderful floral arrangements at the pulpit on each Sunday in the Meeting House. Donating flowers provides an opportunity for members and friends to honor a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion as part of our community worship. You can order flowers for a particular Sunday to grace the pulpit during the service and take them with you to enjoy or give away after the service.

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



Spiritual Development

First Unitarian Women's Chorus 🌍🌱

Sundays in September/October (to be scheduled), 12:00p-1:30p

This is an opportunity for women of all ages (including teens) to get together to sing. Director Beth Armstrong 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. If the group chooses, it's possible that the chorus will sing in a Sunday service. Join us on all or any of the Sunday rehearsals in the Meeting House Choir Room (watch for dates in the *Meeting House Times*).

Beth has years of experience singing and directing choruses and special experience with women's voices.

Registration through the church office is requested.

Contact: Beth Armstrong

Coming in October

Parenting through a Unitarian Universalist Lens 🌍🌱

Wednesday, October 13, 7:00p-8:30p

We will explore the love-filled, challenging, and soulful work of parenting from a UU perspective. Drawing on resources including Michelle Richards' *Tending the Flame* and sharing our own stories, we will discuss topics like family rituals, answering big questions, and teachable moments. This single session may continue with regularly scheduled support-group sessions.

Please call the church office to reserve a space.

Contact: Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education (401.421.7970 or dre@firstunitarianprov.org)

The Way of Just Sitting 🌍🌱

Thursday, October 21 at 7:00p

This is the first of two sessions on the arts of Zen meditation for the beginner and the old hand. We will have a presentation outlining the origins of Buddhist meditation and how it evolved into the discipline of Mo Chao Chan, the Zen of silent illumination, or Shikantaza, the way of just sitting. Most commonly, it is just called Zazen, Zen meditation. The talk will include instruction in the basic posture and will explore the techniques of an ongoing practice. There will be an opportunity for a full discussion.

The second session, What Is the Sound of One Hand, Anyway?, will be held on Thursday, November 4 at 7:00p

Contact: Rev. James Ford (401.421.7970 or min@firstunitarianprov.org)

Consider the Cosmos 🌍🌱

To be scheduled: Fall 2010, 7:00p-9:00p (weather dependent)

These two-hour explorations of the night sky offer an interesting path to deeper awareness of our place in the universe. We will view objects within our solar system, within our galaxy, and far beyond our galaxy while we discuss related, mind-bending facts and theories that, in the words of Einstein, cause one to "pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe."

Limited to nine people per session, with a minimum of at least three participants committed to each session. Repeat participants are welcome as space permits. It's best to sign up for one of the first sessions in order to attend at a later date if your session is clouded, rained, or snowed out.

Location: Wishing Star Observatory in Barrington, which houses a 14" telescope designed for programs such as this. Registration is required.

Contact: Pete Peterson



Social Justice

UUSC@First Unitarian Begins the Year with a Documentary on UUSC Founders

Sunday September 19, 12:15p



The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee at First Unitarian will begin its work for the year with a compelling new documentary on the work of two of UUSC's founders: Unitarian minister the Rev. Waitstill Sharp and his wife, Martha Sharp. "Heroes of the Spirit: Genocide Then, Genocide Now" is a 24-minute documentary, directed by Academy Award-winning filmmaker Deborah Shaffer, that takes you from

the Sharps' rescue mission across Europe during World War II to their legacy inspiring UUSC's work today in challenging genocide in Darfur. DVD extras include a video about the UUSC's work to end genocide in Darfur, plus study and action resources for discussion at the UUSC@First Unitarian Committee meeting.

Come see the video and help begin the committee's work for the year. Cake will be served!

Contact: Dianne Mailloux (401.439.6827 or dkmailloux@cox.net)

The Peace Flag Project and the UN International Day of Peace



Sunday, September 19, 3:00p-6:00p

Burnside Park at Kennedy Plaza in downtown Providence

First Unitarian's Ginny Fox and the Peace Flag Project are celebrating the seventh annual UN International Day of Peace. The event on Sunday, September 19, is free and open to the public. From 3:00p to 5:00p, there will be activities for adults and children, including making peace flags, face painting, tie-dying T-shirts (with Toby, for those who know him from Star Island), and more. At 5:00p, there will be a brief program, followed by a

silent walking meditation. The walk will be led by interfaith clergy, including our own Rev. James Ford and Cathy Seggel. The event closes with interfaith prayers for peace.

Many people and groups from First Unitarian will be participating:

- Anne Connor is organizing a voter registration effort.
- Standing on the Side of Love and our Tuesday knitting group will be exhibitors.
- Peter Van Erp will be representing Habitat for Humanity.
- Our Youth Group is volunteering to set up the event and help with activities and exhibits.

Some very good news is that Peace Day has been expanded to the Month of Peace in Providence. There are month-long exhibits of peace art at the URI Urban Arts and Culture Gallery and in the Providence Art Windows in downtown Providence. Our Atrium Gallery is hosting a special show of peace art.

We need lots of help to create all these events! Please join those who are already on board.

For more information, visit www.thepeaceflagproject.org

Contact: Ginny Fox (401.453.8281 or info@thepeaceflagproject.org)

Standing on the Side of Love

Sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Standing on the Side of Love (SSL) program is dedicated to standing up against identity-based violence and injustice. SSL welcomes participation from all faith communities, creating a regional coalition working against racism, homophobia, and targeting of immigrants.

First Unitarian's SSL Committee will soon be announcing a fund-raiser for its program here at the church. Raff Gianfrancesco has recently opened a hair salon on Ives Street in Providence, and he will be donating the proceeds from an entire day's work for the committee's projects. Thanks for your generosity, Raff!

Last year, the newly formed SSL Committee got off to a great start. We co-sponsored a forum for a speaker from No More Deaths, an Arizona organization that gives life-saving food and water to people making the perilous trek across the Sonora desert. With the rest of the congregation, we proudly supported our minister's journey to Phoenix to join hundreds of UUs demonstrating against Arizona's harsh and racist anti-immigrant law.



Many members of First Unitarian marched in the Gay Pride parade on June 19, where we marched, sang, and danced behind our rainbow-covered pick-up truck, proudly displaying our district's enormous Standing on the Side of Love banner. We were decked out in our distinctive yellow SSL T-shirts and pins, and the crowd gave us a rip-roaring welcome to match our own Welcoming Congregation status.

Come to the Standing on the Side of Love table in the Atrium at Coffee Hour to find out what we're planning for this year, get on our email list, buy an SSL pin or order a T-shirt. Chat with us at the SSL table, come to meetings that we'll be announcing, enjoy a BGLT-friendly flick at Movie Night in October, and check out our welcoming ad in the September issue of Rhode Island's *Options Newsmagazine*.

For more information, visit the SSL table at Coffee Hour or the SSL program website at www.StandingOnTheSideOfLove.org.

Continuing Programs

Knitting for a Better World 🌍🧶

Every Tuesday, 7:00-9:00p

Come join fellow knitters for a casual evening of knitting and conversation. Work on your own project or join in one of our many group efforts: dolls for children in Haiti, knitting warm clothes for immigrants learning English through English for Action in Olneyville, prayer shawls for women in the Middle East, or hats and mittens for the annual First Unitarian Mitten Tree. Beginners are always welcome; we have plenty of yarn, needles, and experience to help you get started.

Contact: Julie Meyers (kelmey@cox.net)

Neighborhood Social Justice 🌍🧶

Thursday, September 23, 7:00p

The Neighborhood Social Justice Committee (NSJC), created by the late David St. Germain, will be continuing its mission to find productive and just solutions to the societal injustices threatening individuals or groups in the neighborhoods and diverse communities that have become marginalized, ignored, or oppressed. By working hand in hand and becoming equal partners with those struggling to find their way through these labyrinths, we will consciously seek to help each other, and to try to make the world a better place, one neighborhood at a time. We are committed to drawing energy and insight from our UU principles and traditions.

The NSJC Committee will meet each month on the first Sunday at noon and the third Thursday at 7:00p. All are welcome.

Turning Magazines into Food! 🌍🧶

Sundays during Coffee Hour in the Atrium

Congratulations! Last year, in five months, your magazine recycling donations/purchases earned more than \$400 for First Unitarian's Community Food Share Pantry. You can help keep this conversion going by bringing in your used magazines (three months old or newer) or donating fifty cents or a dollar for magazines that you'd like to try. Of particular interest: magazines in Russian, Portuguese, and Spanish; *Ranger Rick*, *Kids' National Geographic*, *Cricket*, *Spider*, *Seventeen*; music magazines; *The Economist*, *Science*, *Science News*; *GQ*, golf, fishing, car, and other "man mags"; *Kitchen Design*, *Martha Stewart*, cooking magazines; yoga magazines. Food pantry clients are also able to take magazines on the distribution day.



Social Justice

September Is Canned Tomato Month at Our Food Pantry! 🌍🧶

Distribution Day, Monday, September 20

Our First Unitarian Community Food Share Pantry is moving a lot of food to folks in need. We always appreciate new faces and helping hands to share the work. Anyone who has access to a van or other large vehicle and has some free time the third Monday of each month to help deliver produce and bread, we would love to hear from you.

Join in on the longest-running social justice program at First Unitarian! Here are opportunities to get involved:

- Sign up for a shift on Distribution Day for set-up, distribution, or clean-up.
- Shop at the Food Pantry once a month (needs a strong back and a large vehicle).
- Pick up produce and bread on Distribution Day (also needs a strong back and a large vehicle).

Contact: Elesa Amand (elesa2@verizon.net), Amy Webb (amy.webb7@verizon.net), or Martha Manno (Mmanno7@comcast.net)

Supporting Haiti through Our Village Bank 🌍

In May, the Village Bank Committee sent a check for \$2,500 to the FINCA Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund. We were happy to learn that all the women in our two banks survived the earthquake, but unfortunately their businesses were wiped out. Due to the earthquake, FINCA is not starting any new village banks this year. Instead, funds will go to help the nearly 13,000 FINCA Village Banking clients, including the women in our two banks, restart their businesses.

Our donation was made possible by the generous plate collection of \$1,125 on Mother's Day, the sale of Guatemalan handicrafts last Christmas, and our great volunteers. We have a small amount left to start off our fundraising for next year. So far, we are planning a sale of handicrafts this December and the December Community Collection will be donated to Village Banks. We welcome ideas for additional fundraising. The need is great in Haiti and other developing countries.

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

Knitting Dolls for Haitian Children



A Haitian child is delighted with her own knitted doll



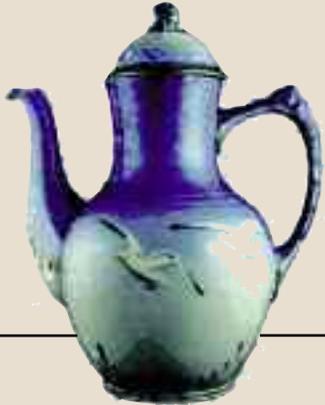
Four dolls made by the First Unitarian knitting group

Answering a last-minute call in May from an organization called Women for Women, Knitting for a Better World, the knitting group at First Unitarian, was able to contribute 4 of the 599 dolls that were brought to the children in Haiti in an effort to give them some comfort after the earthquake.

Then, coincidentally, in June, group member Julie Meyers met a pediatrician who was just back from volunteering in Haiti. He showed her his photos, and she was astonished to see that each child in his pictures was clutching a knitted doll like the ones the group had made. He told Julie how important the dolls were to the children: one child who had refused to be examined by the doctor returned the next day holding a doll and agreed to be examined. The picture says it all!

September 2010

"Despite what they tell you, there are simply no moral absolutes in a complex world." – Berkeley Breathed

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<u>1</u> Prudential Committee 6:00p Meditation 7:00p	<u>2</u> Deacons 6:00p	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
			<u>5</u> Sunday Service 10:00a	<u>6</u> LABOR DAY Church Office Closed Benevolent Street Zendo 7:00p	<u>7</u> Knitters 7:00p	<u>8</u> Meditation 7:00p
<u>12</u> HOMECOMING Sunday Service 10:30a Dave St. Germain Memorial Service 2:00p UU Men 7:00p	<u>13</u> Benevolent St. Zendo 7:00p	<u>14</u> Teacher Orientation 7:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitters 7:00p	<u>15</u> Meditation 7:00p	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>19</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Sunday School begins 10:30a UUSC 12:15p Women's Alliance Quilt Workshop 12:15p	<u>20</u> Food Pantry 4:00p Benevolent St. Zendo 7:00p	<u>21</u> Knitters 7:00p	<u>22</u> Meditation 7:00p	<u>23</u> Neighborhood Social Justice 7:00p	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u> Church Leadership Retreat 8:30a-1:30p
<u>26</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Ice Cream Social 12:00p 2:00p	<u>27</u> Benevolent St. Zendo 7:00p	<u>28</u> Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitters 7:00p	<u>29</u> Executive Committee 7:00p Meditation 7:00p	<u>30</u>		

First Unitarian Church of Providence
One Benevolent Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02906



We are a
Welcoming Congregation.

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A Benevolent Bounty to Benefit First Unitarian!

Saturday, November 6

We are pleased to announce the Benevolent Bounty, our fall auction and dinner event! Mark your calendars now so you'll be sure to be at the church for all the festivities: a three-course dinner, wine, silent auction, music, and a live auction. Auction items will include vacation properties, gift certificates to local businesses, handmade items, and services from First Unitarian members.

More details will be forthcoming as we finalize auction items. Tickets will be sold during the month of October.

We need lots of help to make this event a success! We are looking for auction items and volunteers for the night of the auction. If you can participate in the "Bounty," please let us hear from you.

To donate auction items, contact Holly Dobbs
(touchjunkies@gmail.com)

To volunteer your time, contact Dorothy Fibiger
(dfibiger@gmail.com)

GOING...GOING...GONE!

• Silent Auction • Services
• Live Music • Vacation Homes • Trivia
• Live Auction • Art • Dinner
• Gift Certificates

DINNER & AUCTION

**Benevolent Bounty To Benefit
The First Unitarian Church**

**Saturday, November 6, 2010
6:00 - 9:00 pm
Tickets: \$25**
(Includes 3 Course Dinner & Wine)

First Unitarian Church of Providence
Parish House and Auditorium
One Benevolent Street, Providence, RI 02906
401-421-7970