



COMMENT

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

JUNE 2009

For the Time Being

Notes from your Interim Minister

The congregational year is winding down towards summer. As noted elsewhere in these pages, June 7 is the last double Sunday service until September 13; starting June 14, there is one service at 10 a.m. In July and August, all the services will be lay led. Last summer, I was very impressed with the high caliber of these services, so when you're in town, please come! Although things do get quieter here during the summer, the New England Unitarian tradition of churches shutting down for the summer is long gone.

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On Memorial Day weekend, a good crowd (standing room only at 11 a.m., with many guests) came to hear Haider Hamza, a young Iraqi journalist, tell his extraordinary story. As one who lived through the United States invasion of Iraq, became an embedded reporter from the age of 16, was both shot at by Marines and kidnapped by insurgents, and has witnessed untold death and destruction in his country, Haider has already seen more suffering in his 24 years than many North Americans see in a lifetime. And yet he remains remarkably open, taking it upon himself to travel around this country and hear the stories of Americans.

One of the *News-Times* reporters who called me about Haider's appearance, asked me if I thought it was appropriate to have a "speaker of this type" at a religious service. But what is religion, if not about peace, justice, and reconciliation? I'm grateful to Haider for being willing to come speak to us, and also to Scott Wolfman for bringing him here.

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Recently, several prospective members have remarked that UUCD is "not very pushy" about asking people to join the congregation. It's true - Unitarian Universalists tend not to be pushy about many things, including membership. We assume that people will intuitively know when they're ready to take that important step of signing the membership book. Some know they're ready to join within a couple of months after walking in the door; others take years.

But even though we aren't very pushy at UUCD, we do invite! Have you been coming to services for a while, and feeling at home here? Have you been wondering what's involved in joining the congregation? Or, have you reached that point of internal readiness, but aren't sure how to proceed? In any of these instances, a good next step would be to contact me, or anyone on the Membership Committee. We're delighted to speak with you!

Love and blessings,
Sue

Our Mission Statement:

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury is an open religious community that welcomes a diversity of people, ideas and beliefs.

We celebrate together that which is good in life, and offer comfort and care in times of need.

With others, we work to create a just society and a sustainable Earth.

We stand as a beacon for independent thought, and encourage lifelong spiritual and intellectual exploration.

Adopted by this congregation May 16, 2008

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 SherryUUCD@gmail.com or dropped off at the church office.

**New to UUCD?
Come to a "Coffee Connection"
on Sunday, June 14th after the service.**

**Deadline for the July/August Comment -
Friday, June 19th.**



Sunday, June 14th will begin our Summer Service Schedule. We will have one service at 10:00 a.m. This will continue through Sunday, September 6th.

Share the Plate Sunday

Thanks to all you have given so generously in our last three Share the Plate Sunday 50-50 collections. The City of Danbury is cutting back on support for local non-profits and we at UUCD are pleased to do our part to help. The next Share the Plate Sunday is June 7th. The recipient is AIDS Project Greater Danbury.





President's Letter

by Carl Tichler, President

Thank you to everyone for your approval of the budget at the Annual Meeting and support of the supplemental pledge. The response to the pledge so far has been very strong, so if you have not already done so, please make your supplemental pledge so that we can meet and hopefully exceed our \$18,000 goal.

The Annual Meeting also brought the election of new members of our Board, including our new president, **Jean Bowen**. I am very pleased that Jean agreed to take on this demanding job for us, and I believe that her long experience in management and effectively working with local government should serve our congregation well. I look forward to working with her in the transition. As I mentioned in the Annual Report, I look forward to working on the Finance Committee in the coming year, as our financial situation will need to be monitored closely due to our tight budget.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve as Board President these past two years, and for the personal growth and relationships that I have gained during this time.



Help wanted

- (** PAINTER(S) NEEDED FOR INTERIOR PAINTING IN THE HOUSE ... SHORT-TERM JOB **
- (ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS ARE DESPERATELY NEEDED FOR THE "SCRUB CLUBS" (A.K.A. CLEANING TEAMS)! REMEMBER THAT "MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK"
- (MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MEMBERS
- (HOSPITALITY HELPERS
- (RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEADERS FOR 2009-2010

FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO VOLUNTEER, PLEASE CONTACT DARLENE ANDERSON-ALEXANDER

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

The summary statistics for January, February, March and April of the 2008-09 fiscal year are recorded below.

	January	February	March	April
% Annual Canvass pledge return	64.7%	70.5%	76.7%	81%
Operating Income Year-to-date	\$124,764	\$137,238	\$167,684	\$180,686
Operating Expenses Year-to-date	\$137,341	\$157,290	\$179,472	\$200,423
Operating Income – Expense YTD	<u>\$ -12,577</u>	<u>\$ -20,052</u>	<u>\$ -11,788</u>	<u>\$ -19,737</u>
Unrestricted Funds	\$ 7,635	\$ 499	\$ 8,177	\$ 1,051

Analysis for this Month:

The April pledge returns (4.35%) is at the bottom of average April returns (4.4% to 7.5%.) Due to the earlier strong showing the Total Pledge returns to date (81%) is still above average. Over the last 7 years the average and maximum pledge returns to date were 79% and 86% respectively. Thank you. So please keep the pledge returns coming as early as possible. The Operating Income YTD is about \$2,000 below its 10 month projected value and the Operating Expense YTD is about \$4,000 above its 10 month projected value. The difference of \$6,000 may not seem like much but UUCD must be very diligent in May and June or the expected year end deficit of \$19,000 could well exceed \$25,000.

Assets:

UUCD’s financial assets were equal to \$107,445 at the end of April. These assets included monies in bank accounts, the money market and invested in the stock market. This sum is divided into three piles with each pile having different restrictions on availability.

- **Unrestricted Funds:** These assets combined with incoming deposits are used by our Treasurer to pay our bills.
- **Restricted Funds:** These assets represent liabilities that may come due momentarily. They include special collections such as the Rug Fund, Women’s Retreat Fund, and early next year’s pledge payments.
- **Endowment Funds:** Today these funds amount to about 75% of the total. The Music Fund, UUA General Assembly Fund and the Celebration of Life Fund are examples.

Over the last few years it has not been important to monitor and display these figures on a monthly basis. The recent (last 4 years) deficit spending has reduced the Unrestricted Funds to a dangerously low level. It is for this reason among others that the Board has insisted on accepting for next year a budget that is balanced. Our Unrestricted Funds can not absorb any additional deficits and must be watched. It is for this reason that this statistic has been added to our monthly review.

Supplemental Pledge Drive:

A Supplemental Pledge Drive was initiated at the April Board Meeting. We are pleased to have already received 57 pledges. Thank you’s go to all these earlier pledgers. In addition, letters requesting a Supplemental Pledge have been sent to the remaining congregants. Please give freely to support the UUCD we have been striving to achieve. This coming year with the conclusion of the Search for a new minister is crucial.

Bruce Buzby, Finance Committee Chair
Marie Dupree, Treasurer

Fund Development Doesn't Have to be Boring

by Jean Bowen, President-Elect

Fund development is a big picture process that can revitalize a community and connect us with resources and people that will grow and support our Congregation.

Our current financial position requires that we take immediate steps in managing our assets. It also requires a great deal of creativity and hard work to expand our stewardship activities.

At the Annual Meeting, some of you came forward with proposals to raise additional awareness of UUCD and attract donations. All of these suggestions are being investigated and pursued.

UUA hosted a web cast recently that was conducted by fund development professionals. The information was familiar but also of interest. I thought you might appreciate some of the following points:

On Growth:

- Focus on meaningful services, community service and membership will follow; it is a “mistake” to link growth with money. In the short run growth can cost more in services.
- The best Capital Campaigns are the ones that tie in support for people-community with the building.

Involving Children:

- *Not* involving children leads to isolation among donors.
- Have children host the coffee hour several times a year.

The Ask:

- Aspire to 5% of gross income.
- People give to vision.
- Capital Campaigns are taking more time to plan in current economy.
- If you assume the economy is terrible those are the results you can expect.

Special Events:

- Purpose is to build community and raise money second.
- Labor intensive, risk is congregants trading dollars with each other.
- Fundraising events focus is good for external ministries.
- 80% of annual budget should be funded by annual financial commitment.

UUCD will expand our process and goals. In the coming months I will call you individually and ask for your help. Many of you enjoy volunteering for specific and time limited projects. I want to provide you with those opportunities. Meanwhile, give me a call.

It's the Works!

Here is a family-friendly social event to kick off the summer. Mark your calendar for Saturday, June 27th. It's a barbecue, a refreshing swim, and the spectacular fireworks display at Candlewood Park in Danbury. It will all begin at the home of **Lynn and Bob Taborsak**, starting at 5:00 pm. *YOU MUST ARRIVE BEFORE THE POLICE CLOSE THE ROAD TO TRAFFIC AT 6:30 PM.*

Please bring a beverage and a salad or dessert to share. Hot dogs, rolls and condiments will be provided. Please bring a “bag” chair, blanket, wagon or umbrella stroller for the fireworks. We will be walking “en masse” down to the Town Park at 8:00 pm. Mosquito repellent is a good idea too. You can use the sign-up sheet at the rear of the sanctuary or you can RSVP to Lynn and Bob with the number of adults and children attending and the side dish you will be bringing. The rain date for the fireworks is Saturday, July 11th.

Religious Education Update

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

Thanks to Fern Paes, for making the Leader “Thank You” T-shirt gifts. The image of a tree with its roots and green leaves represented the 2008-‘09 RE Focus on our Jewish and Christian Heritage. **Thanks to all Religious Educators, Assistants, Advisors!**

Thanks to Lynn Taborsak for donating a shelving unit for my office, **Michael Packer & Jeff Shaffer** for their heavy lifting and encouraging my re-organizing my office. Many thanks.

At the end of May we began our **Spirituality and the Arts** programming for all ages. This programs’ focus is to provide experiential activities that give us space for our thoughts, feelings, emotions, and our spirits. Through the arts we access one of Unitarian Universalism’s six sources of wisdom: direct experiences of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit. We affirm spiritual and artful expression! Throughout this program we are also doing a concrete **service project for UUCD - refurbishing the metal chairs** we use for Religious Education in the House.

During the first session on May 24th, we focused on the importance of the process of creating (vs. the finished product). We wanted to go beyond ideas to experiencing the doing. We began with a short worship time and then dug and planted flowers, drew our names in chalk, did a group drawing that unfolded a little at a time. Peace flags and music, in honor of Memorial Day, were also options for participants to choose from. We started washing the metal chairs.

On **May 31st** the focus will be on meditative movement and sculpture. The participants will create flowers for the Flower Communion services and the “bridge” for our Senior High Youth bridging to adulthood. We also have options to create a dance to music and continue the chair refurbishing project.

What’s on Tap for June

June 7th: Multigenerational Flower Communion Services – Bring a flower for each member of your family. These services will feature the music of “Stringed Cheese” (**Nancy Hershatter, Kim Papa, and Charlie Schott**) 9:00 a.m. Shreve’s Child Dedication, 11:00 a.m. Bridging Ceremony to honor our graduating seniors.

Thursday, June 11th: Religious Education Committee Meeting from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. All members and friends, and youth are welcome.

Friday, June 12th – Saturday, June 13th: Junior High Group Retreat (incoming 6th graders are welcome.) This is an overnight retreat at the House with fun activities on tap. Contact Greg Pings for details

June 14th (first 10:00 a.m. service): The Theater of Make and Believe (and Achieve). This session will focus on the “Power of Intention” to create our reality, and to note our Heroes in story and myth. These characters and real life people inspire us, give us hope, and remind us that what we think about, and our attitude, really do matter. Another of our UU Sources encourages us to look at the words and deeds of prophetic women and men because they challenge and encourage us to face the injustices we see in the world and call us to justice, compassion and the transforming power of love. Possible Activities: drama, costumes, props, and music; continue with spray painting chairs (hopefully a rainbow batch); tissue paper (stained glass style) window shades for the Conference Room

DRE will be out of the office June 15th-17th for a retreat and in the office June 18th & 19th.

June 21st: Sew, So Beautiful. Fabric, yarn, weaving, sewing, and knitting can be very meditative experiences. Beautiful words can connect to us in a way that makes us laugh or cry or feel like someone understands us deep inside. Bring a short sample of poetry, quotes or a short passage of your favorite beautiful words.

Possible Activities: sew or create chair pads; option to continue with the Theater of Make and Believe; beautiful words (write or share); complete chairs.

June 28th: The Power of Music to Speak to Us No Matter How We Feel. We have a lot of musicians and music lovers among us. Participants are encouraged to bring an instrument, and sample of what you play or a song you love to sing (CD’s),

Possible activities: sing; dance; hula hoop; complete any outstanding work; plan summer times dreams.

The DRE will be away from the office (and work email) from the last Sunday in June through July. DRE starts back in the office weekday mornings in August, and on Sundays after Labor Day weekend for our 2009-2010 program year.

July and August 2009

July 4th weekend: nursery care only.

July 9th – August. 2nd: **Empty Bowls project.** Team Green’s **Mary Alice Kimball** is organizing this. See her article in this *Comment* for more information!

NOTE:

August 9th – September 6th: **Currently, nursery care only.** See Summer Services article for ways you could change this.

Summer Services



Let’s give a hearty UU cheer to **Scot Fritz, Gale Alexander, Susan Shaner, Charlie Schott, Carl Tichler, Uwe Koepke, Joe Gillotti, Jeremy Stein,** and a cast of UUCD Women for offering to share their spiritual and intellectual journeys with us this summer! Our summer of lay led services will begin on July 5th and will continue through September 6th. Prepare to be enlightened and amazed!

Don’t worry, **YOU** can still be involved in our UUCD summer! We are looking for people to provide activities for our children during services on August 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, and September 9th (Labor Day). This could take the form of providing free arts & crafts time, leading games outside, reading books or stories from our vast resources ... the sky’s the limit! Our goal is to provide a safe, supervised experience for our children while maintaining an adult atmosphere during services. What better way to show that we are a welcoming congregation to visiting families! Contact **Mary Collins** if you can help or see the clipboard in the back of the sanctuary.



Please don't forget to bring water from your travels - near and far - this summer for inclusion in our traditional Intergenerational Water Communion Service to be held on September 13th.

~ The Sunday Services Committee

Just a reminder that we now take a weekly Food Offering during the Children's Focus of our Sunday service for distribution by our Social Action Committee to local soup kitchens and agencies. A list of appropriate foods appears in our Sunday Order of Service, **Dried beans and whole grain rice are especially needed.** It is easy to forget to bring your donation so when you think of it stick it in your car.



Empty Bowls Project

by Mary Alice Kimball

We have some exciting **Summer Programming** scheduled for this year. **Team Green** is sponsoring the "Empty Bowls Project".

The basic idea for Empty Bowls is simple. Participants create ceramic bowls, and then we will serve a simple meal of soup and bread. Guests choose a bowl to use that day and to keep as a reminder that there are always Empty Bowls in the world.

All Members of the UUCD will have an opportunity to create a bowl. During the month of July we will be working with the younger members of the congregation in creating their bowls.

Sundays, July 12th, 19th, 26th, and August 2nd alternative summer programming for children and youth will be occurring at the Founders House, starting at 10:00 a.m.

We will be talking about **Team Green's** interests in increasing awareness and availability of organically grown and local foods and waste reduction. Empty Bowls is a creative way to string these themes together, while also drawing attention to hunger, and global abuse and misuse of seemingly abundant resources. It allows us to tie our own efforts for creating a sustainable community to efforts around the globe where groups like ours are doing the same thing.

The sale of our bowls and project will be promoted at the Annual Taste of Danbury celebration to be held the weekend of September 12th 13th, 2009.

We will be hosting a simple meal on Friday, October 16th, World Hunger Day. This meal will be open to all participants of the Empty Bowls Project.

Contact **Mary Alice Kimball** or **Suzanne Perry** if you are interested working with our youth or if you want to create your own bowls this summer. We will schedule additional opportunities for this fabulous project.

For additional information regarding the Empty Bowls Project go to <http://www.emptybowls.net/EmptyBowlsProject.htm>.



Yoga is back on the Ridge!

Every Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. in UUCD Fellowship Hall, Harnam Singh (Tony Zatzick) will begin teaching weekly Kundalini Yoga Class. Any and all are welcome to join the class. It will be open to both members of UUCD, and members of the community. Each class has a fee of \$15.00 (half of which will be donated to UUCD) and will last about one and one half hours. Some mats will be available, but if you have your own please bring it with you. If you have any questions please contact **Shawn Sweeney**.

Men out to Breakfast

Men Out to Breakfast is an organization of men seeking fellowship and spirituality and meets 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 2 and 4. Meeting time: 9:00 a.m. June dates are the 6th and 20th. All are welcome. Please notify **Mike Searing** if you plan to attend.



Women out to Breakfast

Women out to Breakfast meets on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of every month at 9:00 a.m. for informal coffee and conversation at Elmer's Diner. Everyone is welcome. If you would like to attend, please contact **Karen Gillotti**. June dates are the 13th and 27th.

Search Committee Corner

by Charley Stark

Hello from your Search Committee. Now that we are in June, we have completed the information-gathering piece of the assessment process. We thank all of you who have participated in the various aspects of this effort. You have been interviewed, cottage meetinged (okay, I made up that word), surveyed and questioned. Why have we done all this?

As we compile and quantify the results this is a good time to talk about the uses to which the information is to be put. The Search Committee will be preparing a Congregational Record to go on-line to be viewed by any potential ministerial candidate. Some of the questions are purely factual, e.g. numbers of members, attendance, pledge data. But many questions search for the heart and soul of our congregation. For example, "what are the ministerial skills and enthusiasms most needed by the congregation?" Answers to questions like that do not come from the private opinions of the Committee members; they come from your responses and input. Other questions seek to discover the theological views that we hold, our priorities and our mission.

In addition to the Congregational Record, the Committee is putting together an Informational Packet. In the past this took a loose-leaf format, with pictures and descriptions of our home and our people. Now it will all go on-line. Prospective candidates will look at this. We will attempt to be honest and transparent, while trying to put our best foot forward.

Ministers in search also must put together their own packets, which the Committee gets to look at on-line. In this way both sides try to achieve what we hope will be a long and happy marriage.

What things might a minister look for in deciding whether the UUCD is the right place for her/him? I would think a minister would be very interested in the vitality and commitment of the members of the congregation, what hopes and aspirations we hold and what we have done thus far to reach our goals. One thing I'm sure will be looked at is our financial health. This is one of many reasons why the supplemental pledge drive and a balanced budget are so key right now.

We are nearing the summer, which traditionally is a slow period between church years. But rest assured your Search Committee will be busy as we move forward toward our goal of presenting an outstanding candidate to the congregation next spring.

**If you have any questions for the Search Committee,
please email them to search@uudanbury.org.**

Spring - Summer Chalice Circles Have Begun

Chalice Circles are groups of up to ten people who meet regularly to build community, learn to practice shared ministry, and nurture their spiritual lives. Every Chalice Circle has a facilitator who meets with other facilitators in their own Chalice Circle. The facilitator this summer will be **Maredith Spector**. Sign up as a new or seasoned Circler. **Drop-ins welcome in June!**

The following dates have been scheduled at 7:30-9:30 p.m.: **June** - Wednesday, June 17th in the Fellowship Hall; **July** - Wednesday, July 1st and 15th in the Fellowship Hall and July 29th in the Conference Room; **August** - Wednesday, August 12th and 26th in the Conference Room; **September** - Wednesday, September 9th in the Conference Room. For more information, or to sign up, please contact **Maredith Spector**.

Still making summer plans? A week on **Star Island**--10 miles out from Portsmouth, NH--is an affordable and beautiful vacation for both single adults of all ages and families. Kids five and under pay no room and board. Meals, kids activities, open workshops on contemporary topics of interest to [UUs or UCC], and the best sunset in the Northeast--all included. www.starisland.org or contact office@starisland.org if you have questions. You can also contact Keith Dupree or Marie Dupree for more information.

Landscaping the Cottage

by Barbara Myers

A group of members and friends worked in April and May to improve the landscaping around the cottage. After agreeing on parameters, creating a design, and soliciting plants (Phase I), on May 17th they entered Phase II: a hearty band of eight worked together to landscape both the front and back of the cottage. On May 24th, **Mary Collins and our kids** added their colorful touch by planting annuals for summer color.

Many thanks to our workers: **Lisa Austin-Smith, Claudia Durrell, Nick Kyriacou, John Letson, Barbara Myers, Kim Roberts, Karen Romanelli, and Tom Worden** for their hours of digging, hauling, planting, watering, and mulching. Your labors are well appreciated, and will continue to provide enjoyment for members, friends, and visitors for years to come.

Many of these folks brought and/or purchased plants for this initiative, but special thanks to **Camilla Worden** for donating an abundance of plants, most notably, the gorgeous boxwood in the back.

If you have an interest in joining Phase III of the landscaping efforts, email Barbara Myers.

From your Community Minister

Dear UUCD Members and Friends,

"We stand at the edge of Summer"
begins a reading in our hymnal by Helen Cohen (#548)

"O source of the turning seasons, of earth, of life, of promise gradually becoming fulfillment, ..."

I so appreciated Sue's simile in her May 3rd sermon to *"think of UUCD as a transplanted tree. Before new growth becomes visible, the tree must first get over the shock of transplant, take root underground,...deep into the soil. Only then can it branch out, and put forth new blossoms and leaves."*

We have a living example right here in our yard in Ridgefield!

Last spring we ever so carefully prepared a special site for the arrival of a specimen red delicious apple tree.

The tree looked like a pinkish-white lollipop, feathery with beautiful blossoms. It leafed out over summer, and stood leafless all winter.

Was the tree dead? dying? hibernating?

This spring we watched the tree, hoping for signs of buds. None. Nothing for the longest time. Then gradually, miniscule bumps appeared at the end of all the twiggy branches.

"No blossoms this year," the nursery person said, as we all looked at the greening tree, now lush with leaves on longer branches. *"It's probably still getting used to its new home here. It looks good. Probably flowers and fruit next year,"* he said. As he waved goodbye, he added, *"Take good care of it!"*

"We stand at the edge of summer... O source of the turning seasons, of earth, of life, of promise gradually becoming fulfillment."

Key word: gradually

Take good care of yourselves, too!

Faithfully yours,
Peggy Block,
UUCD Community Minister



Thank you for bringing beauty to the UUCD! We would like to thank the following people for bringing flowers to the Sunday Services in March, April and May: Stacey Campanella, Carol Huckabee, Darlene Anderson-Alexander, Mary Collins, Sue Spencer, Valerie Cochrane, Holly Murtha, and Mary Alice Kimball.



Tea n Green

Community Garden Update

The UUCD Community Garden, located on State Street in downtown Danbury, is progressing very well, with a fence and sign up, the plots laid out, and some planting already started. By June 1st, all of the planting will have been done.

Thanks very much to all of the volunteers, led by **Ali Zipparo**, who have worked hard to make this goal of a Community Garden a reality! This entire project came together within less than two months!

Please stop by to see it. Driving north on Main Street, turn right at Walgreen's onto State Street, which runs perpendicular to Main Street and Town Hill Avenue. The Garden is on the left (north side) part way up the street.

If you have any questions about the Garden, please ask **Ali Zipparo, Lynn Taborsak, Chris Halfar, Anne Krieg, Ben Roberts, or Donna Lawrence.**

Fresh Local Vegetables every Sunday at The Ridge?

Team Green is hoping to organize a regular delivery of fresh, local, organically grown vegetables every Sunday morning for a twenty-week period starting in mid-to-late June. The vegetables will be sold on a full-season subscription basis (the "CSA" model). Stone Wall Farm in Cornwall Bridge is growing the produce and is willing to bring it down to New Milford on Sunday mornings in time for UU volunteers to make a pick-up before heading to The Ridge for services. If you are interested in purchasing a seasonal share (or half-share) of vegetables or in volunteering to be part of the New Milford pick-up team, please contact Ben Roberts.

Concert to benefit the Greater New Orleans Unitarian Universalists.

Cindy Scott & the New Orleans Connection will be performing on Saturday, June 13th at 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Church in Westport. Cindy and her husband Bill are members of the Community Church Unitarian Universalist in New Orleans. Their church was totally destroyed in Hurricane Katrina, and the two other UU churches in New Orleans were heavily damaged. For reservations or more information, please call (203) 222-7190.



Special Father's Day Sunday Service

The Sunday Service on June 21st will be devoted to "remembering our fathers," with personal sharings by **Barbara Myers** and **Yvonne Ruddy-Stein**, a special reading by **Jane Leff**, and "Dreams from Our Fathers," a sermon by our Community Minister, **Rev. Peggy Block**. Invite a father, a son, a friend of any gender to this "spiritual feast" of remembrances, served up with calm cool jazz by **Charlie Schott** and **Rob Catalano**. Relax. Enjoy! And remember, on June 21st, there is only one service at 10:00 a.m.

Come early, if you wish, to set a framed picture of your dad, your granddad, or any special father figure, on our front "altar" table. Stay after, with your coffee, to chat with others about your "special dad."

16th Annual Interfaith Peace Camp

July 13 – 17, 2009, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Children have fun making new friends while "camping" at a different sacred site each day: Christian Church, Islamic Mosque, Buddhist Temple, Jewish Synagogue and Native American Grounds. Camp includes: Lunches, healthy snacks and refreshments, all supplies for games, crafts and inter-active activities. Cost \$70 for the week. Scholarships are available. Call ARC at (203) 792-9450 for more information.

Membership Committee and Kitchen Hosts

by Pat Coulston

This year has been a wonderful experience for me as I've found a way to contribute, in my own way, to the life of the congregation at UUCD. Sometimes we started with a very meager pantry - and, like the fishes, the food multiplied to feed everyone who showed up!! I did little more than serve whatever others provided! It has been a year of learning and a blessing to me. I have learned to share, to feel connected and to ask for help. This is an exceptional congregation.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to the treats that we have been able to provide for the Sunday Hospitality Hours this year. A special thanks to everyone who helped plate and serve the bounty; and to those who cleaned up the kitchen, the Fellowship Hall and the bathrooms, after everyone else went home. And thank you to all who contributed to the funds we used for those services by putting an offering into our basket as they "Shared Our Bounty".

This year we are looking for a core group of hosts, who want to share in the joy of hosting those Sunday Hospitality Hours for the 2009-10 year.

Anyone who is interest in hearing about the opportunity to serve the UUCD community through our Kitchen Ministry, please, contact **Pat Coulston**. We are organizing a core group of four to five hosts who will accept the responsibility for coordinating and hosting both services on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and the occasional 5th Sunday of every month for the next year - beginning in September.

If you can be part of a team to help us continue to provide this important opportunity to connect with each other in a festive and healthy way, please think about making this commitment. The rewards returned to you are multiplied more than you can imagine.

Starting in the fall, we will have sign-up sheets for those who want to assist in the kitchen, and for those who want to commit to providing treats on a certain Sunday.

Stay tuned and think of what you can do to see that our community thrives.

Soup Kitchen Corner

by Lynn Taborsak, Coordinator

On Saturday, June 6th, **Lisa Austin Smith** and **Debbie Musumeci** will be leading Team #4 at the Soup Kitchen with the assistance of **Randy and Tucker Smith, Joanne Davidson, Cathie Billings, Jackie Alexander, Jane Leff, Darrin and Haley Perlow, Jan Galloway and Irene Levanos**.

Please plan to arrive at 1:30 pm unless you are asked to come in early to prepare the meal and side dishes. You can help with setting up the dining room, wrapping silverware, making bag lunches and getting dessert trays ready. You can try out your skills as a waiter or waitress at 3:00 and serve our guests a delicious meal. We have been serving between 100 to 160 meals every day for the past 4 months. The economy is showing us just how much hunger there is in our local community. The UUCD has been providing a meal on the first Saturday of the month for 25 years at the Soup Kitchen in good times and bad times, month after month, and year after year.

If you are not a soup kitchen volunteer, please consider serving as an occasional alternate when extra hands are needed or help us feed our neighbors by donating a gift card in any amount from any local grocery store in the collection plate on Sunday. Finally please continue to bring in non-perishable food items for our food offering each Sunday. Please remember that it is YOUR JOB to find a substitute from the alternate list if you are unable to volunteer on your assigned day.

This summer we will also be serving a hot meal on TUESDAY, July 21st and TUESDAY, August 18th. Since the soup kitchen is not air conditioned, we are standing in for the regular Tuesday team that cannot work in summer heat because of medical issues. Please sign up for these special opportunities in the rear of the sanctuary.

Movies with a Message – Friday, June 12th

by Keith Dupree

In film and in life, things are often not what they seem. Be prepared this month for three films that will ask you to open your mind and shift your perceptions.

7:00 p.m. - *It's My Turn* - For eight minutes we follow a group of Turkish children, entranced with cinema but too poor to buy tickets. But creativity and imagination are indifferent to age or social status. In Turkish, with no subtitles, the film's message could not be sent more clearly!

7:15 p.m. - *Jack and Jill vs. the World* - Isn't that just how life is? Just when you think you are perfectly fine living your life the way you do, someone steps in and makes you question everything you've ever believed about yourself. This is how Jill enters Jack's world – but that's only the beginning...., starring Freddie Prinze Jr. and Taryn Manning (from the Spiritual Cinema Circle newsletter, 2009, Vol 3).

9:00 p.m. - *Common Practice* – “As a city moves through its day, something is brewing....” (SCC newsletter, 2009 Vol 3). This brief film uses standard cinematic technique to create an enormous feeling of anticipation, and then just when we think we know what's going to happen...this film reminds us to set aside our preconceptions and listen for the beauty of everyday life and love. Eleven minutes, with no dialogue (and none is needed!)

We believe that good experiences are even more fulfilling when shared with others. To this end, our objective each month is to present films of substance in a living room setting and to provide an opportunity to discuss with friends. Please join us on **Friday, June 12, at 7:00 p.m.** in the UUCD conference room. As usual, all are welcome. Pizza is provided for your culinary enjoyment. Bring your own beverage. Popcorn optional! Contributions gratefully accepted, all of which will go to the UUCD.

(More information on these films will be posted on the bulletin board near the hymnal bookcase.)



UUCD Conversations (formerly the Nonfiction Book Discussion Group)

UUCD Conversations 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 June through November is:

June 11, 2009: Food. Facilitator: Sue Spencer. Source: *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* by Michael Pollan, 2008, 464 pages, \$9.35. The author examines what he calls "our national eating disorder" (the Atkins craze, the precipitous rise in obesity) in this remarkably clearheaded book. It's a fascinating journey up and down the food chain, one that might change the way you read the label on a frozen dinner, dig into a steak, or decide whether to buy organic eggs. Along the way, he is alert to his own emotions and thoughts, to see how they affect what he does and what he eats, to learn more and to explain what he knows. His approach is steeped in honesty and self awareness. His cause is just, his thinking is clear, and his writing is compelling.

July 9, 2009: The Small Guy Matters. Facilitator: Bob Bollinger. Source: *An Army of Davids: How Markets and Technology Empower Ordinary People to Beat Big Media, Big Government, and Other Goliaths* by Glenn Reynolds, 2007, 288 pages, \$11.24. In *Army of Davids*, author Glenn Reynolds, the man behind the immensely popular Instapundit.com, provides an in-depth, big-picture point-of-view for a world where the small guys matter more and more. Reynolds explores the birth and growth of the individual's surprisingly strong influence in: arts and entertainment, anti-terrorism, nanotech and space research, and much more.

August 13, 2009, September 10, 2009, October 8, 2009: Undetermined

November 12, 2009: Science Biography. Facilitator: Ross Fenster. Source: *The Invention of Air* by Steven Johnson, 2008, 216 pages, \$16.34. A story of science, faith, revolution, and the birth of America. It is a story of sweeping historical transformation, of genius and friendship, violence and world-changing ideas that boldly recasts our understanding of the most significant events in our history.



The **Knitting Ministry** is offering knitting lessons to anyone interested in learning this wonderful craft. We knit for charity as well as for our annual holiday craft show, and we meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00

p.m. You'll be amazed how creative you can be in a short amount of time with just two "sticks" and some yarn.

Beginning in June, we will also be starting an evening group for people who may not be able to join us during the day. We will meet the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. in the second floor Conference Room. Knitting lessons will be offered at this time as well

So pick up some new knitting needles, or dust off the old ones, and come join us for fun, learning and creativity. Please contact **Karen Gillotti** if you are interested or for more information.

June 2009																																																																																																									
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Shaded Events are off-site

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5/28/2009 10:42 AM

Services at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

June 7, 2009: **Intergenerational Flower Communion Service.** This festive service includes music by “Stringed Cheese,” the dedication of Madeline Joy Shreve (daughter of Lauren and Steve, and baby sister of Benjamin), a special story, and the uniquely Unitarian Universalist ritual of Flower Communion. Service led by Mary Collins and Sue Spencer.

One Service at 10:00 a.m.

June 14, 2009: **In Praise of Goofing Off.** In our culture, overwork is a serious issue – even as many people face unemployment. This service, Sue Spencer’s last before the summer, considers the spiritual significance of Sabbath, and even the virtues of idleness. The service begins with the dedication of Miranda King (daughter of Christi and Jim, and baby sister of Thomas).

June 21, 2009: **Dreams from Our Fathers.** This special Father’s Day service is centered on remembering our fathers, our own and others: Barack Obama’s, Forrest Church’s, even a forefather of this congregation, P.T. Barnum. Jazz by Charlie Schott and Rob Catalano; a reading by Jane Leff, “Father”; personal sharings by Yvonne Ruddy-Stein and Barbara Myers; service coordinated by Ross Fenster; sermon by our Community Minister, Peggy Block. Come early and bring a framed photo of your “favorite dad” for the front table. Happy Father’s Day!

June 28, 2009: **Gay Rights.** The Social Action Committee will present the annual last Sunday in June Gay Rights service. Brianna Johnston, a seminary student, will tell of her experiences and perspectives on transgender rights, especially from a spiritual perspective.