



COMMENT

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury, 24 Clapboard Ridge Road, Danbury, CT 06811 * 203-798-1994

OCTOBER 2008

For the Time Being

Notes from the Interim Minister

What is interim ministry? Ways of thinking about it have evolved over time. Interim ministers used to be seen as placeholders, “holding the fort” while the Search Committee did its work. With this came the assumption that the interim year was a static time, and that Sunday attendance and pledging would fall. Fortunately, this view has changed!

Interim ministry began to be seen as a specialized vocation, and the interim year as an active time. Interim ministers were viewed as change agents. Sometimes this was purely for the sake of change; I remember hearing older colleagues speak of going in as interim to “shake the place up.”

These days, while there may still be room for some “shaking up,” thoughts about interim ministry have evolved even further. Interim ministry is still seen as transformational work – but the real “change agent” is now the congregation! The interim minister is there to assist, as “coach,” “midwife,” or “consultant.”

Current thinking is that congregations must complete “five developmental tasks” during the interim time. The more successful a congregation is in completing these, the greater likelihood of success in the new settled ministry:

- 1. Coming to Terms with History.** This can include celebrating the past and sharing congregational lore with newcomers, grieving the departure of the former minister, and deciding if there are parts of the congregation’s “script” that should be rewritten for the future.
- 2. Discovering a New Identity.** For UUCD, identity questions include: “Who are we as a congregation? How has our identity changed since the move to Danbury? How did Linda Hansen’s ministry shape our identity? And who are we now that she’s gone?” Clear answers to these questions will help guide the Search Committee in its choice of a ministerial candidate in 2010.
- 3. Allowing Leadership Changes and Empowering New Leadership.** With a change of ministerial leadership, shifts in lay leadership often naturally follow. Especially if there’s a substantial leadership turnover, it’s best that such changes happen during the interim period.
- 4. Renewing Denominational Connections.** As with Task 3, some of this happens naturally during the interim period. To move forward, the congregation *must* connect with the UUA. But a deeper current runs beneath the practical aspects: We are part of a wider religious movement with a vital message. We are part of something larger than ourselves. We are not alone.

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5. Committing to New Leadership and a New Future. The first four tasks move in the same direction, culminating in the final and most crucial task. This is not only about “finding a new minister,” it’s about *joyfully moving into a new future* with that minister. As church consultant Loren Mead says, “The installation service is more than the installing of a person into a job.” It’s also “the installation of a new sense of mission and of an invigorated leadership,” ministerial and lay.

More about the Developmental Tasks can be found in my September 21 sermon, posted at www.uudanbury.org. I’m looking forward to working with you this year, as you lay the foundation for the next chapter in your history!

Blessings,
Sue

**Deadline for the November Comment -
Friday, October 17th.**

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. October dates are the 4th and 18th.



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 located on Padanaram Road across from North Street Shopping Center. Everyone is welcome. If you would like to attend, please contact **Karen Gillotti**. October dates are the 11th and 25th.

Canvass Corner

by Ross Fenster

We will soon be kicking off our annual Canvass pledge drive which will cover the Congregation’s budget from July 2009 to June 2010. Seems early doesn’t it? We wouldn’t usually start our Canvass until early 2009.

Confucius once said that... “If you start early, work hard and involve other committed people there is nothing that can’t be accomplished.” It is critical that we have a successful Canvass and so we are starting early. We want to stop funding part of our expenses with our reserves, and we have to grow membership in order to do this. We would like a budget that will fund a full time Director of Religious Education, and will pay Fair Compensation to our settled minister in 2010. A successful Canvass is the beginning of this process so we can fulfill our vision of being a liberal religious beacon in Danbury.

Thank you in advance for your support and be looking for future Canvass Corner articles that will tell you all you ever wanted to know about our upcoming Canvass.



President's Letter

By Carl Tichler, President

As I attempted to collect my thoughts in attempting to write this month's letter, I found myself distracted by the recent series of news about the multiple problems in our economy and financial markets, and the feverish attempts within government to somehow address these problems, as well as the continuing parade of headlines about our upcoming presidential election. It feels to me as if I am bombarded with too much unimportant or distracting information masquerading as "news", with the real issues and discussion hard to find or missing entirely. There is the additional component of an unstated underlying fear and uncertainty which prevents real analysis, understanding, or consideration of different perspectives.

In trying to deal with this and bring some clarity to my own thoughts, I was reminded of Sue Spencer's recent sermon "What I Learned from the Sisters", on her time spent in a women's spiritual community in Brewster --- and how I might benefit from taking such a monastic perspective, taking away the distractions of the larger world and focusing on my personal needs and those of my community. I have also appreciated her effort to make the consideration of longer-term issues a regular part of our board meetings, since these have been recently been overwhelmed by more immediate considerations.

So in this month's letter, rather than discussing details of recent board and congregational activity, I will instead ask each of you to think of what brings you to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury. I feel that our strength as a community comes from the mutual support and empowerment we give each other, in all of our diversity of backgrounds and perspectives. This understanding and mutual bond provide me with the needed perspective and humanity that I don't see in the news coming from the larger world.

News from the Volunteer Committee

by Darlene Anderson-Alexander



~ We held a successful Committee/Volunteer Fair on Sunday the 21st. Thank you to all of the committee chairs and representatives who created visual representations of their good works and who shared their passion for their committees with fair goers. A special thank you to **Chan Roen** and **Veronica Swain** for creating our "Five to Thrive" banner which will be used many times this year. And, of course, thank you to everyone who looked around and considered all that it takes for our spiritual home to function smoothly.

~ If you signed the "I want to help" clipboard, THANK YOU! You will be contacted via "blind" email when opportunities to volunteer come up. Hopefully some congregational needs will match your availability and interest. If you would like to be added to this list, please contact Darlene Anderson-Alexander.

~ Look for opportunities to be an active part of this congregation on the bulletin board near the water fountain in the Fellowship Hall and in the "Help Wanted" section of the monthly Comments.

~ COMING SOON ... an on-line (or in-person if you prefer) interest inventory for you to participate in. We want to learn more about YOU!

~ Please continue to consider how you can contribute your FIVE (or five additional) HOURS to the UUCD this year so that we may THRIVE as a congregation!

~ For additional information, please contact Darlene Anderson-Alexander.

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

The summary statistics for Prepaid, July and August 2007-08 budget year is recorded below.

	<u>Prepaid</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>
% Annual Canvass pledge return	10.6%	16.4%	21.5%
Operating Income Year-to-date		\$28,093	\$37,072
Operating Expenses Year-to-date		\$15,625	\$35,886
Operating Income – Expense YTD		<u>\$12,468</u>	<u>\$ 1,216</u>

Analysis for August:

The Operating income YTD (\$37,072) is somewhat ahead of the Operating Expenses YTD due to the high level of payment of pledges prior to beginning of the current fiscal year. The August Operation Expenses (\$20,261) were somewhat higher than expected (\$18,661) but within a range that should not cause concern.

Annual Canvass

This year’s pledge drive resulted in 119 pledge’s pledging \$169,241 for the fiscal year 2008-2009. This is to be compared with last year’s 110 pledges with a total pledge return of \$163,068. We thank the congregation for their generosity.

It does look hopeful that the estimated use of reserves for this year (\$13,043) can be reduced somewhat since the pledge return in our budget was estimated at \$166,000. In addition several members have indicated that they will be adding their pledging soon.

Bruce Buzby, Finance Committee Chair
Marie Dupree, Treasurer



Help wanted

- Cleaning crew for the first week of each month; join a team and do as much or as little as you can
- Clear out and organize the “coat closet” and “audio closet” (1 time event);
- Help the Finance Committee with clerical tasks that can be done from home.

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

General Assembly Comes to the Ridge

The Denominational Affairs Committee is sponsoring a new adult program entitled, General Assembly Comes to the Ridge. We will meet on the 1st and 3rd Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Conference Room. Watch for more information in your weekly email and announcements.

Religious Education Update

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

Dear MEMBERS & FRIENDS (a.k.a. “The Village” as in “It Takes a Village to Raise a Child”),

You may have noticed children and youth after services in the Fellowship Hall, and that parents aren't running off to get them in the house. That's because after RE programming they are joining the rest of the community for refreshments on a regular basis. They are no longer eating snack at the house (unless they cook something as a part of their curriculum). **During refreshment time, I encourage you, if you feel shy, to SMILE, SAY HELLO, ASK A QUESTION, SHARE WHAT YOU LIKE TO DO, or TELL a JOKE or STORY!** You will enjoy a different perspective and perhaps find someone who has a common interest!

Calendar of RE as of the September *Comment* deadline:

Sundays:

October 5th :

- **Intergenerational Service with Jim Scott** at both services. Just Nursery Care for our youngest members. All others meet and stay in the Fellowship Hall today (*no 7th-9th Our Whole Lives group either*).
- 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. - **10th to 12th Graders Our Whole Lives** Sexuality and Values – 1st session – (no Sr. High Youth group meeting today).

October 12th: (Columbus Day weekend DRE off today)

- Group Sessions today.
- **Sam McCoy**, Religious Education leader for 6th-8th and RE Chairperson, presents 11:00 a.m. Children's Focus.
- **Junior High Youth Group meets today at 11:00 a.m.** Youth either come with your ideas for activities or contact your Advisors: **Veronica Swain**, and **Greg & Cathy Pings** with them prior to this date.

October 19th:

- Group sessions.

October 26th:

- Group sessions.
- At 11:00 a.m. **Rev. Sue** will present the Children's Focus.

November 2nd:

- **Senior High Youth Group** will present special programming at the House at both 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. (no regular groups **except 7th-9th OWL meets in the 2nd floor conference room at 9:00 a.m.**).
- 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. - **10th to 12th Graders Our Whole Lives** Sexuality and Values – (no Sr. High Youth afternoon meeting today).

FEEDBACK PLEASE

The RE Committee and DRE are seeking feedback regarding our programming for this year in time to adapt, if need be. **In particular, we are curious about the 11:00 a.m. programming and Children's Focus at that time that is curricula inspired.** (RE has a trial run through November being responsible for the 11:00 a.m. Children's Focus).

The RE committee is charged with gathering input from: **Religious Educators, parents, children and youth** attending. Please contact a member of the RE Committee: **Samantha McCoy**, chair, **Fern Paes**, **David Payne** **Suzanne Perry**, **Barbara Searing**, **Herb Kinsmann**, or DRE.

Questions to address:

- Is the 11:00 a.m. Children's Focus giving you a UU perspective on our Jewish and Christian Heritage?
- Are the children/youth making connections with their peers, their leaders? (*FYI - inviting visiting friends/family members is encouraged. Another idea to aid a shy or new child - make a play date or brunch together with other RE families. When they get to know the other children better, they look forward to seeing them on Sunday*).
- Is the material suitable and engaging for your children and the group?
- What type of activity might we add more of, and can you help provide it? (music? a guest? share a skill or passion?).

Registration

At the September deadline we have had one service. Out of 44 attendees on opening day, 19 children/youth are registered. THANKS to those of you who have helped us gather important and helpful information. If you haven't yet, please complete a registration form (in the Fellowship Hall RE table, on-line at www.uudanbury.org - Religious Education – forms – you can print out).

RE Calendar (year at a glance) is posted on our web site.

6th, 7th, and 8th graders -- The Junior High Youth Group. The first meeting will be Sunday, October 12th at 11:00 a.m. in the Youth Room, and it's vital that you attend. We will spend some time getting to know each other, then work on a covenant where you tell us what the rules for the coming year will be. Finally, we will plan a fun event that we can do in October, but we won't know what it is unless you tell us. Questions? Call **Veronica Swain** at 797-8956 or **Greg & Cathy Pings** at 791-0126. Better yet, save your questions for the 12th. See you then!

Greetings from the Social Action Committee!

by Jean Hislop, Chair

The Social Action Committee had our first meeting since the summer break, on September 9th. It was a well attended meeting, and a very productive one. The Social Action Committee is diving right into our objectives for this year.

Members of the Social Action Committee recently met with state and local leaders to address Immigrants Rights. Including our wishes that they support the following two house bills HR 1176, also known as the Child Citizen Protection Act, and HR 5950, also known as the Detainee Basic Medical Care Act.

SAC members have also attended an interesting lecture, "Rethinking Immigration" at Western Connecticut State University on Wednesday, September 17th, given by New York University Professor Suarez-Orozco of the Harvard Immigration Project. Dr Orozco's lecture was inspiring and enlightening, and dealt heavily with the statistics regarding immigration today.

On September 25th, we continued our work for Immigrants rights, by sponsoring a "Night of a Thousand Conversations", a nationwide night of discussion and dialogue about the erosion of civil liberties, and how this specifically effects the immigrant community. For more information, please visit www.rightsworkinggroup.org.

On the anti-war front, we will be helping to sponsor a group of Interfaith Peace Pilgrims in October. *Pilgrims for Peace* is looking for a place in Danbury to stop and talk about issues pertaining to peace, social justice, and equality. The Social Action Committee has been asked to host an evening of discussion at our church on October 30th, at 7:00 p.m., as well as a potluck dinner. Pilgrims may also need lodging for the night. If you can be a host home for one or two of these pilgrims, please let us know. In addition, our peace vigil attendees continue to stand in protest of the war in Iraq every Saturday morning from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Danbury War Memorial. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

This Time in History

by Douglas Parkhurst



Over the next 1-2 years the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury will be occupied with the work of selecting a settled minister. This task is not new to us, though the modern ministerial search process is more lengthy and sophisticated than it was in days gone by. Since its founding in 1822, the UUCD has been served by approximately sixty ministers, both permanent and temporary. Church records for August 1868 indicate a call was made that month by the church to a minister from Maine. This candidate apparently chose not to accept the offer. The following entries appear in the records for September 1868:

Notice

The members of the First Universalist Society of Danbury, Conn. are hereby warned to attend a special meeting of said Society, to be holden at their Church, on Saturday, September 26th, 1868, at 7 o'clock P.M. to take action on the settlement of a Pastor over said Society, and to do any other proper business.

T.H. Foster

L.A. Ward

L.L. Hubbell

Society's Committee.

Danbury, Ct. Sept. 21st, 1868.

In accordance with the above notice the Society met and organized, by appointing Bro. S.A. Hurlbut, as Moderator, and A.A. Heath, Clerk, Pro Tem.

Motion by Bro. S. Bates, that this Society extend a "call" to Bro. W.G. Haskell, of Marblehead, Mass. to preach for us one year, for the sum of \$1200. - Carried. Meeting adjourned till tomorrow immediately after the afternoon service.

Attest, A.A. Heath, Clerk Pro Tem.

Sept. 27, 1868. Met agreeably to adjournment. Committee reported that a house could be procured for Bro. Haskell, about the first of November. Adjourned.

Attest, A.A. Heath, Clerk Pro Tem

Bro. William G. Haskell did accept the call of the Society and ministered in Danbury until October 30, 1870.

Meditation and the "Power of NOW"

Join us for a 10 week course study reading "The Power of Now" written by Eckhart Tolle beginning on Monday, October 6th from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. in the Conference Room. The experience will be transformative and enlightening. Eckhart Tolle's book will help us understand how to change negative thinking, fear, anxiety, resentment, attachment and negative relationship issues. We also get greater insight into ego consciousness and what it means to experience true JOY in life as opposed to the opposite polarities of sadness and happiness. This course will give us the opportunity to expand our spiritual practice to the next dimension of thinking including a daily practice. The class will be limited to the first 12 people who sign up, also, it will be necessary to have your own copy of the book mentioned above (\$14.00 in bookstores, \$9.75 @ Amazon) and a weekly donation to defray costs of materials and electricity will be requested. For more information and sign-up contact **Joe Gillotti**.

Jim Scott Returning to the UUCD!
~ IN CONCERT ~
“A CELEBRATION OF EARTH AND PEACE”



Saturday, October 4, 2008
 7:00 p.m., UUCD Fellowship Hall
 All Advance Sale Tickets - \$8.00; \$12.00 at the Door

For more than two decades, Jim Scott has made it his business to create and perform music that celebrates the earth. His songs and poetry have inspired and educated audiences around the world. He has developed presentations for every age group and crafted songs that sensitize his listeners to the beauty of the earth, teaching principles of ecology in memorable verses. Jim has a long connection with UUs and has visited our congregation two times before to lead us in worship. **THIS TIME**, however, in addition to leading our Sunday services, Jim will be performing a concert, open to all, the night before!

Many people know Jim as a member of the Paul Winter Consort. His hymn, "Gather the Spirit" has become a staple for many congregations - one of three he has in our hymnbook. Jim was the Co-Chair of the Seventh Principle Project, the UU ecological group, and helped develop the "Green Sanctuary" program for churches to follow to become more ecologically sound. He composed many pieces recorded by the Winter Consort and is known for his lyrical songs of nature, peace, and other positive values. Pete Seeger has called Jim "... some kind of a magician." There's also lots of good humor in his songs; kids and adults will all find something to laugh as well as sing about.

There is still time to buy your tickets for this awe-inspiring evening! Please call the UUCD office at 798-1994, option 1 or contact **Val Cochrane** or **Darlene Anderson-Alexander**.



Soup Kitchen Corner

by Lynn Taborsak, Coordinator

There is still time for volunteers to sign up for a UU Soup Kitchen team for the coming year! On the first Saturday of each month, we provide a hot, nutritious meal at the Dorothy Day House of Hospitality on Spring Street in Danbury. We have four teams altogether, so you'll only have to work on three Saturday afternoons every year. Please sign up between services with **Lynn Taborsak** or add your name and contact information to the Soup Kitchen Roster on the table in the rear of the sanctuary.

Everyone is welcome to join in this effort. You can volunteer to **LEAD** a team; you can participate as a **REGULAR TEAM MEMBER**; you can serve as an occasional **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 basket in the foyer to help replenish local food pantries.

On Saturday, October 4th, Soup Kitchen Team #4 will be led by **Lisa Austin Smith** and **Debbie Musumeci** and includes: **Randy Smith, Joanne Davidson, Cathie Billings, Jan Galloway, Jane Leff and Haley and Darrin Perlow**. It is officially fall and guests are very appreciative of our hospitality. If you cannot come on your assigned date, please find a substitute from the alternates list. Remember, the show must go on!

Adult Education Program: "The Bible for Religious Liberals" led by Sue Spencer

The Rev. David Eaton, late minister of All Soul's Church (UU) in Washington, D.C., liked to say, "Religious liberals need to know the Bible even better than conservatives do!" This four-session introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), facilitated by Sue Spencer, is offered in that spirit.

We'll meet on four Tuesday evenings at the Ridge: October 14 and 28, and November 11 and 25, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. (If necessary, class participants may agree on a rescheduled final class date, to avoid the Tuesday before Thanksgiving.) Please bring a Bible (preferably in a modern, non-paraphrase translation) if you have one! Please register with Sherry Kyriacou by calling the office at (203) 798-1994 or emailing her at secretary@uudanbury.org.

Participants will also find it helpful to read the first few chapters of John Buehrens' book, *Understanding the Bible: An Introduction for Skeptics, Seekers, and Religious Liberals* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003), which is readily available, new or used, in paperback.

Theater Enthusiasts

by Keith Dupree

Join us for local theatre on Thursday, October 2nd, at TheatreWorks in New Milford, to see Stephen Sondheim's *A Little Night Music*. To quote TheatreWorks, "One of Broadway's most overlooked musical masterpieces romantic and achingly beautiful ...deals with love in all its wondrous, humorous, and ironic forms." More information, including directions to the playhouse, can be found at www.theatreworks.us.

Normally, tickets at TheatreWorks run between \$20 and \$28, but October 2nd 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 p.m. 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 to let us know you are coming, so we can look for you and try to find seats together.

Movies with a Message – The Second Friday in October

by Keith Dupree



This fall we are moving our Spiritual Circle Cinema presentations to the second Friday of the month. Our objective is to provide an opportunity to view a movie of substance in a living room setting, and an opportunity to discuss it with friends. This month's themes: Dreams and Hope.

Our feature presentation for October is *Guarding Eddy*. This touching film is based on the true story of 18-year-old Eddy Patterson, an autistic sports fanatic, who dreams of playing pro basketball. Through his determination and despite his ineptitude, Eddy wins our hearts. In a climatic scene that is shockingly cruel and yet ultimately compassionate, we find solace in an answer to the question: How can one respond when cold reality intrudes into the lives of those who pursue the impossible dream!

We will begin our evening with a selected short, *Feathers to the Sky*. In Uruguay, a young girl yearns for an education but is forced to sell "feathers" (dyed marsh weeds) to support herself and her disabled grandfather. One kindly person reaches out to her and changes her life with an idea. Beautiful and gentle, this film has its own message of hope.

Please join us on Friday, October 10th, at 7:00 p.m. in the UUCD conference room. As usual, all are welcome. Pizza (Vegi) is provided for those who wish to chip in. Bring your own beverage. Popcorn optional!



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 September through December follows:

October 9, 2008 - Topic: Battle of Faiths. Facilitator: Rev. Sue Spencer. Source: "I Don't Believe in Atheists" by Chris Hedges, 2008, 224 pages, \$16.50. Hedges shatters the new atheists' assault against religion in America, and in doing so, makes way for new, moderate voices to join the debate. This is a book that must be read to understand the state of the battle about faith.

November 13, 2008 - Topic: History of Language. Facilitator: Bruce Buzby. Source: "The Horse, the Wheel, and Language" by David W. Anthony, 2007, 566 pages, \$25.20. A thorough look at the cutting edge of anthropology, Anthony's book is a fascinating look into the origins of modern man.

December 11, 2008 - Topic: History of Liberalism. Facilitator: to be determined. Source: "The Conscience of a Liberal" by Paul Krugman, 2007, 352 pages, \$17.13 2007. Paul Krugman, today's most widely read economist, studies the past eighty years of American history, from the reforms that tamed the harsh inequality of the Gilded Age to the unraveling of that achievement and the reemergence of immense economic and political inequality since the 1970s.

Services at 9 and 11 a.m.

October 5, 2008. **Gather the Spirit - A Healing for the World.** Jim Scott will lead the services. Jim mixes songs and stories in a message of peace and reconciliation for a wounded world and our struggling American society. Amid wars, cataclysmic weather events, and a divisive politics, any long term vision of sustainability is obscured if not abandoned. We can generate that renewal of spirit for the work we have before us - nothing less than a job of healing, the earth and ourselves.

October 12, 2008 (Association Sunday). **The Ties that Empower.** Congregational polity (self-governance) is one of the touchstones of Unitarian Universalism - and yet UUCD is part of a wider religious movement with a saving message. This year's Association Sunday theme is "Growing Our Spirit," and the offering taken (except for money specifically labeled "pledge payment") will support two UUA initiatives: (1) Lay Theological Education, and (2) Excellence in Ministry (scholarships for promising ministerial students, continuing education for clergy, and support for UU ministers of color). Last year's Association Sunday, in which UUCD participated, raised \$1.4 million! For more information, or to make an on-line gift, please go to www.uua.org/giving/associationsunday. Service led by the Rev. Sue Spencer.

October 19, 2008. **American Plus.** U.S. Census projections indicate that non-hispanic whites will no longer comprise a majority of the population by the year 2042. What can we learn from the "next majority" about the challenges of living in the dominant culture without sacrificing your own identity, history and traditions. Service will be led by Ileana Velasquez, MSW, who was born in Puerto Rico and raised in New York City. She has been a Danbury resident for the past 32 years and is currently working with the Department of Children and Families.

October 26, 2008. **Election Sermon, 2008.** "The Election Sermon" was a tradition in 19th century Unitarian circles - not to endorse candidates, but to lift up some of the spiritual issues raised by an election. This sermon attempts to follow in the footsteps of our forebears. Service led by the Rev. Sue Spencer.