Sunday, August 2, 10:30am
*In the Midst of Terror and Wonder*
Lois Shepherd Porter

*Music: Karen Hosmer, oboe; Mark Evans, piano*

At the height of summer, when many of us are traveling, we will reflect on the spiritual benefits that can be derived from interacting with people from other cultures.

Sunday, August 9, 10:30am
*Beyond Belief*
Rev. Margret A. O’Neall

*Music: Elizabeth Huntley, harp*

Unitarian Universalists have been called “freethinking mystics with hands” – faithful people who will not be bound to a static creed, and who commit to a practical religion, a religious practice of making a difference. What does it mean to be part of a religion that is beyond belief?

Sunday, August 16, 10:30am
*Beyond Walls*
Rev. Margret A. O’Neall

*Music: Graham Wolfe, piano*

It is often said that the coming generations care little about building institutions, and much about the difference they can make for those in need. How can we move beyond the walls of our institutions to create a more just and compassionate world for all people?

Sunday, August 23, 10:30am
*Re-Creation*
Rev. Margret A. O’Neall

*Music: Evelyn Welch, violin; Gary Griffiths, piano*

Summer is a time for recreation -- a time to change the pattern, to replenish our resources, to re-create ourselves. The Jewish mystical Kabbalah tradition speaks of *Tikkun olam*, which translates as “repairing the world.” As people of faith, we are called to repair the brokenness of the world, which begins with healing our own lives.

Sunday, August 30 10:30am
*Legacy of our 2nd U*
Phil Schulman

*Music: Peg Delaney, jazz piano*

Universal Salvation is the root of one of our two core theological traditions. Exploring the submerger and reemergence of Universalism, we ask: how is this stream feeding our living tradition? How does it lead us to give the world a challenging and hopeful message of love and universal kinship?
CIRCLES

Mission:
Connecting in spiritual community, we celebrate life with joy
grow in compassion
create justice

What’s on Your Summer Reading List?

One of the ways people learn about one another is by examining the books they find on their bookshelf, or stacked on the table beside a favorite chair. The “summer reading list” has a long and honored tradition in our educational system, encouraging kids to keep up their reading skills when school is out—and many of us search out books to take along on vacation, planning to spend long hours reading on a beach or by a mountain stream. I have fond memories from my childhood, waking up early on long summer days, grabbing a bowl of cereal and a book to enjoy on the backyard patio, or curling up on a chaise lounge in the shade when it was too hot to do anything else but read.

I have been thinking a lot about my own summer reading list these days, what it says about my loves, my learnings, my curiosity. So I thought I would share my list with you—maybe it will give you some hints about our explorations together in the coming months!

Fiction is always my go-to for relaxation, and this summer I am spending time with Anne of Green Gables, Lucy Maud Montgomery’s 11-book series about a girl on Prince Edward Island in the early 20th century. These are the books I was reading with my 100-year-old aunt before her death in early June, and it feels like an act of loving connection to complete the series as I remember the beautiful hours I spent reading aloud over this past year as she listened with attention and joy.

Then I plan to continue my cultural education by finally reading Malcolm Gladwell’s The Tipping Point, which was all the rage when it was published 15 years ago, but which somehow never made it into my reading list until now. And everyone at the Interim Ministry conference I attended in June was talking about John Kotter’s recent book, Accelerate (XLR8): Building Strategic Agility for a Faster-Moving World, so I figured I had better hurry up and add that to my list as well. Those same colleagues also recommended Thomas Bandy’s See, Know & Serve the People Within Your Reach, with guidance on how to connect more effectively with the folks in our congregations and communities. That one is now lined up in my Kindle queue!

I picked up Bruce Feiler’s book, The Secrets of Happy Families: Improve Your Mornings, Tell Your Family History, Fight Smarter, Go Out and Play, and Much More, again a recommendation from colleagues at the June conference, with two thoughts in mind. Many of the strategies that work well in family life can also be applied to congregational life, and I also wanted to see if it might be good material for a parent reading group in our Adult Faith Development program. I am finding it to be nicely researched, well written and entertaining, so we might be proposing a book group this year if there is interest.

On a more spiritual note, I now have a set of meditations called Always We Begin Again: the Benedictine Way of Living, by John McQuiston. This little book has lovely, thought-provoking guidance toward a life that is grounded in simplicity, welcome and compassion, and you will probably be hearing some of it as we open and close meetings in the coming year. Other spiritual explorations in my list include Barbara Taylor Brown’s Learning to Walk in the Dark, and I just finished poet Tracy Smith’s touching memoir, Ordinary Light.

And if there is time left after all that, I have loaded up Patrick Rothfuss’ The Slow Regard of Silent Things, and Paramahansa Yogananda’s Autobiography of a Yogi, a classic first published in 1946. There is enough variety in that list to satisfy my moods and interests in these summer months.

So—what are you reading in these lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer? Let’s talk about it when I see you in church!

Margret
me when I went to high school cons. During each midnight worship, I would feel heavier and lighter at the same time. I could appreciate the gravitas of the service and worshiping together while simultaneously feeling able to handle the weight because of the community that was gathered there with me. Ask the youth in our congregation. I’m sure they feel the same way.

The second source is the words and deed of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transforming power of love. UUs have been active in many instances of fighting for justice recently, from walking with our “Standing on the Side of Love” banner at pride parades and LGBTQIA protests to traveling to Alabama commemorate the 50th anniversary of the march on Selma while still holding up the work we need to do.

We have many wells of wisdom to guide us to action like this. Whether we are moved by a religious quote, such as Romans 13:10, “Love does no harm to its neighbor…” or a more secular act, such as the Salt March led by Gandhi in 1930, we cannot deny that we are moved by such prophetic people. If you doubt it, may I remind you that one of our own youths was moved to start a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) at her high school this upcoming year.

The last source is the spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate this sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature. This is a source I see actively at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady. From drum circles at the full moon with Earth Circles to the UUSS camping trip later this month, this is a congregation that enjoys communing with and caring for nature as a spiritual practice. I admit, coming from Manhattan, spending time in nature doesn’t come naturally to me, if you’ll excuse my pun. I am excited to learn how to delve deeper into this source with this congregation as we learn together.

I hope now you, like the children in our summer RE program, have a better understanding of some of the sources. I do not have the space to discuss all the sources here, but I am always happy to discuss them more in person. Perhaps at the camping trip? See you all then!

Julie

Six is Just as Great as Seven

In the last Circles, I mentioned my favorite principle- the free and responsible search for truth and meaning. We all know our principles, but many people forget about something just as important as our seven principles, though - our six sources at http://goo.gl/Wg0Hlr.

Our six sources serve as a way to guide our search. Unitarian Universalists come from all different faith and ethnic backgrounds. These sources help us to affirm and celebrate those differences as we learn together. Our summer RE curriculum “Love Will Guide Us” at http://goo.gl/85lz4j is implicitly starting to teach our children about our six sources. Why not then, I thought, since it is halfway through the summer; explicitly talk about them in Circles?

The first source is the direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder affirmed in all cultures. Direct experience renews your spirits. I know this was true for
PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

For many of us, it is the time of year for a little travel or adventure or perhaps just enjoying the warm weather. However you are filling your summer, I hope you are finding some time for relaxation and fun. At the time of this writing, I just completed a cycling tour across NYS on the Erie Canal, an experience that renewed my appreciation of the rich heritage and culture of our state and the many friendly and welcoming people I met along the way. It was a grand adventure.

The Board of Trustees has moved one step closer to developing a new governance structure. In June, we selected and appointed a team of five members to serve under the leadership of Reverend Margret as a Governance Task Force. This team: Frank Coon, Kathy Fernandez, Holly Hawkes, Dan Leonard and, Christy Multer will assist the Board in developing the new policies and structures that will allow us to move forward most effectively. We are appreciative of everyone involved. But I want to take a moment to acknowledge one individual, in particular, because almost nobody in the congregation knows him. Rob Brash is our Clerk of the Works, whose role is to represent the interests of UUSS during the construction phase. This is a hugely significant role, insuring the successful completion of the project within our cost and schedule targets. Rob is a professional Construction Manager; he is not a member of UUSS, and has declined our offers to compensate him for his role. His only connection to UUSS is that he happens to be married to our Church Administrator, Susan Marino.

We are all deeply indebted to Rob for his skills, guidance, good judgment and incredible dedication.

Please plan to be around for the dedication of the Entry Plaza on September 13th. It will be a memorable event and a fun time.

John Reschovsky

CONNECTING AND GROWING IN LOVE - TREASURER'S REPORT

New Year’s is a time to reflect on where we are and where we want to be. Although it is now summer and 80° many days, our new UUSS year began July 1st. At the spring Annual Meeting, projections of how UUSS would end the year financially were presented. One goal of the 2014-2015 budget was to end the year in the black by $14. (Remember UUSS had been running a deficit for several previous years so this represented positive thinking.) Projections then showed that depending on how many families fulfilled their pledges, we would end with several thousand much more than $14.

End-of-year financial statements, though still preliminary, exceeded these expectations tremendously. Of the $374,000 pledged for 2014-2015, 97.7% ($365,375) has been received as of June 30. This was the highest percentage of pledge income paid that has occurred since at least the 2008-2009 year. In addition, the total income for the church year was 3.4% higher than was budgeted. Although this amount may be lower due to additional bills yet to be paid, preliminary reports show that UUSS will end the 2014-2015 year in the black by approximately $17,000, an amount that will wipe out our past budget deficits.
PLAZA UPDATE: FOUNTAINS — AND A BIG PARTY — COMING SOON!

Our new entrance pool and plaza are finally starting to take shape.

Since the plaza construction work started in May, church members have watched as tons of gravel, then steel reinforcing rods, PVC piping, wires, and scads of wooden forms were gradually added to the area in front of the church that held our former reflecting pool.

July 15 was an especially exciting and noisy day as workers spent hours spraying and shaping gunite (pneumatically applied concrete) into the network of wooden forms and reinforcing rods — and voila! The shape of the new pool emerged.

Like the old pool, the new pool will contain three fountains along the northern end of the building and six fountains along the southern end (the parking lot end) with a bridge across the middle, running from the church front doors to the Wendell Road sidewalk. However, the new pool will use considerably less water than the old one because it will be both more shallow and more narrow, leaving space for plantings, benches and walkways along the sides and ends. Where once we had only a pool, now we will have both a pool and plaza.

Party on Sunday, September 13

A committee led by board member Gerry Schuth is already at work planning a major party and public open house on Sunday, September 13, to celebrate and show off these new facilities. This is also the date of our annual Water Communion and Ingathering Service, so we will be celebrating water both inside and outside the building that day. The party will be held from noon to 3 pm.

Invitees will include UUSS members and friends, our neighbors in the GE Realty Plot, other churches, Schenectady elected officials, and other groups that have used our spaces like the Oakroom Artists and A Place for Jazz.

The celebration will include music, food, a formal dedication of the pool, tours of both our buildings, games for kids, and displays of church history and current activities. Anyone who would like to help with the event is urged to contact Gerry at gerry@schuth.com. (see photos right and page 6)
HELP WANTED

UUSSBugs is looking for volunteers to help with summer services. For each of the services to September 6th, we need a minimum of 2 people who will share the tasks of greeting, ushering and mixing and serving lemonade. If you are willing to help out, please email your UUSSBUG Coordinators Lisa Angle at langle.fking@gmail.com or Mary Anne Mangano at mmangano@nycap.rr.com with the dates you are available. Thank you.

Fireside Chat is a place to bring your questions and make connections with members of UUSS! Join us after service in the Fireplace Room on first Sundays this summer: August 2nd!

~ The Membership Committee

SUMMER PLANS for UUSS PHILOSOPHY GROUP

We have chosen a new book for the fall beginning on September 2nd. It is David Hume’s *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Our summer schedule will continue through August.

If you need further information contact Michael Foster at mfoster9@nycap.rr.com or 382-5982. We meet every Wednesday at 10am in the Emerson Room. New members are always welcome.

COFFEE, CRULLERS & CONVERSATION!

CC&C is done for the summer. It’s over. Kaput. But in September it will “awaken” or “rear its ugly head” (or choose your own metaphor) — and you can be part of it.

Surely you have a sermon in you, a presentation to give, a cause to celebrate, a position to expound upon, or simply an issue upon which a thoughtful discussion might shed some light. If so, contact Bill MacTiernan at bigmiketuna@gmail.com and schedule your very own CC&C. And do not worry, the coffee and crullers will magically appear.

CIRCLES

Are you new to Unitarian Universalism? Wondering what we believe, how we worship, and where you might fit in? Fireside Chat is a place to bring your questions and make connections with members of UUSS! Join us after service in the Fireplace Room on first Sundays this summer: August 2nd!

~ The Membership Committee

A photo from July 12 shows the wooden forms and rebar ready and waiting for the concrete.

A photo from July 15 shows the northern end of the pool (right) taking shape. The shallow gray-looking basin on the right will hold three fountains. Water will also fill the dark narrow troughs that connect both ends of the pool and that will run under a central bridge, which will be built above the central open space you see here.
GREEN SANCTUARY: ADVENTURES OF PAPER AND BOTTLE

Our friends Paper and Bottle have been looking for a higher purpose. Paper (an Order of Service) and Bottle (a drink container) starred in a play in April – The Parable of Paper and Bottle -- in which they asked for our help to become new objects made from recycled materials. Now it's even easier to help them!

What's new? Since June, UUSS has commercial recycling collection to replace City pickup. Although the old curbside service was free, the new recycling service actually saves us $528 off our trash costs, thanks to the negotiating skills of Administrator Susan Marino.

What can you recycle? Paper Products and Containers, same as before; but now you can recycle more types of containers, and our friends Paper and Bottle can go into the same bin together.

Paper Products include paper, cardboard and boxboard. Containers include glass bottles and jars, metal cans, plastic containers #1 to #7, take-out containers, and cardboard milk and juice cartons. (Still NO styrofoam and NO plastic bags.)

Behind the scenes, our custodians no longer have to wrestle with the rotating City curbside schedule. (Last summer, recyclables built up for 13 successive weeks when City collection was on the custodians' days off!) Instead of awkward bins, there's a new recycling dumpster.

“Can I recycle this?” Colorful recycling instructions are posted in the kitchen, hall, and at Waters House. If you have a question, please ask at the Green Sanctuary table. We'll be happy to help. On behalf of Paper and Bottle, Thank You for Recycling!

Keep Recycling Successful - Single Stream Recycling

Acceptable Items:

YES
Cardboard/Box Board
Computer, Fax & Copy Paper
Kraft Paper (brown grocery bags)
Magazines & Catalog
White & Colored Ledger Paper
Newspaper
Notebook Paper
Paper Egg Cartons
Construction Paper
Telephone & Paperback Books
Envelopes (incl. Junk Mail)

YES
Juice Boxes
Aluminum Cans
Glass Bottles/Jars
(all colors)
Tin & Bi-Metallic Containers:
(including Aerosol Cans)
Aseptic Milk/Juice Cartons
Aluminum Foil
(incl. pie plates)
Plastic Containers
#1-7
Frozen Food Cartons

Place acceptable items here

Unacceptable Items:

NO Trash, NO Diapers, NO Clothing, NO Styrofoam, NO Plastic Bags, NO Caps or Lids, NO Food, NO Compost, NO Yard Waste
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**August 2015**

**Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady**

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**For an-up to-the-minute-UU Society of Schenectady-calendar, go to www.uuschenectady.org and click on the calendar link at the top of the page!**
PURPOSE OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF SCHENECTADY

The members of this Society covenant to maintain and foster in Schenectady a non-creedal religious society whose purpose shall be to:

- Encourage a free and responsible search for truth, knowledge, and understanding;
- Nurture the religious growth of all who participate in the life of this Society;
- Serve the community;
- Seek the realization of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

Affirming the individual right of conscience, freedom of belief and the democratic process, with reverence for life and respect for the profound mystery of existence, we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

Sunday Services and Religious Education
10:30AM every Sunday Morning