



COMMENT

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury, 24 Clapboard Ridge Road, Danbury, CT 06811 * 203-798-1994
Rev. Linda Hansen, Minister

JULY/AUGUST 2008

Letter from Linda



This is a hard letter to write – my last as your minister. So I’m seeking help from two wonderful poets. First, Emily Dickinson:

My life closed twice before its close.
It yet remains to see
If immortality unveil
A third event to me.

So huge, so hopeless to conceive,
As these that twice befell.
Parting is all we know of heaven,
And all we need of hell.

I gather Dickinson scholars are unsure what were the two events that felt like death to Dickinson – the two times when her “life closed . . . before its close” in death. But there may be a clue in the last two lines: “Parting is all we know of heaven,/ And all we need of hell.” Perhaps Dickinson faced profound partings in her life; perhaps, like my leaving you now, hers were a paradoxical mixture of joy and grief, beginning and ending, heaven and hell.

I am leaving of my own free will, eager and happy to rejoin my family and friends in the Midwest. But I would not have you think I leave without grieving my loss of you. I would not have you think there haven’t been “heavenly” parts to my being among you these five years.

And yet it’s time to go, and so I turn to a part of Mary Oliver’s poem “In Blackwater Woods”:

To live in this world
you must be able
to do three things:

To love what is mortal;
to hold it
against your bones knowing
your own life depends on it;

And, when the time comes to let it go,
to let it go.

That time will come on July 18th, my last day in the office. At that time the minister@uudanbury.org address will be stopped, and my sermons will be removed from the website. Soon after you will have the chance to welcome your Interim Minister, Rev. Suzanne Spencer, whom I have met, and who I think will be wonderful! Her email address, by the way, will be interim@uudanbury.org (hoping to spare her the spam mail I get in droves!).

I dearly love you, and I will let you go, happy to know you are in wonderful hands – not just your new minister’s but – even more importantly, as you’ve always been – in one another’s.

With love,
Linda

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The Church Office is typically open on Tuesday from 8:45 - 10:45 and Thursday and Friday from 9:00 - 2:00. Please call ahead for office hours and/or appointments with Rev. Linda Hansen, Rev. Peggy Block or DRE Mary Collins.

Comment is the newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury, 24 Clapboard Ridge Road, Danbury, CT 06811, (203) 798-1994. Articles (**250 words or less**) may be emailed to Sherry at secretary@uudanbury.org or dropped off at the church office.

Men Out to Breakfast

Men Out to Breakfast is an organization of men seeking fellowship and spirituality and meeting for breakfast and discussion on the first and third Saturdays of each month, at the Windmill Diner, Mill Plain Road in Danbury, convenient to exits two and four. Meeting time: 9:00 a.m. All are welcome. July dates are the 5th and 19th, August dates are 2nd and 16th.

Women out to Breakfast

Women out to Breakfast will meet on Saturday, July 12th and Saturday, July 26th. August dates are Saturday, August 9th and Saturday, August 23rd. We meet at 9:00 a.m. at Elmer's Diner on Padanaram Road across from the North Street Shopping Center (exit 6 from I-84W, turn right; exit 5 from I-85E, go straight 2-3 miles.) Please notify **Karen Gillotti** via email if you plan to attend.

Please Note Change in Comment Mailing

In order to reduce mailing costs, we will be emailing the *Comment* instead of mailing a printed version wherever possible. If you receive this *Comment* and the label has a red "e" on it, you will be receiving the next *Comment* by email. If there is a reason that you would like to continue receiving it by mail, please let us know, either by phoning our office or by emailing our secretary, Sherry Kyriacou at secretary@uudanbury.org.

New Sanctuary Movement Plans

by Chris Halfar

At the June meeting the Social Action Committee identified a dozen New Sanctuary Movement activities, many of which we hope to begin implementing by the end of the summer.

There are at least two area families we might support as they fight orders of deportation or seek permanent status; we will meet with them to see whether and how we can help. We plan to meet with our legislators to urge them to support immigration reform so that our neighbors can live their lives in peace. We will also petition them to support the Child Citizen Protection Act H.R.1176. We are preparing an open letter to city officials against the Danbury Police Department's entering into an agreement with ICE.

In conjunction with the Sunday Services Committee we will arrange for a speaker who will address the challenges of living in a new culture and raising a bicultural family. We hope to have an inter-cultural music and dance event, sponsor "know your rights" and immigration status programs, and serve as a community resource for ARC's Rapid Response Network. We will ask ARC to bring their four-week Immigration and Race Study Circle to the UUCD.

Watch "UUCD This Week" for more news and the ways in which we can all be involved. We are the first New Sanctuary Movement Congregation in Connecticut! Let's all help make that mean something!

Deadline for the September Comment - Friday, August 22nd.

President's Letter

By Carl Tichler, President



The arrival of the month of June made me realize that we would only have a precious few more sermons from Linda before she leaves Danbury. And what great sermons they have been! I am not sure how her final sermon on June 29th can top them, but I know that we will remember it – and her – very well. Thank you, Linda, for all that you have given us in your time here.

At our June Board meeting, we met with the Ministerial Search Committee to discuss the dilemma they have of going forward with the search without any funding. As they made clear to us – and as was reiterated to them in their earlier meeting with the District Ministerial Search Representative, Rev. Craig Hirshberg – a beginning retreat is crucial for the Committee to move forward with a clear, shared vision. Also, the delays in getting the search started would make it extremely challenging to finish the work of finding a candidate by the coming spring.

So the Board has accepted the unanimous recommendation of the Committee that the search be extended to two years, and that \$1,500 be allocated from the Buildings and Grounds reserve funds to pay for the Search Committee retreat and other initial costs. We are also recommending that \$8,500 be taken from our long-term reserves to fund the remaining costs of the search. Since this is an unusual and significant decision, we are calling for the congregation to approve this step in a congregational vote to be held in September.

It has become very clear to me that the Search Committee needs the financial commitment of the congregation to go forward effectively with the search, and to attract the best ministerial candidates to Danbury. I hope that you will affirm this commitment in September.

Summer Soup Kitchen

by Lynn Taborsak, Soup Kitchen Coordinator

On Saturday, July 5th, **Gary Winn** will lead Team #1 at the Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen on Spring Street with team members **Melody Levy, Charley Stark, Donna Lawrence, Craig Mitchell, Darcy Smith, Tom Miglietta, Mike Stavola** and **Chris Halfar**. Summer is sizzling but our hot meal and hospitality are still really appreciated. Next month, **Andrew Bloch** will lead Team #2 on Saturday, August 2nd. Andrew's team includes **Anne Kreig, Carl Tichler, Judy Lacker, Val Cochrane, Stacey Campanella, Pamela Mitchell, Mike Searing** and **Glenn Brady**.

We are trying a new way to schedule Soup Kitchen volunteers to match the work flow at the kitchen. When your team leader calls to remind you about volunteering this month, please tell him which "tasks" you are available to do. You can come in at noon to prepare the main course and side dishes. You can come in at 1:30 p.m. to set up the dining room, wrap silverware, make bag lunches and prepare dessert trays. If you are a highly skilled waiter or waitress, you can come in at 3:00 p.m. to serve our guests and stay for clean-up duties. We want to be flexible enough to give everyone in the congregation an opportunity to participate in this long-standing project of the Social Action Committee. Our congregation has sponsored these soup kitchen and shelter teams for 25 years, each and every month.

We also need volunteers with WEEKDAY availability to help on Tuesday, August 12th, when there is no coverage by regular volunteers. Please sign up to lead or volunteer for this extra shift on the sign-up sheet in the rear of the sanctuary. This is a great opportunity to try your hand at local social action. You might enjoy it so much that you end up joining one of our existing teams.

If you're not a soup kitchen volunteer, please consider serving as an occasional alternate when extra hands are needed. You can also help us feed our neighbors by donating a gift card in any amount from a local supermarket in the collection plate on Sunday. You can continue to bring in donations of non-perishable food items every week to replenish our local food pantries. There is a large basket for these items at the entrance to our Fellowship Hall.

Finally, you are responsible for finding an alternate if you are not able to work on your assigned day. You will receive a list of congregation members who serve as alternates with your e-mail reminder.

Welcome to New Members

The **Wolfmans** are a family of four (plus one canine friend) living in Newtown. They are **Scott, Gina, Emma** (age 9, almost 10) and **Sophie** (age 7, soon to be 8 in early Fall). Lucy is their new puppy and she's a 5-½ months-old American Staffordshire Terrier/Pit Bull rescue. She has a heart-warming story for anyone interested and we are strong advocates for the breed.

The Wolfmans are an interfaith family. Scott was raised in the reformed Jewish tradition in York, Pennsylvania, and Gina was raised in Ardsley, NY in the Episcopal and Eastern Orthodox churches. Although they are both spiritual people, neither one embraced the doctrines of their respective religions. In fact, each believes that organized religion can be dangerous and extremely divisive. They celebrate and share with the girls select Christian and Jewish traditions as they interpret them.

As for personal background, Scott enjoys film and music, hiking, biking and reading, but most of all, spending time with his family. For work, Scott is a bit of an entrepreneur, owning a couple businesses, including a booking agency for speakers and performing arts programs in Southbury, and a coffee house called Mocha in Sandy Hook, CT.

Gina is an environmental attorney and planner by profession, having most recently worked in reuse planning for contaminated properties. Having spent many summers on an island off the coast of Maine and attending an undergraduate institution in Vermont, she enjoys the outdoors, particularly downhill skiing, camping, hiking, kayaking, biking and running. Gina is a Girl Scout leader for both her daughters' troops and is their Outdoor Trainer. She spends many hours volunteering at the girls' elementary school and is working on publishing an educational, environmental newsletter for middle school students. Her most unusual job was assistant elephant keeper at the Bronx Zoo the summer of 1983. She was majoring in wildlife biology at the time.

Emma is finishing up 4th grade at the Hawley School and has many interests as well as strengths. She's a competitive gymnast of 4 years and is a strong leader. She also loves to sing and performed in the OAKE National Children's Choir in Denver, CO, this past March. Emma loves the outdoors and is a talented athlete.

Sophie is finishing 2nd grade and is a strong but quiet little girl. She has a brilliant sense of humor and is a loyal and caring friend. Sophie loves to play tennis, enjoys all activities in the outdoors, and would like to be an art teacher when she grows up.

Scott and Gina are happy to become UU members here in Danbury because, first and foremost, they delight in the wonderful lessons their children are learning about the world and their place in it. The reason they sought the UU community is that the girls wanted to have a place to learn about and practice their evolving spirituality. Although they are completely comfortable being the children of a Jew and a Christian, they seemed to need a venue and a community.

The Wolfmans started attending services here in Danbury in January and feel they have found the ideal congregation. They were especially impressed with how Linda handled Easter...that was the big test and she passed with flying colors! Scott and Gina find the services thought-provoking as well as stimulating, and they feel the girls are being nurtured in a very special way. The UU community enforces values Scott and Gina find crucial – acceptance and respect for the Earth and its inhabitants. They are looking forward to getting to know more of you and feel very fortunate to be a part of this community.



Wheel of Life

Congratulations to

- **Lynda Dayley** who's been given a permanent teaching contract at Greenwich High School.
- **Leslie LaCroce** whose son, Chris Saretto, married Angelo Russo in mid-June.
- **Christopher Schmitt**, son of **Kim and Chris Schmitt**, who's been accepted into the Law School of the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

Our concern to

- **Samantha and Brian McCoy** as Sam's father continues to recover from surgery for lung cancer.

**Treasurer's
\$\$ Report \$\$**

The summary statistics for April through June of the 2007-08 year are recorded below.

	<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>June</u>
% Annual Canvass pledge return	70.8%	77.1%	87.9%
Operating Income Year-to-date	\$187,931	\$214,442	\$237,742
Operating Expenses Year-to-date	\$202,231	\$223,224	\$245,517
Operating Income – Expense YTD	<u>\$ -14,299</u>	<u>\$ -8,781</u>	<u>\$ -7,775</u>

Analysis for current year:

The “Operating Income – Expense, Year-to-end of May” (-\$8,781) has become significantly smaller in the month of May primarily due to the unexpectedly large dividends from the Jeremiah Smith Fund. The end of June projection is equal to -\$7,775. The primary reason for the large shortfall in pledge returns comes about from families who have fallen into financial difficulties due to the economic conditions over the past year. We thank all of you who have been able to complete your pledge and our wish for the rest of you is that your fortunes will soon be restored. We also thank the generosity exhibited in our fundraisers and other contributions. It is these contributions that have enabled the UUCD to significantly offset the low pledge returns. It also helped that UUCD received more monies than estimated from rentals and interest from our Endowment funds.

The Operating Expenses Year-to-Date is normal.

Pledge Campaign Update:

The Annual Budget of \$240,043 was approved at the Congregational Meeting on May 16th. Actual pledges at the time of this meeting amounted to \$126,000 with an estimate of an additional \$40,000 from members who had not yet submitted their pledge. A telephone canvass was organized and as of June 20, 2008 the actual pledges amount to \$163,861. With only a few more members to be contacted it is now expected that the total, in the end, will reach \$166,000.

Bruce Buzby, Finance Committee Chair
Marie Dupree, Treasurer



More Than Knit One/Purl Two...

After our UUCD Treasurer, Marie Dupree, opened her mail last week she was reminded that help in addressing Congregational budget problems sometimes comes as a pleasant surprise. The check from the Knitting Ministry for \$1000 was very welcome in addressing the unusually high expenses facing us this year. From a group which knits hats, shawls and afghans for charitable causes, that big check spoke loudly of both knitters’ awareness of the budget needs, and congregants’ willingness to cooperate through sales and boutiques by purchasing the knitters’ creations. So, while breaking even for charity and need is the goal of the Knitting Ministry, they came through with that extra effort.

The **Nonfiction Book Discussion Group** meets on the second Thursday of each month from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. in the Conference Room. All are welcome. Please contact **Bruce Buzby** if you have any questions. The schedule for July follows: July 11, 2008 - Topic: Direction of the World. Facilitator – Bob Bollinger. Source: “The Post-American World” by Fareed Zakaria, 2008, 288 pages, \$15.57. This book is about the rise of everyone else. Following on the success of his best-selling “The Future of Freedom,” Zakaria describes with equal prescience a world in which the United States will no longer dominate the global economy, orchestrate geopolitics, or overwhelm cultures. He sees the "rise of the rest"—the growth of countries like China, India, Brazil, Russia, and many others—as the great story of our time, and one that will reshape the world. The tallest buildings, biggest dams, largest-selling movies, and most advanced cell phones are all being built outside the United States. This economic growth is producing political confidence, national pride, and potentially international problems. How should the United States understand and thrive in this rapidly changing international climate? What does it mean to live in a truly global era? Zakaria answers these questions with his customary lucidity, insight, and imagination. (Watch the weekly email and the Order of Service for August information.)

Religious Education Update

by Mary B. Collins, Director of Religious Exploration (DRE)

MANY THANKS to:

- the RE Committee: Chairperson **Sam McCoy, Fern Paes, Suzanne Perry, David Payne, Herb Kinsmann**
- the DRE Relations Committee: **Brad Greene, Mary Burnham, Jack Bestor, Kim Papa**
- **Jackie Alexander and all the volunteers who made our Year-End Peace & Justice programming happen.** Jackie worked hard to recruit additional volunteers to assist us each week. I thoroughly enjoyed collaborating with her in creating each of the six session plans, dramatizing the stories, and singing with her.
- **Cathy Pings & Summer Volunteers** without whom we would be a much less welcoming congregation. Cathy has put in a lot of time to create a fun program (see insert or web for summaries of the sessions) and is giving many of her Sunday mornings this summer.

These folks kept me sane, particularly during the year-end crunch.

DRE away from her e-mail and office in July. Your DRE will not be in the office (officially) for the month of July and will not be reviewing the dre@uudanbury.org e-mail until August 1st, 2008. Starting then, I plan on being at the office approximately 20 hours per week. Weekday mornings are your best bet of reaching me.

Leader Orientation Saturday, September 6th. 9:00 a.m. leaders will meet with Suzanne Perry in the first-floor conference room; 11:00 a.m. leaders will meet with Mary Collins on the second-floor conference room.

OTHER Orientations with dates not set at press time:

Youth Leaders (Our Whole Lives: 7th-9th and 10th-12th) and Junior High and Senior High Youth Advisors in August or very early September, as these people will need to communicate with each other and the families with youth.

PARENT Orientation for Our Whole Lives is mandatory for your youth's participation and will be scheduled in September. This sexuality and values program is outstanding! Our trained leaders are:

7th-9th Grade: Fern Paes, Steve Shreve

10th-12th – Lisa & Brad Greene (a once-a-month program, during Youth Group time slot)

Mary Collins and Lauren Shreve are also trained and may be substitutes.

2008 Summer Program (July 6th - August 31st, 2008)

Religious Education programming continues for children entering 5th grade and under. Older youth and parents are always welcome to join in!

Nursery care is also available most Sundays. Our nursery care provider is on vacation July 20th and 27th. We do need substitutes, or parents can stay in the nursery with their children.

The program will be a continuation of our Peace and Justice Year-End programming based on "In Our Hands (1st-3rd and 4th-6th)" by Goldenberg, Hunting & Thomas (Unitarian Universalist Association curricula). These next sessions, "Nature and Friends," were designed by Cathy Pings, with assistance from Mary Collins, Director of Religious Education.

On Sundays, from July 6th to August 31st 2008, the Children will:

- Begin at 10:00 a.m. in the House (across the pathway from the Fellowship Hall)
- Whole group starts in the House's first floor Conference room (through kitchen to the room with the fireplace & piano)
- Take attendance and put on name tags
- Chalice Lighting
- Story
- Share Joys and Sorrows
- Age appropriate activities and questions to consider

At the conclusion of our program, the children will rejoin the parents in Fellowship Hall for refreshments.

10:00 a.m. Session Summaries – Nature and Friends Program:

July 6th - Appreciation of Nature - led by Cathy Pings and assisted by Madison Alexander

STORY: Tell about the important book “Silent Spring” by Rachel Carson; alternate book “Wump World” by Bill Peet.

UU Principle covered by this session: #7 Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Possible Activities:

Younger: Touch Box- children will put their hand into a box and touch and feel objects from nature.

Older: Make a fresh flower press project. *Please have children bring a fresh flower from your garden or a nursery.*

Afterwards, we will go outside under the sprinkler, so wear bathing suit and bring a towel. We will play a game, “Frogs on a Pond” - a variation of musical chairs.

July 13th – Feelings about Nature - led by Donna Roscoe and assisted by Jill Miller

STORIES: We will hear a story about a Unitarian Universalist who worked with nature, and who found peace and joy in doing so. From In Our Hands curricula, they will hear about plant wizard Luther Burbank and how he made the world a better place to live in. We will also hear the story about John Slykhis. He encouraged the awareness of our different ways of seeing the world and that everyone can find something they can do in the world.

UU Principle covered by this session: #7 Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part, and

UU Sources: 1st - Direct Experience with nature; 5th - Use science and reason; 6th - Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Possible Activities: *Bring a towel for children to lie on the ground for a meditation.*

Younger: Coloring sheets and stencils.

Older: Nature puppets (supplies provided).

July 20th - Partners with Nature - led by Nancy Tramontana and assisted by Madison Alexander

Nursery Care substitute needed – contact Nancy Tramontana if you can help.

STORIES: “The Loray” by Dr. Seuss.

UU Principle covered by this session: #7 Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Possible Activities:

Younger and older: Games outside: “Mother May I.” Possible things that can help nature, Inflatable Globe (Keep the Earth afloat). *If raining,* “I AM A PARTNER WITH NATURE” medallion.

July 27th – Friends and Enemies - led by Cathy Pings and assisted by Val Cochrane

Nursery Care substitute needed – contact Cathy Pings if you can help.

STORY: “Let’s Be Enemies” by Charlotte Zolotow.

Discussion - What makes someone a friend? What does the word *enemy* mean?

UU Principles covered by this session: # 1 - The inherent worth and dignity of every person; #2 - Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; # 3 - Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations; #6 - The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.

Possible Activities:

All Children: Make a mask, Role-play, Build a wall out of blocks, Sing “Love is a Circle.”

August 3rd - Friends with People Different from You - led by Cathy Pings and assisted by Yvonne Ruddy-Stein

Many religions encourage one to “Welcome the Stranger” including Unitarian Universalists. We search for what people have in common and strive to treat everyone with kindness.

STORIES: “My friend the Monster” told by Clyde Buller (other possible books: Friends in the Park, Boy in the Wheelchair).

UU Principles covered by this session: #1 - The inherent worth and dignity of every person; #2 - Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; #3 - Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.

Possible Activities:

Younger: Beaded necklace.

Older: Macramé friendship key ring.

August 10th – From Enemies to Friends - led by Cathy Pings assisted by Mike Searing

STORY: “Knight and the Dragon” by Tomie DePaola

UU Principles covered by this session: # 5 - The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large; #6 - The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

Possible Activities:

All Children: Co-operative games: Magical Motion Machine, Shrinking Rope Circle game.

August 17th – Creative Conflict Resolution Part I - led by Cathy Pings and assisted by Leslie LaCroce

STORY: To be determined but we will explore the causes of conflict and apply some of the elements of creative conflict resolution by resolving a simulated conflict.

UU Principles covered by this session: #2 - Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; #3 - Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation; #5 - The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

Possible Activities:

All Children: Centering and discussion after meditation. Win/Win Rules Questionnaire, The T.V. show (role-play).

August 24th – Creative Conflict Resolution Part 2 - led by Cathy Pings and assisted by Barbara Searing

STORY: To be determined based on the topic above.

Before bringing the children back to fellowship hall, we will sing, “Love is a Circle.”

UU Principles covered by this session: #2 - Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; #3 - Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation; #5 - The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

Possible Activities:

All Children: Hassle Line (role play), make finger puppets. Sing “Let There Be Peace on Earth,” words and music by Sy Miller and Jill Jackson.

August 31st – Celebration Sunday (Labor Day weekend & LAST Summer Session) - led by Cathy Pings and assisted by Jackie Alexander

Possible Activities:

Face painting with stencils, co-operative games, animal balloons, and make a fruit punch.

From the Religious Education Committee

by Samantha McCoy

The Religious Education Committee, along with the rest of the UUCD, has had to take a serious look at its budget for 2008-09 and discussed a variety of ways in which we could address our needs for next year. The result of these discussions is that the Religious Education Committee is requesting a materials fee for the Religious Education program in 2008-09 of \$20 per child, with a maximum fee of \$50 per family, to be paid annually at the start of the program year in September. Because we want all children to participate, and we understand that finances are tight for many at this time, families who need assistance with these costs should speak with Mary Collins, the Director of Religious Education, regarding a waiver.

The Committee hopes that families will understand why we have chosen to take this step. We will still have a line of funds in the general UUCD budget for the upcoming fiscal year, but the amount allocated to us is lower than in recent years, while at the same time enrollment in our programs has only continued to grow. Instituting this policy will alleviate some of the pressure on our reduced budget and will allow us to fulfill the needs of all classes in correlation with how many children and youth are actually participating. As mentioned above, however, every child is welcomed and valued in our classes and no one will be excluded based on the inability to pay these fees. I would encourage any members of the Congregation who have questions or concerns to please contact me, as Chair of the RE Committee, or to speak with Mary Collins, our DRE.

Summer Thoughts from the Sunday Services Committee

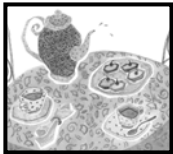
by Darlene Anderson-Alexander, Chair

The Summer of '08 promises to be a time of transition for the UUCD ... and the Sunday Services Committee is ready for it! As we say our good-byes to Reverend Linda Hansen, I would again like to sincerely thank her for her active participation on our Committee. We will greatly miss her knowledge, warmth, enthusiasm, and "big picture" perspective at our monthly meetings and - of course - her inspiring sermons on Sunday mornings. With endings come beginnings, though, and we are awaiting Reverend Suzanne Spencer's arrival with eager anticipation!

In the meantime, we have an *amazing* summer of services led by UUCD members and friends planned. Please refer to the schedule printed on the last page; there is also one posted on the wall in the Fellowship Hall and on the bulletin board in the House. The variety of service topics this year really excites me. THANK YOU to **Judy Lacker, Gale Alexander, Evan Smith, Carl Tichler, Susan Shaner, Veronica Swain, Doris Henderson, Charlie Schott, Joe Gillotti, Gina Cassetta, Sue Tarshis, and Lynn Taborsak** for sharing themselves with us this summer. We hope that many people will attend these single, 10 a.m. services in the more casual environment that the summer provides.

Don't forget that the Sunday Services Committee doesn't lie dormant during the summer months! We are already planning for 2008-09 and will meet on July 2nd and August 6th at 7:30 pm. Join us if you have thoughts about next year ... especially if you would like to play an active role in making Sunday services happen. Have a beautiful summer!

Refreshments for Summer Services



Please sign up to host "light coffee hour" after Services this summer. This might mean lemonade and popcorn, juice and bagels, coffee and fruit salad ... anything appropriate to gathering in the summer. Look for a sign-up sheet in the back of the sanctuary and pick a day to bring snacks and drinks to the UUCD. Remember - if you don't do it, who will?!

Can you help Unitarian Universalists flooded in the Midwest?

In the aftermath of devastating floods that have wreaked havoc on several Midwestern states, the Unitarian Universalist Association Prairie Star and Heartland Districts have announced the launch of individual district relief funds to provide assistance to Unitarian Universalists in Indiana and Iowa whose homes have been severely damaged or destroyed by flood waters.

As of June 17th, no UU church properties are known to have sustained substantial damage. However, Nancy Combs Morgan, Acting District Executive of the Heartland District, and Nancy Heege, District Executive of the Prairie Star District, report that numerous members of local congregations have incurred flood damage.

In Iowa, flooding has come within a block of the Cedar Rapids church. Hundreds of blocks in the city have been impacted, and damage is estimated to be in excess of \$1 billion. The devastation to the city and the resulting damage to the economy of the area will affect the lives of people in that congregation in the weeks and months ahead. In Iowa City at least fifteen parishioners' homes have been flooded, and the property of the University of Iowa, a significant source of employment in the area, was heavily damaged, impacting job security for residents. In Indiana, the Terre Haute congregation is trying to provide assistance to members—including the retired minister of the congregation—whose homes have been flooded. The city of Columbus has been extremely hard-hit, and a number of congregants have lost everything.

The District Boards of Prairie Star and Heartland have been involved in information-gathering and connecting individuals affected to available resources. Relief funds in each district will be administered through processes established by each district; check the district website for current information: <http://www.psduua.org/> and <http://www.heartlanduu.org/>.

To contribute to the district relief funds, please address your check as follows. Thank you!

For the Prairie Star District

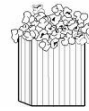
Prairie Star District UUA
122 W. Franklin Ave., Suite 303
Minneapolis, MN 55404

For the Heartland District

Heartland District of the UUA
445 N. Pennsylvania St., Suite 510
Indianapolis, IN 46204-1893

Fourth Friday Film Series – Movies with a Message

by Keith Dupree



We will continue our Fourth Friday Film Series through the summer, drawing on *Spiritual Cinema Circle* for our message and inspiration. We begin at 7:00 p.m. sharp and wrap up between 9:00 and 9:30 p.m.

Friday – July 25th: A Longer Shorts Night. We devote our fourth Friday in July to longer shorts – short films too long to be shown in conjunction with a regular feature, but too good not to be seen. The unifying theme of these four short films is people at work – how they approach the passion, the amazement, the questions, the humor in the everyday things that they do. Or more importantly, how do you?

Below is the evening's schedule, the shorts' titles, and a question to ponder as you view each film.

7:00 p.m. – *Dead-End Job*: At work, when your intuition feels like a burden, can it be transformed?

7:30 p.m. – *Laundry and Tosca*: What kind of encouragement does one need to follow a dream?

8:10 p.m. – *After Shave*: How do you keep your integrity intact while pursuing abundance in your life?

8:45 p.m. – *Three-Fifty*: What are the pros and cons of being honest, even about the smallest of things?

Please join us on Friday, July 25th at 7:00 p.m. in the UUCD Conference Room. As usual, all are welcome. Pizza will be provided for those who wish to chip in. Bring your own beverage. Popcorn optional!

Friday – August 22nd: *What's Bugging Seth?* I recently noticed a quotation in a shop window, which went something like this: "When one can no longer see, one loses contact with things. When one can no longer hear, one loses contact with people," (Helen Keller). The main character in our August feature is hearing impaired, as is the filmmaker Eli Steele. *What's Bugging Seth* is a quirky romantic comedy that touches on many issues. Although you may feel uncomfortable at times during this film and perhaps uncomfortable with its ending, it is nonetheless appropriate for the entire family. It can be viewed on several levels. We will begin our evening with a surrealistic short that borrows much from Salvador Dali. Visual graphics are great, but I have no idea what it means. (Disk jacket says it's about love?!!) I'm hoping one of you can explain it to me!

7:00 p.m. – *Elephant's Egg*, written and directed by Sam Yousefian

7:25 p.m. – *What's Bugging Seth?* Written and directed by Eli Steele

Please join us on Friday, August 22nd, at 7:00 p.m. in the UUCD Conference Room. As usual, all are welcome. Pizza will be provided for those who wish to chip in. Bring your own beverage. Popcorn optional!

Theatre Enthusiasts' Group

by Keith Dupree

Join us again this month for local theatre. Our next venture will be Thursday, July 17th, at TheatreWorks in New Milford, to see *Suddenly Last Summer*. To quote TheatreWorks, "Playwright Tennessee Williams, Theatre's great poet of impossible love, creates a powerful battle between reality and self-delusion in this rarely-seen stage gem." More information, including directions to the playhouse, can be found at www.theatreworks.us.

Normally, tickets at TheatreWorks run between \$20 and \$28, but July 17th is a "Pay-what-you-want-night." For this performance, you name the price for your ticket, but no reservations are accepted, it is first-come, first-served. Curtain time is 8:00 p.m. so to ensure seating, plan to arrive when the doors open at 7:30. We will plan to meet at the theatre, but let me know if you have questions. Although you do not need to register for this event, please try to give me a call or email to let me know that you are coming, so we can look for you and try to find seats together.

P.S. If fellow theater travelers have thoughts for other local theater, we would be delighted to entertain your ideas. Please share with us your suggestions.

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Summer Services led by UUCD Members & Friends

July 6, 2008. **How I May Have Become Who I Am.** It's been a year in the making! Judy Lacker purchased Reverend Linda Hansen's help with writing a sermon at the 2007 Auction – and here it is! Join Judy as she contemplates how she came to be. Perhaps her thoughts will give you insight into your own journey.

July 13, 2008. **Other Voices.** Gale Alexander will explore the perceptions of Unitarian Universalism prevalent in the media and other sources. He will consider how these perceptions affect us and what our responses - if any - ought to be.

July 20, 2008. **What We Know: Open Territory and Our Line of Sight.** Our lives are structured, and “safe” – or so we think. In reality, all of us are regularly “walking the line” and at the boundary between this world and the next, between living and dying, between life “as we know it” – and something completely different. Sometimes we are provoked to see this boundary, and sometimes, we see into what lies beyond it. During this service, we'll talk together about this experience of being “at the frontier” – and the language we use to describe it when it happens. Service led by Evan Smith.

July 27, 2008. **Stepping Outside the Box.** How have implicit assumptions about our country and our society limited our own perception? How much of what we take for granted in our perception of the world is really a myth? In this morning's service, Carl Tichler hopes to explore what we can accomplish by breaking down these barriers.

August 3, 2008. **Authenticity: Finding Your True Voice.** Join Susan Shaner as she explores how we can be our best selves when we truly listen to what's inside.

August 10, 2008. **A Sunday Celebration of the Arts.** Come enjoy an Arts Sunday – Visual, Poetic & Musical. Better yet, come and join in! There will be a diverse collection of paintings, sculpture, poetry and music to celebrate our diversity of talents and tastes. Contact Doris Henderson (poetry), Veronica Swain (visual) or Charlie Schott (music) if you are interested in participating.

August 17, 2008. **Hinduism, God, and Happiness.** Joe Gillotti will discuss the fundamentals of Hinduism this morning. Join him and consider why God is not like the rest of us – thank God! – and how we are all searching for Happiness and yet we somehow seem to get misdirected.

August 24, 2008. **The Labyrinth – Metaphor for Life.** Learn about labyrinths, how they have been used throughout history, and their relevance to our lives today. This Service, led by Gina Cassetta and Sue Tarshis, will include a labyrinth walk and time for a short discussion.

August 31, 2008. **What brings YOU to UU?** Why don't you just stay in bed on Sunday mornings? Why does having children change everything? Why do you fear that other mainstream religions would reject you? Why are you attracted to smart, hip, sometimes eccentric people? Come listen to a cross section of our congregation answer these and other deep questions – and lend your voice to the mix! Service coordinated by Lynn Taborsak.



Please don't forget to bring water from your travels – near and far – this summer for inclusion in our traditional Intergenerational Water Communion Service on September 7th.