

The Quest

December 2011

The North Universalist Chapel Society
Woodstock • Vermont

Affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association

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Donna Atwood, Office Manager
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wdstkuu@sover.net

TO BE HOPEFUL in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness.

What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places—and there are so many—where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act....

And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live *now* as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvellous victory.

Taken from "You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train: a Personal History of Our Times"
by Howard Zinn

From the Board

Daniel reported on a lunch meeting he hosted for local clergy to welcome the new minister at St James. There was discussion around the possibility of having a combined meeting of all the congregations. However this seemed impossible in light of formidable liturgical differences. All the area churches are aware of declining memberships especially amongst young people. Daniel reflected on the national trend which regards religion as less relevant leading to dropping church membership.



We discussed the plans for discussion of spiritual life in our community especially in the aftermath of Irene. On Sunday December 4th we plan to have a potluck meal following the service to discuss how the tropical storm has affected our lives. Some have become more acutely aware of deeper personal or spiritual needs and are searching for ways to feel more fulfilled. Daniel mentioned how

people in Woodstock will often go to Our Lady of the Snows around noon time, light a candle and sit or kneel quietly to reflect or pray. The Board wondered if something similar could be set up in our church? Daniel felt this could be done: the door could be open at certain times, candles made available and appropriate music provided for a background. This seems like a good idea - to provide a space for contemplation and prayer, and will be investigated further.

Plans for the holiday season are underway. The church is on Pentangle's Wassail weekend tour this year. This means the church will be open to visitors on December 10th; a docent or guide will be present to talk about the church to indicate some of its architectural and historical features. We wondered how much decorating to do for this event; it's a little early to put up the tree but putting up wreaths and having candles in the window wells seemed like a good idea. Building and Grounds will consider this further.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Finally we began discussion of financial needs since it is the start of creating a budget for 2012 and the start of our annual pledge campaign. It seems that the church has been falling behind in its capital reserves (money needed for anticipated repairs, eg painting, roof repairs, etc.); if we were to have major loss it could be difficult to cover it. The Resource Committee believes we should ask members to increase in pledges by approximately 10% this year in order to diminish this shortfall. While this seems tough in this uncertain financial climate, it is interesting how much our church community means and is able to accomplish. The Board feels we are very fortunate to have such a vibrant and active congregation and we have an opportunity to do so much for our community.

In Peace and Love,

Lynn

Important Conversational Meeting of Our North Chapel Community Sunday, December 4th

Your Board of Trustees and minister Daniel Jantos invite members and friends to join in a pot-luck luncheon and important conversation. The purpose has to do with looking back at what we learned and could still learn from Tropical Storm Irene and other significant life-changing events this past year. We would like to explore together what this learning suggests for North Chapel's ongoing role and offerings in our community, including the idea of our creating a new "quiet space," formerly envisioned as the River Room. Won't you please mark your calendars to join us in what we hope will be a lively, interactive conversation that will help to shape our 2012 budget and vision for the future, Sunday, December 4, following church in the social hall.

Church Notices

The Pastoral Care Committee

Do you know of anyone who might want or need support of some kind?

Perhaps, a ride, a meal, some company, a card, or assistance in some other way would be helpful. If so, please contact the Pastoral Care Committee.

The co-chairs are:

Nancy Peterson [672-3697] and
Judy Williamson [457-3620].

Treasurer's Report

YTD (10/31/11) Budgeted

TOTAL RECEIPTS
\$180,114 \$207,960

Expenses
Church Building \$29828
\$29212

Parsonage \$1530
\$1150

Administration \$33717
\$30698

Benefits \$39633
\$30560

Minister's Package \$69509
\$57924

Worship \$3250
\$2237

Music \$16279
\$13227

Coffee \$500
\$142

Resource Dev. \$500
\$88

Membership \$4850
\$3610

RE \$8354
\$5151

TOTAL EXPENSES
\$174,000 \$207,960

Balance \$6114.20

Treasurer:
Ann Wynia 457-2217

Book Corner

Our Book Corner downstairs needs some fresh input. Bring some books you have enjoyed to pass along to others, and take some home for your winter reading!



December Birthdays

- 12/1 Jasmine Tracy
- 12/3 Ginny Christy
- 12/3 Lisa Purvis
- 12/6 Edie Crocker
- 12/5 Dec McCullough
- 12/9 Judi Simon-Bouton
- 12/10 Chris Bartlett
- 12/14 Megan Lancaster
- 12/15 Deborah Rice
- 12/18 Jon Bouton
- 12/18 Denise Martin
- 12/20 Rose Mroszczyk
- 12/21 Jane Richards
- 12/21 Devi Belisle
- 12/22 Carol Egbert
- 12/23 Marcia Peterson
- 12/24 Mary Griffin



Thanksgiving Offering for Life and Hope Association



Venerable Somnieng sends his heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to the Thanksgiving offering to support the work of Life and Hope Association. Continuing a commitment we made last year, the congregation's offering this year will support the seven children who live in NUCS House, one of eight traditional Cambodian houses spread around the Children's Development Village. (If you haven't yet met our kids, take a look at Anne Macksoud's wonderful six minute video at <http://vimeo.com/26771491>)

For those who were out of town or were otherwise unable to contribute, Ann Wynia will hold off on transferring money to Cambodia until December 10. So if you'd like to contribute, you still have time to make a check to NUCS with a memo notation "for LHA." Thanks for your generosity in this season of giving.

Woodstock Winter Farmers' Market



The next Winter Farmer's Market held at the Masonic Hall will be on Wednesday, December 14 from 2 - 6 PM. Please come and support your favorite vendors from the MT. Tom Farmers Market and the Market on the Green. Produce, prepared foods, eggs, meat products, breads, preserves, baked goods, jewelry, clothing and accessories, rugs, angora fiber, wool products, cards, prints and much more will be available. For more information please contact Anne Dean 457-3889.

This is a Fundraiser for our Church so please bring friends and come and support this new venture. All are welcome!

Spirituality Connections

Divinity Group

The Divinity Group will meet every first Thursday at 7pm in the Church Library. Spiritual support, snacks and the illumined perspective of Jeshua & Mary Magdalen form the basis for our free & open Divinity Group. Drop-ins welcome.

Offered by Jennifer Donaldson of Through The Rose Mystery School, Pomfret. FMI: 457-3690.

Meditation and Oneness Blessings every Tuesday at 5:15 in the church parlors

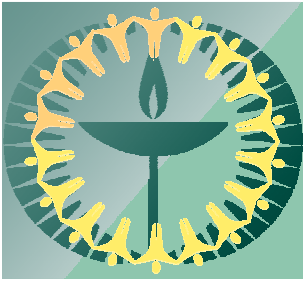
The Oneness Blessing offers a simple effortless method of giving profound rest to the body and peace to the mind, promoting wellness in all areas of live. Oneness Experience creates a neurobiological shift in the brain silencing the ceaseless chatter of the mind, enabling us to simply experience reality as it is, in the present moment where there is peace and a deep sense of well being. *Come and experience for yourself!*

Additional Opportunity: A Meditation and Oneness Blessing will be offered from 5:15 to 6:15 on the first and third Thursday each month at the **Barnard Library**. Please contact Mary 234-5541 or Anne 457-3889 for directions or information.

Clearness Committees

Are you struggling with an important issue that you could use clarity on? Then consider being a “focus person” in a clearness committee of people you trust who ask you open and honest questions to help you gain clarity around that issue. The process takes about two hours and is entirely confidential.

For more information about clearness committees and/or to see about setting up a committee for yourself, please contact Daniel (sotnaj@aol.com), Richard (richardaschramm@gmail.com) Veronica (delays@comcast.net), Shoshana (sboar@comcast.net) or Donna (wdstkuu@sover.net).



Pledge Drive Update

As of November 30 we have received 50 pledges for a total of \$74,157.00. Although that is an impressive amount, it may not be enough for us to reach our Pledge Drive goal of \$145,000. (As you may know, \$145,000 would put us back to the pledge total received in 2008.)

Certainly our basic costs just to keep us going have increased since 2008. And in addition to keeping the lights on and our building heated, we need to reach our goal to support a number of important projects:

- We need a new, reliable and adequate sound system
- We need to improve the energy efficiency of the sanctuary
- We need to increase our capital reserve fund
- We need to appropriately compensate our minister, music director, and office manager

Think about it: How much impact on your lifestyle would a pledge increase of \$5, \$10, \$50 a month really have? We know that such increases from those who can afford them will help us achieve our goal.

Thank you for your thoughtful evaluation of your giving capacity. The sooner you submit your pledge the easier it is for the Board to create next year's budget. Anyone, member or non-member, can pledge. And remember, you can always submit a revised pledge at any time during December.

Wednesday Morning Meditations

For those who might feel the need or welcome the opportunity to participate in a group meditation in the middle of the week please feel welcome. Charity Gray, who has had long and diverse experiences with meditation practice will be facilitating a meditation experience in the carpeted children's room starting at 8 a.m. and completed to allow people to comfortably make 9 a.m. appointments. All are welcome.

Wassail Weekend Events

At our church and around town

Dinner before the Concert

Friday, December 9th, 6:00 pm, Social Hall



December 9th the Vienna Boys Choir will be performing a concert in the Woodstock Town Hall Theater. If you would like to make a complete evening out of it and arrive at the concert warmly oriented by the flavors and aroma of Austrian food then come to our social hall where dinner will be served at 6:00 pm sharp.

It will be a culinary treat for all "Schnitzel munchers" that includes along with schnitzel, mushroom sauce, baked potatoes with herbs, red cabbage with apples and cranberry sauce. Knoblauch Creme soup to start and a dessert of Strudels.

It just might even feel like an evening in Vienna. Mahlzeit!

Tickets \$15 per person for the dinner

Reservations now being taken—please call 457-2557.

Limited seating - reservations are required.



DECEMBER 10 Concert

Solstice Cello - Eugene Friesen

8:00 pm, NUCS sanctuary

Tickets \$10

Join four-time Grammy winner Eugene Friesen in a spirit-filled evening celebrating the magic, warmth and mystery of the holiday season in a special program for all ages.

www.eugenefriesenmusic.com

Pentangle's 10th Annual Holiday House Tour Saturday December 10th, 10 am–4 pm



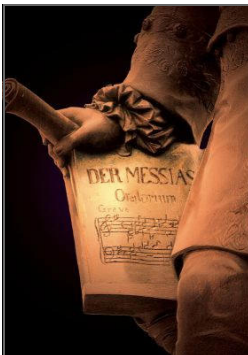
Experience the warm hospitality of old New England when Woodstock's most charming houses deck their halls and open their doors for what has become a quintessential holiday tradition. Horse-drawn wagon rides and live musicians accompany visitors along the way. **Our church, along with other Village churches will be part of the tour for the first time this year.** The tours begin at 10:00 am. Pick up your ticket at the Woodstock Town Hall (\$30 in advance or \$35 on the day of the tour).



Ring in Wassail Weekend

Have you ever heard and seen a handbell choir play? You'll have an opportunity on Saturday, December 10th when the Revere Handbell Choir will "open" for The Ten, T Belisle's NYC male choir. Sherry Belisle directed the choir for

20 years, retiring 12 years ago. After ringing for the memorial service of a former member, the group decided to ring during Wassail Weekend once again. It's a short concert at the Congregational Church in town, beginning promptly at 2:45 and ending at 3:00 when the men begin their performance. Admission is by donation.



The Messiah Sing Sunday, December 11th 4:00 pm, Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church

No charge for admission, but donations happily accepted. Orchestra and chorus conducted by R. Lee Adams. Four superb soloists. Audience joins in for the choruses, so bring your libretto!

Change the World Kids



We send a deep - heartfelt - thank you for all of you who carefully chose gifts for the children and parents that we sponsored this holiday!

Our fabulous annual "anti-cabin fever" Wednesday night dinners begin on January 4 with a sumptuous kick-off meal! It's a great way to get out of the house, break up the week, and see friends on long cold winter nights! Each Wednesday until the end of March, a local chef, many from the area's best restaurants, prepares a delicious meal. These dinners are FUN, plus they subsidize costs for our annual work trip to re-forest Bosque para Siempre, the migratory rain forest habitat in Costa Rica that we are helping to conserve, and that supports our Vermont neo-tropical migrants, as well as native rain forest species, such as the fabulous three-wattled bell-bird. Dinner is at 6:00 in the church social hall, and costs \$9.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children. Seating is limited, so reservations are suggested. Please call (457-2622), email us (changetheworldkids@yahoo.com), or sign up on the sheet in the social hall in late December. Please let us know if you are not receiving the notices about the chef and meal for the week, and would like to do so. Come dine, laugh, and beat the winter blahs and blues!

Please let us know of anyone who can use our help! 457-2622 or changetheworldkids@yahoo.com

December Hand In Hand Community Meals

- Dec. 1: Chef's Choice
- 8: On This Day...
- 15: Bill of Rights Day
- 22: **Christmas**
- 29: A New Year

Hand In Hand Thursday night Community meals are served from 5:00 - 7:00 in the social hall. Meals are open to any and all who are interested in Sustainable Community Growth and Development in Woodstock, Vermont and the surrounding Community. Meals are served at no cost, Donations are accepted. For further information or to volunteer, contact: Lauren Jane Wilder at 802-299-1777.

Woodstock Winter Ballroom Dance Classes

In our church social hall - taught by Jenny Gelfan



Plan ahead with a great gift to your sweetheart - winter date nights for dancing classes right here at NUCS!

3 Friday Nights in January: 13, 20 and 27, 2012

6:30 pm - Swing Swing Swing - for Beginners

7:30 pm - Ballroom - for people who know the basics

3 Fridays in February: 10, 17, 24

6:30 pm - Intro to Slow Dance - Foxtrot & Waltz

7:30 pm - Latin Moods - for experienced dancers

Costs: \$30 per person per series. \$15 drop-in fee.

Partners encouraged, singles welcome.

ADVANCED REGISTRATION REQUIRED

For more information & to register, contact Jenny:
call 802-356-1156 or email maybeyes2@gmail.com



Last Spoonful of Hash !

Over 50 people joined together to make the Red Flannel Hash Supper very successful. We netted \$1425 +/- for the church operating budget.

Thank you very much.

Woodstock Community Food Shelf News

Non-perishable essentials needed each month include: crackers, cereal, baked beans, canned fruit and veggies, canned soups (low-sodium if possible) and canned salmon and sardines. The Woodstock Community Food Shelf is located at 2176 Maxham Meadow Way, Woodstock. Phone 457-1185. Donations of cash are also much appreciated. Non-perishable donations may be dropped off in the basket in our church narthex.

Religious Exploration



Children's Chapel Schedule for December

- December 6 - The Natural World with Anthea
- December 11 - Yoga and Lessons with Geraldine
- December 18 - Arts and Crafts with Marion and Norman
- December 25 - No Children's Chapel

All children age K-6 are invited to attend Children's Chapel each Sunday during the school year.

Valerie will provide nursery care downstairs for babies and pre-school children each Sunday.

Note to parents: Please see the notice about the Children's Choir on page 15 of this Quest.



Holiday Adornment

Each holiday season the sanctuary is transformed into an even more tranquil and beautiful place with greens, candles and subtle colors. If you would like to donate towards these greens and flowers in memory or honor or in celebration of someone, please contact Ann Wynia (457-2217 or ALWynia@aol.com) or Fran Lancaster (457-1169 lancfam@myfairpoint.net)

The names you have chosen will be included in the order of service on 12/18 and 12/24.



Wreath Making December 6th

Please join Building and Grounds members for the creation of our wreaths which adorn our beautiful windows during the holiday season! So, come and have a hot cup of soup with us! You will only need to bring clippers and gloves.

We will meet in the Social Hall Tuesday, December 6 at 5:30.

Courses in Adult Religious Education

This year's series of Adult RE courses began in November with George Wohlgemuth's course on the Bhagavad Gita; George's course will end on December 11, 2011. We will continue after the Holidays with a course on Contemporary Unitarian Universalism in January followed by courses on Spiritual Poetry (March) and on Spiritism (April), which will be described in our RE booklet available by early December, or contact the church office for details.

As in previous years, class size will be limited to 12 in order to enable everyone to participate in a conversational style of learning. We would like people to register by filling out and returning a registration form (registrations forms available from the church office) so that course facilitators can plan and prepare materials.

If you have any questions you can contact Lynn Peterson (672 3697, lpeterson@vermontel.net) or Donna Atwood in the church office.

Contemporary Unitarian/Universalism

Four Sessions on Sundays 5:00 - 6:30 pm

Dates January 6, 15, 22 and 29

Location NUCS Library

Like most religions in the US, Unitarian/Universalism has failed to grow over the past 3 years. One of the leading UU ministers, Galen Guengerich, minister at All Souls Church in NY city, argues that the failure to grow is related to confusion over what is distinctive and important about the UU faith. He argues in a series of talks that Virtue is what distinguishes Unitarian Universalists - Unitarian Universalists are "saved" by Virtue, not by faith or good works. Guengerich presents his argument in a series of dynamic videos using materials ranging from Aristotle and Saint Augustine to Mary Oliver and Tiger Woods. We will watch 4 of the 30 minute videos (one each week) - covering Fulfillment, Justice, Transcendence and Compassion - followed by class discussion. Limit 12 participants.

Facilitators

Lynn and Nancy Peterson. Lynn and Nancy have been members of NUCS for 7 years and attended the General Assembly in 2010 where they attended Guengerich's talks.

Church Committee & Group Meetings

- **Resource Development Committee**
2nd Sunday after church in Library
Contact Lynn Peterson 672-3697
or Peter Rousmaniere 457-9149
- **Men's Discussion Group**
1st & 3rd Mondays, 7:00 pm
in Library
Contact Lynn Peterson 672-3697
- **Membership Committee**
4th Monday, 7:00 pm in Library
Contact Sherry Belisle 457-1919
- **Worship Committee**
1st Tuesday, 5:30 pm in Library
Contact Don Ransom 295-5135
- **Buildings and Grounds Committee**
1st Tuesday, 6:30 pm in social hall
Contact Norwood Long 457-2918
- **Board of Trustees**
3rd Tuesday at 6:15 PM in Library
Contact Mary Jeanne Taylor
234-6953
- **Pastoral Care Committee**
4th Tuesday, 6:30 PM in Library
Contact Judy Williamson 457-3620
- **Choir Rehearsals**
Wednesdays, 7:00 PM, sanctuary
Contact Diane Mellinger 234-6619

Ongoing Activities at the Church

Mondays - AA Meeting 7:00 PM, Social Hall. Open meeting, all are welcome.

Tuesdays: Oneness Blessings held in the parlors, 5:15-6:15 PM. All are welcome. Contact Anne Dean 457-3889 or anneldean@gmail.com

Wednesdays - Course in Miracles: 5:30-7:00 PM in Library. Contact Robert Walker (802) 359-4047

Thursdays - Yoga Class: 8:30-10:00 AM in Social Hall. Contact Instructor: Phoebe Standish 672-3800

Thursdays: Hand in Hand dinners held in the Social Hall, 5:00-7:00 PM, free. Volunteers welcome. Contact Lauren Jane Wilder 802-299-1777

Divinity Group: 7:00-9:00 pm, library room, 1st Thursday each month. Contact Jennifer Donaldson 457-3690

MARK YOUR CALENDARS -

ANNUAL MEETING JANUARY 29th

Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 29th after church service. Child Care will be provided. More information coming in the January Quest!

December Worship



Sunday services at 10:00 until 11:00 AM
Child care provided every Sunday.

December 4

Reflection: Daniel Jantos
Music: Diane Mellinger

December 18

Reflection: Daniel Jantos
Music: Diane Mellinger

December 11

Reflection: Daniel Jantos
& Eugene Friesen

December 24—Christmas Eve
Services at 6 pm and 8 pm

December 25 Christmas Day
No service

December Worship Notes

December 11: This service is a combination of short reflections and poems with Eugene's music.



December 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight services will be held at 6 and 8 pm. Please plan to arrive early to find your seat.

December 25: Our church will be open for quiet meditation between 10 and 11 AM on Christmas Day. There will not be an organized service.



Christmas Eve Children's Choir

We invite all children ages 5 up to age 13+ to join in the children's choir for our 6 pm Christmas Eve service. We would need to rehearse for 30 min. immediately following the church service the next 3 Sundays (12/4, 12/11, 12/18) in the sanctuary (attendance at 2 out of the 3 rehearsals would be fine.)

Please contact Diane Mellinger 234-6619 or by email at vermontdianem@aol.com

North Universalist Chapel Society
7 Church Street
Woodstock, VT 05091



December Quest

**Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage Paid
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Permit number 5**

Return Service Requested