



unitarian universalist
CONGREGATION OF DANBURY

COMMENT

24 Clapboard Ridge Road, Danbury, CT 06811 * 203-798-1994
Rev. Barbara Fast, Settled Minister

MAY 2011

“At the heart of it...” from Rev. Barbara Fast

As requested, from my sermon, *Some Things I Have Learned in Ministry, or, The Good News Gospel of Good Enough*, for posting on your refrigerator, or in your heart.

The Three A's of Spiritual Growth - (attribution forgotten)

Attention

Affection (acceptance)

Appreciation

The Four Buddhist Truths –from a sermon at UU campground at Ferry Beach, 1989

Show up

Speak the truth (in love)

Do what you do with Intensity (enthusiasm)

Don't get attached to outcomes.

The Three Gates of Speech (again Buddhist)

Is it true?

Is it necessary?

Is it kind?

The four things to say to those you love before you die (or more often)

Please forgive me

I forgive you

I love you

Goodbye

Two more thoughts:

1- Life is all about practice (not perfection).

2- Hear this coming to you on the soft spring breeze of May,
“You are good enough, you are good enough”.

*Blessings,
Barbara*



**Call for the Annual Meeting of the
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury
May 20, 2011, 7:00 P.M.**

Every May, as specified in the bylaws, we hold the Annual Meeting of the UUCD. The order of business is specified in the bylaws, and includes Reports, Adoption of the Budget, and New Business, as well as Elections of Officers, Trustees, and Nominating Committee members.

Roberts Rules of Order prevail at all Congregational Meetings. Our bylaws also state that there must be a quorum of at least 15% of the membership. At an official membership of 163, this means there must be at least 24 members present at the May 20 meeting for the meeting to proceed.

Voting rights extend only to those who have been members for at least 60 days, which, for this year's meeting, means anyone who signed the membership book prior to March 22, 2011.

Absentee ballots are allowed, and will be available in the sanctuary and online by May 9. Absentee ballots are to be handed to **Barbara Myers** or **Jean Bowen**, or emailed to either of them, by May 19, 2011.

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.

**Deadline for the June Comment -
Friday, May 30th.**



President's Comment

by Jean N. Bowen, President

I love spring. I am sure it is coming to Connecticut.

Although outdoors it is not quite present in temperature and sunshine, indoors has been a celebratory season at UUCD. The Annual Auction, Rev. Fast's Installation, the Annual Budget Drive and beautiful Sunday services tell me that the planning through the winter months has resulted in amazing community events.

In May the women come together in a rite of spring that enhances the bonds of sisterhood in our congregation. The children have Jumped for Justice, raised money for aid to Haiti with their multiple talents and led a Sunday service. The Annual Meeting falls later in May this year allowing for a little more time for the Board of Trustees to present you with a balanced budget. You have heard me say this before and this year it needs to happen!

The Board of Trustees has lingered on the finances this month and will do so again in May. It is important work. I hope you will convey your appreciation to the Board members, the Finance Team and Treasurer and the Annual Budget Drive leaders. These are clever and talented members who are committed to ensuring best practice in managing the funds you pledge to this congregation. Please attend the Annual Meeting on Friday evening, May 20th and join in this annual work of the congregation.

In community,
Jean



Come One, Come All to the Potluck
preceding the Annual Meeting
May 20, 5:30 P.M.

From Your Community Minister, Rev. Peggy Block

LXX

“Get Up and Go”

by Pete Seeger, excerpted (words adapted, original music; 1964;
quoted in Chicken Soup for the Golden Soul)

How do I know my youth is all spent?
My get up and go has got up and went.
But in spite of it all, I’m able to grin
And think of the places my get up has been.

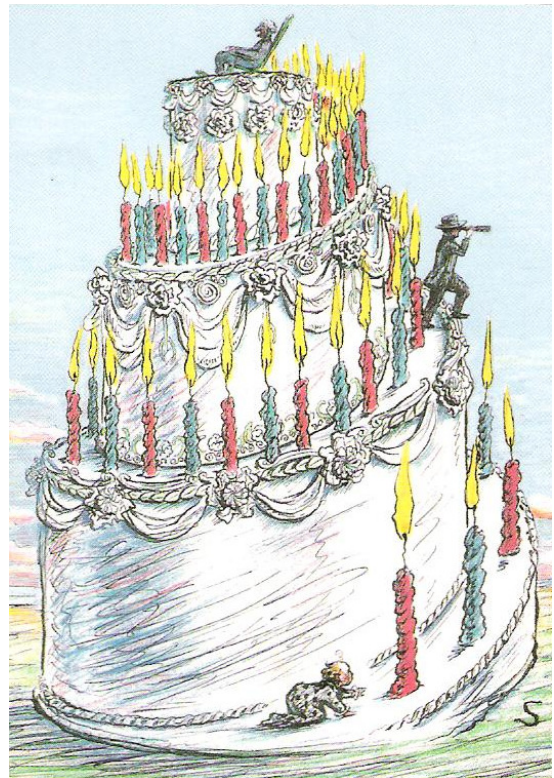
Old age is golden, so I’ve heard said.
But sometimes I wonder as I crawl into bed
With my ears in a drawer and my teeth in a cup,
My eyes on the table until I wake up.

As sleep dims my vision, I say to myself,
“Is there anything else I should lay on the shelf?”
But though nations are warring and business is vexed,
I’ll stick around to see what happens next.

When I was young, my slippers were red,
I could kick up my heels right over my head.
When I was older, my slippers were blue,
But still I could dance the whole night through.

Now I am older, my slippers are black,
I huff to the store, and puff my way back.
But never you laugh; I don’t mind at all.
I’d rather be huffing than not puff at all.

How do I know my youth is all spent?
My get up and go has got up and went.
But in spite of it all, I’m able to grin
And think of the places my get up has been.



from The Oxford Book of Ages

Cheers! Good to be with you – still!
Peggy Smith Block
May 10, 1941 - _____

Happy Spring! Happy Birthday to you, whenever...



Religious Education plans for May 2011: (subject to creative change by our leaders/youth)
by Mary B. Collins, Director of Religious Education (DRE)

Sunday, May 1st - Combined Group Sessions today on Earth Based Traditions (Beltane/May Day) *optional May Pole outside Weather permitting.*

Saturday, May 7th - *Junior High Youth Group* meets at the Soup Kitchen (contact **Greg Pings** for time and details.)

Sunday, May 8th – Group Sessions on Naming Feelings (fear/being lost and found), Nature Picnic – urban garden, Exploring Treasure/NC Wyeth, God as Mother, *Junior High Youth Group* meets.

Sunday, May 15th - Last day of 2010-2011 Group Sessions- Memories of our Faith Home, Thoreau and the Web of Life, UU Me.

Sunday, May 22nd - **Two different Multigenerational Services**

- 9:00 a.m. Lifespan Religious Education Sunday – A multigenerational service and appreciation of Religious Education.
The 3rd-5th grade group will present their Social Action Project book for their culminating Bird & Butterfly Habitat during the 9:00 a.m. service. The children need adults to help plant the plants and put up the bird houses following the service or later that afternoon. Please contact **Lisa or Brad Greene** to assist them in completing their project today.
- 11:00 a.m. – *Senior High Bridging Service* – Families with graduating High School Senior High youth please contact Mary Collins to confirm your plans to attend.

Sunday, May 29th – Memorial Day Weekend – Children’s Chapel - Children and Youth welcome so start in the House – TOPIC: PEACE. Seeking children and youth to lead music, readings – contact **Mary Collins**.



Committee News

From the *Auction Committee*

Thank You from the Auction Committee

The Auction Committee would like to thank the following people for their generous matching donations. Their generosity helped to make this year's Auction a success. The matching donations have been a great way over the past years for people to contribute to the auction if they're out of town on the night of the event, if they didn't find anything special to purchase at the auction, or if they just want to give something extra.

Thank you to: **Bruce and Catie Berg, Jean Bowen, Valerie Cochrane, Marie and Keith Dupree, Ross Fenster and Jane Leff, Chris Halfar, Kim and Chris Schmitt, and Scott Wolfman**

And, it's still not too late to make a matching donation to this year's Auction! If interested, please contact Suzanne Perry. Thanks again!



A Message of Success from the Auction Committee

A warm, hardy and sincere thank you to our congregation for helping to make the 2011 Annual Goods and Services Auction a SUCCESS! We netted over \$20,000 this year!

The Auction Committee members worked hard to present an “award-winning” event; and those efforts paid off. We had some very special attendees this year.... Lady Gaga was in the house, as was Darth Vader, Yoda, Pee Wee Herman and Captain Jack Sparrow. Many more individuals who came to the event were dressed to impress - which made for a spectacular evening.

The Committee would like to thank all those who volunteered for the Auction in various capacities, those who donated goods and/or services, those who attended the event itself and those who spent their hard-earned money to help support our congregation.

Baskets were a hot this year and we had a wide variety. Thanks to the UUCD Committee members who enthusiastically embraced the idea of committee-themed baskets and put together some of the best items we had to offer at the Auction.

Most of what didn't sell at the Auction went on to be sold at the Tag Sale on April 1st and 2nd. In addition to those items, many congregants donated directly for the Tag Sale and this year our proceeds were over \$700! Thanks especially go to **Karen Romanelli** and **Suzanne Perry** who tirelessly organized, priced, displayed and sold the goods in our Fellowship Hall.

We still have seats at dinners and for donated services that didn't sell at the Auction. Please look for a separate email to be sent out shortly which will detail what is still available for purchase.

Now the countdown begins until the next Auction – just a mere 11 months to go! Please contact **Christine Bonansinga** or **Suzanne Perry** if you have any questions or comments. We'd love to hear your feedback!

From the *Annual Budget Drive Team*

Thank you to everyone who has made a commitment of financial support for the year beginning July 1st. As of mid-April, 107 individuals and families promised a total of \$168,830. More than half increased their commitment and 14 pledged for the first time. Thank you for your generosity and the value you place on sustaining our shared spiritual home.

Thank you, too, for your encouragement and enthusiastic support in every phase of the Budget Drive. We tried a new process this year, not knowing how it would all turn out—indeed we won't really know for a few more weeks—and at every step of the way, we have been delighted by generous offers of help from many, many people. It may take a village to raise a child but it definitely takes a whole congregation to “raise” an Annual Budget Drive.

We are still waiting for responses from about 30 individuals and families. We need support from everyone to ensure that UUCD thrives in the coming year in a spirit of abundance and joy. To members, we hope you will take seriously your membership commitment to contribute financially to your spiritual home. To friends, we hope your experience with us inspires you to support this spiritual community which is here for you and your family.

Your financial commitment card can be mailed to the office or dropped in the collection plate on Sunday. If you have questions, comments, or concerns please contact Co-chairs **Chris Halfar** or **Judy Lacker**.

From the *Growth Advisory Ministry*

At last month's Board of Trustees meeting, the members of the Board voted to create a new ministry at UUCD, called the Growth Advisory Ministry. Following recommendations from the Growth Team, the think tank group that met every other week for the last year to research and study congregational growth, and then subsequently voted on by the Board, the Growth Advisory Ministry's work will be to guide and lead efforts for growth within the UUCD community. Acting as true ministers, the Growth Advisory Ministry will focus on helping to bring awareness and advice on congregational growth to existing groups within UUCD, to ensure that our community has the foundation it needs to grow both in numbers, as an organization and as a faith community seeking to have a positive impact on this world.

Note from the Growth Advisory Ministry Leader, Shawn Sweeney:

This month, **Anne Krieg** and I attended the third of six retreats on congregational growth as a part of the Eastern Regional UUA Growth and Vitality project. Joining five other Congregations from as far south as Manassas, VA, all the way up to Syracuse, NY, we spent the weekend learning from one another on what it takes to grow a congregation. Specifically we participated in three workshops focusing on the use of Facebook and Google advertisements, creating a sense of belonging

within your congregation, and on the differences between congregational meetings that use a business practice versus meetings that use a spiritual practice to guide them. Over the next two months we'll share a short reflection on these workshops and how they may apply to UUCD. Our first one, “Enriching Members' Sense of Belonging” is below, and “Meetings that Matter” will come in June.

We also spent time setting goals for the next six months. These goals will help guide our newly formed Growth Advisory Ministry and our work ahead until the next retreat in later this Fall. The first and primary goal that we set was for a Congregation wide leadership retreat in June which focuses specifically on Congregational Growth. This retreat will be a four hour experience where participants will learn about how congregations grow, what it takes, and how each member plays a role in that process. We'll also take time to reflect on UUCD's distinct calling in the Danbury area, as well as the wider world. All are welcome to attend, and leaders of committees and groups at UUCD are strongly encouraged to attend. This meeting will take the place of our final Common Council meeting for the year. We'll either meet either the weekend of June 18th & 19th, or the weekend of June 25th & 26th. More details will be forthcoming at the April 27th Common Council meeting, and elsewhere.

(continued)

A Key to Growth - Enriching Member's Sense of Belonging

There is a difference between feeling welcomed, and feeling a sense of belonging. In our Congregations it is of critical importance that we strive to make everyone feel they are welcome when they walk across the threshold of our sanctuaries whether they are brand new, or have been with the community for decades. One can feel very welcome however, while at the same time feel separate, a part from the larger whole. Welcome to be present, but still on the periphery, feeling alone, without a sense of belonging. When we have a sense of belonging we feel a part of something bigger, something greater, something beyond ourselves, something that if we were not present, the whole would be weaker.

In this though process, especially when considering growth, we may turn to this passage by Irish Philosopher John O'Donohue from his book *Eternal Echoes*:

...the hunger to belong is at the heart of our nature. Cut off from others we atrophy and turn in on ourselves. Mostly, we do not need to make an issue of belonging: when we belong, we take it for granted. Merely to be excluded or to sense rejection hurts. When we become isolated, we are prone to be damaged; our minds lose their flexibility and natural kindness.

We become vulnerable to fear and negativity. A sense of belonging, however, suggests warmth, understanding, embrace. The ancient and eternal values of human life - truth, unity, goodness, justice, beauty and love - are all statements of true belonging.

Our hunger to belong is the longing to bridge the gulf that exists between isolation and intimacy. Distance awakens longing; closeness is belonging. Everyone longs for intimacy and dreams of a nest of belonging in which one is embraced, seen and loved. Something within each of us cries out for belonging.

We can have all the world has to offer in terms of status, achievement and possessions, yet without a true sense of belonging, our lives feel empty and pointless. Like the tree that puts roots deep into the clay, each of us needs the anchor of belonging in order to bend with the storms and continue toward the light.

How does reading this passage make you feel? How is your sense of belonging at UUCD? Do you do anything that helps others feel a sense of belonging? What more could you do? What do we as a faith community do to foster a sense of belonging? Remember, there's a difference from being welcoming. What more could we do?

Before the end of our formal year, we'll explore these questions in a service, and talk more about what fostering a sense of belonging in our community can mean for us as we continue to mature and grow.

Adult Education

From the *Joy of Food Group* (formerly *Ethical Eating*)

In one of our last meetings in February, the former Ethical Eating Group, now *Joy of Food Group* was reviewing a list of "Five Easy Ways to Go Organic." With this resource we found that most of the "easy ways" involved shortcuts and foods that we would never consider good first steps for going organic. The ideas included buying organic ketchup for your hot dogs, and buying organic potatoes for example. Neither of which are really great for our bodies, and ultimately, though it might be easy, not where we want to be headed in terms of changing our very complicated food system. So instead, the group decided to make its own list entitled *Five Ways to Eat According to Your Values*. We're sharing this new list with you for your information, and for your feedback. How did we do? Are these things you would consider doing? Are you already doing them? Please give us your thoughts via email to **Shawn Sweeney**.

#1 - Focus on Nutrient Density

When you're in the grocery store, focus on buying produce and packaged products that are packed with nutrients. Doing so, you will inevitably be avoiding foods that are genetically modified and or conventionally grown, as these types of produce and/or products lose nutrient density as they are cultivated using synthetic fertilizers, pesticides and genetic practices that give them defenses for certain pests. Organic produce and products will generally have greater nutrient density given the quality of the soil and the methods used for cultivation.

#2 - No More Additives

When you read product labels a lot of times you'll see laundry lists of ingredients, many of which have more syllables than you can say in one breath, or might be unpronounceable all together. These ingredients, especially sugars like high fructose corn syrup, are added to the products to enhance the flavor. Unfortunately, much is unknown about these additives, and we do well to our bodies and to the earth if we avoid them entirely. To focus on nutrient density, check out the product labels either on the packages themselves, or in the case of produce the signs near them. They will give you a lot of great data on what you can expect to be putting into your body by the ingredients or the makeup of the product. Only buy the stuff that has healthy items at the top of the list, and avoid long laundry lists. You'll be doing yourself a big favor.

#3 Organic Packaged Foods

With big families, and busy lives we all know how challenging it can be to cook and still have time to eat and relax without rushing. So inevitably, the word of packaged and prepared foods can save us a lot of time...as long as we know what is safe to buy. Learn about the companies you're buying from and not only their growing practices, but their processing and packaging practices as well. Buy products that are organically grown, cooked and processed with ingredients you're okay with consuming and packaged in containers that are safe for your food.

#4 Produce to Avoid when It's Conventionally Grown

Living in Connecticut it's nearly impossible to eat organic year round unless you're really good at canning, or don't mind the carbon footprint of foods flown from halfway around the world. If you're not okay with that, then we have to make some concessions. That doesn't mean that we entirely abandon our work to go green and eat for sustainability. We can focus on avoiding a few produce items that are particularly bad when they are raised conventionally. Here's a list of the top 10 items:

<i>Fruit</i>	<i>Vegetables</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peaches • Apples • Nectarines • Grapes • Pears 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bell Pepper • Celery • Spinach • Potatoes • Carrots

At least try to avoid buying these produce items when they are conventionally grown. If you can buy them organically, you're not only helping the Earth, but you're also protecting yourself from harmful chemicals and other toxins.

#5 - Build Community Around Food and Eating According to Your Values

Given the magnitude of the problems in our Food System, we cannot help but create community around food and eating to help us not only cope, but to imagine a new food system built for the entire world. One that nourishes the soil, as well as our bodies and our souls. The **Joy of Food Group** is one community you might consider joining. Now that we are finished with our course, we are now meeting monthly to prepare a communal meal. Last month our menu consisted of Sugarsnap Peas with Ginger and Shallots, Cucumber Risotto with Mushrooms and a White Bean and Asparagus Salad. It was wonderful and we cannot wait for our next meal which will either be April 3rd or April 17th. One of our members hosts the meal, and chooses the menu, everyone who is coming works together to purchase the ingredients, we then cook together and sit and eat together.

From the *Social Action Committee*

Preparations for **HomeFront Day, Saturday, May 7th**, are now underway. HomeFront is the volunteer residential home repair program helping to keep people in need in their homes. This year our HomeFront house will be a repair project staffed solely of volunteers from our church. Please consider signing up for this very rewarding and meaningful program. There are many ways to assist this effort, including preparing food for workers, monetary donations to cover our cost of participation, and child care. (Please note: kids 14 and over may participate with a signed permission slip.) Our home project this year is in Bethel. It needs a lot of TLC, especially staining the outside and cleaning of the yard. Please contact **Chris** or **Max Schmitt** for more information. Thank you!

Soup Kitchen Corner

On Saturday, May 7th Soup Kitchen Team #4 will serve up a hot, nutritious meal at the Dorothy Day House of Hospitality on Spring Street in Danbury with the help of our UUCD Junior High Youth Group. In addition, Team Leader **Lisa Austin-Smith** will be joined by **Joanne Davidson, Debbie Musumeci, Cathie Billings, Jane Leff, Laura Ross, Jan Galloway, Nancy Hershatter, Val Cochrane, Claudia Volano, Meg or Chris Byrne** and **Tim and Janelle Lowe**. Thank you everyone for giving up part of your Saturday afternoon to meet a community need.

Remember, you can volunteer to lead a team; you can participate as a regular team member; you can serve as an alternate when extra hands are needed; you can help us feed our neighbors with a gift card in any amount from any local supermarket; and finally you can bring in donations of non-perishable food items for the food offering each Sunday.

Please remember that if you are not able to volunteer on your scheduled day, you must find a substitute from the alternates list which you can access from our website. The show must go on in 2011!

We also want to thank all of our UUCD "In From the Cold" volunteers. This is the warming program that opens Dorothy Day from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. each evening from November 15th to April 15th. Our congregation was responsible for keeping people warm and welcome on Tuesday evenings all winter long! Thank you **Ross Fenster, Darlene Anderson-Alexander, Amanda Ratzken, Shawn Sweeney, Meredith Spector, John Miglietta, Janet Cory, Sandy Ward Murphy** and **Scott Uhrick**. You are superstars!

From *Team Green*



They're baaaaack! Buy your Heirloom Tomato and Pepper Plants at the Ridge!

The UUCD will once again hold an Heirloom Seedling Sale this year. We have 14 varieties of tomatoes, and 8 varieties of pepper plants organically growing in the basement of the Founder's House, and will be selling them the weekends of May 21st and 28th. We will also have herb plants for sale. Last year we made \$600 from the sale; come help us double that figure this year!

There will be no pre-ordering this year, but we will have more plants for sale. UUCD members and friends can buy plants during the potluck just before the Annual Meeting on May 20th, prior to our sales to the general public the following day.

We do need help with plant care, especially the week of May 16th, when we are "hardening off" the plants, and for the plant booths May 21st, 22nd, 28th, and 29th. To volunteer, see or call **Barbara Myers** or **Suzanne Perry**.



Composting...at the UUCD and at Home!

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

By May 1st, the UUCD will have a compost bin, which will be located at the side of the Founder’s House. All vegetable kitchen scraps and coffee grounds after coffee hour should be put there, and covered up with either dead leaves or hay. (There will always be a supply of hay or leaves available next to the bin for this purpose.) We can also add shredded paper from our office paper shredder, as well as grass clippings in limited amounts.

Why Compost?

Composting is nature’s way of breaking down matter; microorganisms in the compost pile feed on the material, and turn it into “humus.” The real question is, “why NOT compost?” You can reduce what goes into our landfills while at the same time enriching your own soil at home! The compost we make at the Ridge will be spread on our gardens, adding rich texture and nutrients to our soil.

What do I need to compost at home?

You need a place to put it; this can be anything from a simple heap to a fancy store-bought container. Compost can be made aerobically (that is, with air) or anaerobically (no air). Some of the store-bought containers are anaerobic (sealed), but most people who compost just have an aerobic pile or bin in their back yards. Note: Although commercial compost can be made from meat scraps, bones, etc., a small pile should not have these components, as they tend to smell and attract critters.

What helps speed compost along? Compost will be created no matter what you do, but you can help speed it along!

1. Size matters: the smaller the materials, the faster they will break down! The ideal pile itself is 1 cubic yard.
2. The ratio of how you build it: Microorganisms need both carbon and nitrogen; “brown” material is higher in carbon, while “green” material is higher in nitrogen. (see chart at the right.) Browns tend to be dryer than greens, but the true difference is in what they bring to the pile. **The most efficient compost piles have 3 “browns” to every 1 “green.”**
3. Ideally the pile has the moisture of a damp sponge, so if adding dry “browns”, add water, too.
4. To add oxygen to your pile, turn it over every 14 days or so.

BUILDING COMPOST

The ideal ratio for making compost is:

<div style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: brown;">3</div> <div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: brown;">“browns”</div> <div style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em; color: brown;">(high in Carbon)</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● shredded paper ● dead leaves ● hay/straw ● non-diseased plant trimmings ● sawdust (go easy on this one!) 	for every	<div style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: green;">1</div> <div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: green;">“green”</div> <div style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em; color: green;">(high in Nitrogen)</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● fruit/vegetable trimmings ● coffee grounds ● stale bread crumbs ● grass clippings ● barnyard manure (no pet droppings)
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Every time you put in a green, cover with a brown!

That’s it! Visit our compost bin at the UUCD, and start one of your own at home!
 Questions? Email **Barbara Myers** or a member of Team Green

From the *Denominational Affairs Committee*

UU Metro District Meeting

2011 District Annual Meeting May 6-7, 2011, Hyatt Morristown, Morristown NJ

Don't miss the Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed, keynote speaker at the 2011 District Annual Meeting, May 6-7 at the Morristown Hyatt. Rev. Morrison-Reed is a prominent African-American scholar and author of *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination* and *In Between: Memoir of an Integration Baby*. On Friday night, Peter Mayer, singer-songwriter well known for *Blue Boat Home*, will perform. Register by April 29th online or by mail postmarked by April 26th.

- Workshop 1 Supercharging Your UU Social Action**
- Workshop 2 From Nominating Committee to Leadership Development Team**
- Workshop 3 Creating Healthy Youth and Adult Relationships**
- Workshop 4 It Starts With Me: Learning Tools for Building a Multicultural Community**
- Workshop 5 A House United: On Becoming a Multigenerational Congregation**
- Workshop 7 Conversations Across Differences**
- Workshop 8 Covenanting With Our Justice Seeking Values**
- Workshop 9 Ministerial Search and Diversity**

General Assembly

Are You Planning to be a GA Delegate? If you are thinking of serving as a delegate to this year's General Assembly, June 22-26 in Charlotte, North Carolina, contact **Mary Alice Kimball** for information about the delegate selection process. If you cannot attend in person, you may still be able to serve as an off-site delegate. This year's GA business agenda includes a draft Statement of Conscience on Ethical Eating, plus several transformative proposals for bylaws amendments presented by the UUA Board: broadening the definition of congregations; permitting electronic voting; clarifying the credentialing process for religious educators; providing more flexibility in appointments to the Ministerial Fellowship Committee; eliminating Actions of Immediate Witness from the GA 2012 business agenda (restoring them for 2013); and providing a way to incorporate changes in proposals for amendments to Article II (Principles and Purposes). If you would like to talk about this year's GA business agenda, visit the table at the 2011 District Annual Meeting, May 6-7 in Morristown NJ, or contact District UUA Trustee John Hawkins.

Upcoming Events

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**. May meeting dates are the 14th and 28th.

New Saturday morning Yoga Class

Carrie Kane, a practicing massage therapist for over 30 years and a certified Yoga instructor will be teaching a new Yoga class Saturday mornings from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. She will be using the traditional forms of Hatha Yoga with the main focus on alignment, integrating some Taoist theory, meditation, breath work and relaxation. The cost is \$15.00 per class, with half going to UUCD. If the class expands to 1 ½ hours, the cost will be \$20.00.



Conversations

Conversations meets on the second Thursday of each month from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. in the Conference Room. All are welcome. The group chooses current topics of interest and their sources. Questions designed to stimulate conversation are emailed to all members. If you wish to receive our announcements and questions, please email at **Bruce Buzby**. Recently published books of interest are selected to stimulate and support discussions; reading the book is not mandatory in order to participate and enjoy the gathering. Recent topics have related to Ethics, Brain Function Research, Evolution, God, Iraq, Islamic Culture, Civil Strife, History, Science and Religion, DNA Research, Women's Liberation, Military Industrial Threat, China, Nation Building, Economics, Science, Art, and so on. Upcoming Conversations:

May 12, 2011: Practice of Medicine, Ethiopian Political Turmoil and the Process of Breaking and Rebuilding.

Facilitator: Cheryl Edelin. Source: "*Cutting for Stone*" by Abraham Verghese, 2020, 668 pages, \$8.69. A magnificent, sweeping novel that moves from India to Ethiopia to an inner-city hospital in New York City over decades and generations. This brilliant novel revolves around what is broken -- limbs, family ties, trust -- and the process of rebuilding them.

June 9, 2011: Unified Theory of State Formation.

Facilitator: Bob Bollinger. Source: "*The Origins of Political Order*" by Francis Fukuyama, 2011, 608 pages, \$19.49. Political theorist Fukuyama presents nothing less than a unified theory of state formation, a comparative study of how tribally organized societies in various parts of the world and various moments in history have transformed into societies with political systems and institutions and, in some cases, political accountability. Drawing upon a diverse range of sources—sociobiology and anthropology as well as macroeconomics and legal history—and paying particular attention to political development in Asia, Fukuyama describes a somewhat evolutionary mechanism wherein political systems develop in response to certain societal conditions and become institutionalized because of, among other things, their ability to adapt.

UUCD Quilt Cards



On Sunday, May 1st, **Marcia Brooker** will present a sermon regarding our beautiful "UUCD 175th Anniversary" Quilt. We still have some note cards commemorating the quilt. They will be available for purchase after the service. \$12.00 per box of 6 blank note cards. ALL PROFITS GO TO THE UUCD. For more information, contact **Mary Alice Kimball**.



Have you ever met a person or experienced an event that led you to find the “real you” within you? In each of our films this month, the lead characters discover themselves in entirely different ways.

7:00 p.m. – *Plastic* – If only I were taller, if only my nose weren’t crooked, if only my ears were smaller... Anyone recognize these thoughts? Well, through the magic of cinema, our heroine in this short film finds that all her wishes can be granted.

7:20 p.m. – *Do you Wanna Dance?* – Robert Krantz met the real Father Chris at a church function in Los Angeles and was told to come out and spend some time with him in Chicago where Father Chris is a Greek Orthodox priest and to meet his wife and kids. Mr. Krantz was going through a rough period in his life by the time he accepted the invitation. When he did, he found Father Chris to be very different from what he expected. When they parted, Father Chris gave Mr. Krantz a hat and said, “I want you to wear this, so that you will remember all the fun we had this weekend.” Mr. Krantz tried to explain how much it meant to him that one person would stop what they were doing and reach out to help another person, and told Father Chris, “I’m going to make a movie of it someday.” Ten years later, Robert Krantz writes and stars in *Do You Wanna Dance*. (104 min).

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, May 13th, 7:00 p.m.** in the Conference Room. As usual, all are welcome. Pizza is provided, bring your own beverage. Popcorn optional! Contributions will be gratefully accepted, all of which will go to the UUCD to encourage continuation of UUCD programs. **(For more information on these films and on our film series, check the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall, look under “UUCD Events” or visit *SpiritualCinemaCircle.com*.)**

UUCD Women's Retreat - May 13-15
Guest House Conference Center in Chester CT.

This is a wonderful event that connects, reconnects, fosters spiritual deepening, builds community and, of course, is lots of fun. The Committee has a great mix of workshops planned, which include choices of spiritual, active, and creative activities.

Hidden Treasure in Connecticut

I could not have imagined a more brilliant place to spend my last few years in Connecticut. A community of people who welcome and accept all; care for and love known and unknown friends; explore and work on their spirituality in a myriad of ways; believe in and work for projects of significance and do all of this with joy (and usually food and fun)... and a staff of women that just keep giving. It was truly a privilege to support this congregation with a pledge and participation. So glad we showed up at your doorstep.

Thank you all.
Karen Romanelli

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

- May 1, 2011** With Sacred Threads Marcia Brooker
The quilt and the quilter(s) as metaphor for building religious community. Learn about the secret of the quilt that hangs in the front of the Fellowship Hall!
- May 8, 2011** A Service for Mother's Day Reverend Barbara Fast
It seems all blame and blessing is laid at the feet of mothers. We will reflect on the expectations, challenges, blessings, burdens, and boundaries of motherhood with story, poetry, and song.
- May 15, 2011** To Be Determined.... Reverend Barbara Fast
For over ten years I've composed sermon topics and titles for bi-weekly newsletters. Who knows where we will be in a month! Stay posted.
- May 22, 2011 - 9:00 a.m.** A Celebration of our Shared Ministry of Education Reverend Barbara Fast,
Mary Collins, DRE, and the RE family
We will reflect on the meaning and importance of our child centered ministries and recognize and welcome new members who attend the 9:00 a.m. services.
- May 22, 2011 - 11:00 a.m.** Bridging Reverend Barbara Fast & Mary Collins, DRE
A service to recognize those youth who are graduating High School and their families and welcome new members who attend the 11:00 a.m. service.

One Service at 10:00 a.m.

- May 29, 2011** A Time for Peace Social Action Committee
As the nation pauses to honor those who have died in our nation's wars, we will pause to advocate for peace. The service will include readings, stories and songs that manifest our support for peace, justice and freedom.