

THE JOURNEY

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Saratoga Springs * 624 N. Broadway * Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
Rev. Linda Hoddy, Minister * saratoga-uu.org * 518-584-1555 * Vol. 14 No. 6 * February 2010



*Love is the doctrine of this church,
The quest for truth is its sacrament,
And service is its prayer.
To dwell together in peace,
To seek knowledge in freedom,
To serve human need,
To the end that all souls shall grow into harmony
with the Divine—
Thus do we covenant with one another.*

Religious Services for February

Sunday services are held at 9:30 and 11:15 A.M. Religious Education classes for children in grades K to 5 are held during the 9:30 service. Youth in grades 6 to 8 meet on the first and third Sundays of the month at 11:15. Nursery care is provided at both services for infants and preschool children. A social hour is held in the Sanctuary after each service.

February 7 — “Darwin’s Legacy”

Rev. Linda Hoddy

Born February 12, 1809, Charles Darwin’s ideas are a hinge on which turned our thinking about the natural world and God. Do you agree that his theory of evolution destroyed all possibility of belief in a designer God, or do you see the presence of God in the workings of natural selection? On such questions turn much of the antagonism between science and religion today.

The Worship Associate is Robert Mohowski.

February 14 — “Standing on the Side of Love”

Rev. Linda Hoddy

Ah, Valentine’s day! Today, all over our country, Unitarian Universalist Congregations will stand together on the side of love. What does love require of you? In your closest relationships, in the larger community and world? Kahlil Gibran warns that love can crucify even as it crowns us. As the spiritually aware person nears death, s/he asks, “Did I Love Well?”

The Worship Associate is Kimberley Debus.

February 21 — “The Spiritually Mature Person...”

Rev. Linda Hoddy

How would you complete the title of today’s sermon? Do we progress, become more mature in our spiritual lives? Would you know a spiritually mature person if you encountered him or her?

The Worship Associate is Todd Carangelo.

February 28 — “Affirming the Inherent Worth and Dignity of Every Human Being”

Nancy White Martinez

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery that affects hundreds of thousands of people worldwide, particularly women and girls of all ages. Governments, organizations, and individual citizens—even former victims—are taking action to stop the trafficking. What can we learn about this issue globally, nationally, and locally to prevent future victimization of people?

Nancy White Martinez is a member of Soroptimist International of Saratoga County, a chapter of the international organization of business and professional women dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls. SISC members are seeking to raise local awareness and give a call to action to stop human trafficking. The Worship Associate is Alie Mihuta.

The Caring Coordinator for February

Betty Lawrence
577-5970 • betty.lawrence@esc.edu

Sharing Our Wealth

In order to deepen our practice of generosity and broaden our connections to the larger community, once each month our congregation donates half of our Sunday morning collection, not including pledge payments, to a recipient chosen by the Social Justice Committee. The recipient of our half-plate donation this month will be Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Services of Saratoga County.

Helping those in desperate need for over a quarter century, DVRC provides services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Saratoga County and helps them reassemble their lives with safety, healing, and justice through safe shelter, legal advocacy, counseling for adults and children, and preventative education. Their office is located at 480 Broadway LL20 in Saratoga Springs. Visit dvrcsaratoga.org for additional information.

On behalf of those in need, thank you for your generosity and for making a difference right here in our own community.

Peter Marino, Chair, Social Justice Committee
pmarino300@yahoo.com

UUCSS Book Group

The UUCSS Book Group meets on the third Monday of every month in the King Room at the church. On February 15 we will discuss *Brick Lane*, a novel by Monica Ali. This book about a sickly Bangladeshi girl who grows into a strong, confident woman is, according to *Amazon.com*, “indeed a rare find: a book that lives up to its hype.” On March 15 our discussion will focus on the non-fiction book *A Life Worth Living: A Doctor's Reflections on Illness in a High-Tech Era* by Robert Martensen. On April 19 we will discuss the popular novel *Everything Is Illuminated* by Jonathan Safran Foer.

At 6 P.M. we have a light supper, and at 6:30 we begin discussion of the book. Everyone is welcome! You do not need to have read the book to attend the discussion. A wide range of books with some connection (even a loose connection) to spiritual or religious themes is appropriate. Bring your own ideas for future books to discuss! Both fiction and nonfiction books are welcome.

Contact Judy for more information about the group, and Diana if you'd like to contribute to our supper. We look forward to seeing you and hearing your thoughts. Do please join us.

Judy Halstead *Diana O'Brien*
583-2504 587-9605
halstead@skidmore.edu dianaobrien4@yahoo.com

Among Ourselves

We extend our sympathy to Linda Miner regarding the death of her sister, Shelagh, on December 31.

We extend our sympathy to Addy and Ken Waldie regarding the death of Ken's father on December 31.

Our Newest Members

Please join me in welcoming our newest members who signed the membership book in December and January: Deborah Albrecht, Round Lake; Rachel McCracken, Saratoga Springs; Joshua Henrickson, Corinth; and Scott & Jacqui Royael, Saratoga Springs.

Nancy Berggren, Membership Committee
nancy.berggren@gmail.com

Save the Date!

The Second Annual Celebration and Worship Service of the Capital Region Unitarian Universalists will be presented Sunday, June 13, at 10:30 A.M. at the Saratoga Hilton by members and friends of the four congregations of Albany, Glens Falls, Saratoga Springs, and Schenectady. Rev. Peter Morales, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association, will be our guest speaker. Please visit capitalregionuu.org for additional information, and help us spread the word as the day approaches.

Kimberley Debus
kim@wordalchemistry.net

The 2010 Church Directory

The Membership Committee is adding the final revisions to our church directory. You can help by letting us know if there are any errors or changes in your entry in the 2009 directory. If you are a newcomer and would like to be included in the 2010 directory, please let us know as well. The directory is for the convenience of our members and friends, and with your help, we'll make it as useful as possible.

Nancy Berggren, Membership Committee
nberggren@nycap.rr.com

Conserving Energy in Our Building

Instructions for heating our building overnight are posted near the thermostats in the Sanctuary and the basement. Please help our congregation conserve energy and reduce our heating bills as you leave the building after your evening meetings.

Alan Bartenhagen, Building & Grounds Committee
alanbart@nycap.rr.com

Bid...Bump...& Beyond!

2010 Dinner & Auction Extravaganza
Saturday, April 24, 6 P.M.

Please put this important event on your calendar now. We are planning for a fun evening filled with music, dining, and bidding. We are especially encouraging families to attend as we are gathering a number of kid-friendly and family-friendly items to bid on. You can also bring your friends, neighbors, and co-workers along.

Chef Rob Haren will be offering a delicious, three-course dinner, complete with beverages and wine. A vegetarian option will be available. Tickets for the dinner will be sold beginning in April: \$15/person, \$8/children (3 and younger are free).

This year our live auction, with auctioneer extraordinaire Peter Marino, will highlight our youth as they help to liven up the proceedings with imaginative props and costumes. Babysitting will be available during the live auction.

Most importantly, we need you to help get or provide some great items.

The Silent Auction needs:

- Items like collectibles, jewelry, etc.

The Live Auction needs:

- A trip to the Bronx Zoo or Fenway Park or some other fun destination;
- Dinners for 6–8 or some other number;
- Progressive dinners;
- Vacation homes for a week or weekend;
- Cooking classes;
- And more!

The Raffle needs:

- Items to make up huge packages that highlight Saratoga Springs, Boston, and the Adirondacks, including accommodations, restaurants, and museums.

Of course we'll need help in the following areas for the night of the event:

- Cooking/preparing/serving dinner
- Setup and cleanup
- Bid recording/checkout

If you can help in any way or have ideas for items, please contact one of us. Thanks in advance for your help!

Claudia Elkins • astersfriend@msn.com

Sally Kirouac • sallykirouac@gmail.com

Arliss Nygard • arlissny@yahoo.com

Nedra Stimpfle • nstimpfle@nycap.rr.com

Linda Wilkes • lwilkes@neami.com

Michele Madigan

The Kudos for February

The Board of Trustees extends our wholehearted gratitude to the following people for all your contributions and dedication to our church over the past month:

To all of our members, friends, and guests for contributing over \$1,900 to the UUSC/UUA Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund, which raised over \$400,000 denomination-wide;

To **Linda Wilkes** for your service as our webmaster for the last three years, and to **David Wahl** for agreeing to be our new webmaster;

To the members of the ad-hoc steering committee for your work on evaluating congregational activities: **Anne Breznau, Todd Carangelo, Jillian Ehrenberg, Cynthia Eletto, Nikki Ferguson, Ann Hebert, Linda Hoddy, Pat McEvoy, and Gregg Pratt;**

To **Judy Keenan, Chris Mulford, Chris Kus, and Mary Cobb** of the Congregational Safety Committee for your efforts to make our building safer and more secure for the children and the adults in our congregation;

To the Committee on Ministry—**Dick Wilkinson, Faye Mihuta, and Sue Ward**—for hosting the Minister's Travlogue Pot Luck, to everyone who brought such culturally diverse food and drink to the dinner, and to all of you who helped with the setup and cleanup;

To **Sally and George Kirouac** for donating the desk in the King Room for music director Michael Harrison, to **Alan Bartenhagen** for your help in moving it into the building, and to Alan for donating the filing cabinets and setting up the desk in the office for Jennifer Pratt and the Religious Education teachers;

To **Linda and Michael McGraw** for lending us your drums so that Michael Harrison could play them during our service on diversity;

To **Bob Mohowski** for planning and coordinating the end-of-year service for Janus, and to all of you who contributed your poetry and readings;

To **Jim Mihuta** for keeping us supplied with sand for the parking lot during the winter months.

UUCSS Donation to the Earthquake Relief Fund

At the services on January 17, the congregation donated \$1,904 to the Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and Unitarian Universalist Association. Thank you for your generosity and concern.

And thank you for your generosity for the \$150 you donated to the Saratoga Springs chapter of the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York from our Share-the-Plate collection on Sunday, January 10.

*Peter Marino, Social Justice Committee
pmarino300@yahoo.com*

RE News

As we enter the second half of our curriculum year in religious education, the children continue to learn the seven UU Principles as they are exposed to the important historical events that took place in our own Hudson River Valley region. In February, we leave the social justice issues surrounding slavery in the early United States and turn the focus to the movement for women's rights. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Stanton will be two women highlighted as Diana O'Brien and Karen Ricci finish their six-week teaching block. They have done a wonderful job combining social justice issues, highlighting UU Principles, and adding fun craft projects to teach these important topics. During the month there will also be two hands-on Sundays designed to review concepts and have fun!

Also during February, the religious education classes will continue to have an opportunity to contribute to our Haiti Relief Fund by bringing in loose change. The first week of this project saw a large collection and great response from our families. I hope this project will give the children of our congregation a way to feel that they are helping during this time of need in Haiti. Thank you to all who have already contributed!

*Jennifer Pratt, RE Director
dre@saratoga-uu.org*

Calling All Youth and Parents for Fun, Food, and Planning Our Future Youth Programs

If you have a child or children in grades 5 through 11, we hope you and your children will join our St. Lawrence District Program Consultant Karen LoBracco, Rev. Linda Hoddy, and me as we explore the exciting possibilities for the 2010–2011 Junior and Senior Youth Groups. Karen will lead a brainstorming session to gather ideas from both the youth and their parents as we look forward to the kind of programming we would like to see for this group of students. The meeting will be open to discussions about innovative concepts for classroom placement, leadership, scheduling, and curriculum. We are especially interested in the thoughts of the young people who will be in this program and in hearing what their ideas are for making this time an interesting and meaningful experience.

The meeting, which will be held from 12:30 to 3:30 on Sunday afternoon, February 21, will include a light lunch and beverages. If you are interested in attending or know someone who is, please sign up at the back of the sanctuary or contact Rev. Hoddy or me. We hope that all of you will join us and contribute to this important discussion.

*Jennifer Pratt, RE Director
dre@saratoga-uu.org*

Unirondack Asks for Your Help

This morning I received a campership application. But like many Unirondack friends in the last few years, this person had recently lost her job, and she described in painful detail the stresses on the family as they struggle to make ends meet. She then spoke about how much camp would mean to her child.

The truth is that Unirondack is often the most important place in the lives of our children. It is where they feel most safe and accepted. During these cold winter months it is where they think about being in the summer to come. As I read this campership application I reflected for a moment on my visit to my son Jeremy's school a few years ago, when his teacher showed me an essay he had been asked to write about "home." As I read it, tears came to my eyes. He had written about Unirondack.

Last year we granted \$6,475 in camperships, which helped 27 campers come to Unirondack. This year we are expecting more requests. Can you think of a better gift for any of our children than helping one of them go to camp?

Please take a moment and visit unirondack.org to donate to the campership program. Our commitment is that every camper who wants to attend Unirondack will do so, regardless of their financial circumstances. But that commitment really depends on each of us. Wouldn't it be a wonderful gift if in the next few weeks Unirondack received all the donations our friends will need to come to camp this year.

Many thanks, and peace,

*Dan Gottfried
director@unirondack.org*

UU're Home at Any Time of Year

Do you dream of inexpensive vacation travel to interesting destinations where you can stay in the homes of friendly people who share your ideals and are happy to provide directions and advice for their area?

The UU bed and breakfast directory *UU're Home* (formerly *Homecomings*) can fulfill your dream. For 31 years we've provided a network of hosts in the United States (and a few abroad) who enjoy meeting new friends and who are happy to open their home to like-minded people.

Host listings on our website at uurehome.com are updated whenever changes are made or new hosts are added. The paper edition is published once a year in April. For a copy of the 2010 directory and a year's access to the website listings, please click on "become a member" to pay by credit card, or send a check for \$25 and your e-mail address to Home, 43 Vermont Court, Asheville, NC 28806.

If you have questions, contact us at info@uurehome.com or call 828-281-3253.

*Paula Robbins
info@uurehome.com*

Food Pantry Sunday Is Every Sunday

There is a continuing need for canned fruits and vegetables for families in the Saratoga Springs community, especially during these winter months and these difficult economic conditions. Please place your Sunday donations in the large basket on the middle table in the back of the Sanctuary.

Each Thursday morning I transport your gifts to the soup kitchen at the New England Presbyterian Congregational church, where they are packaged along with contributions from other local congregations and grocery stores for delivery to local families. As always, thank you for your generosity.

Jim Mihuta
tackingman@nycap.rr.com

St. Lawrence District Calendar

Our congregation is one of 34 members of the St. Lawrence District of the Unitarian Universalist Association. The District serves to connect and grow new and existing UU congregations in upstate New York and northern Pennsylvania. Here's the schedule of programs over the next three months.

February 5–7: Leadership Development Conference; UU Binghamton

February 19–20: SLD Board Meeting; Syracuse

March 6: Sally Patton's Involve Training; Radical Hospitality: Creating Beloved Community for All Children; UU Albany

March 12–14: SLD Youth Conference; UU Buffalo

April 9–10: Small Congregation Growth Project; Canandaigua

April 9–11: SLD Youth Conference; UU Ithaca

April 23–24: St. Lawrence District Assembly; May UU Syracuse

Nancy Berggren, Denominational Affairs
nancy.berggren@gmail.com

UU Resources for Children and Families

The Church of the Larger Fellowship (clf.uua.org) is an online community of UUs from all over the world that has a number of web-based resources for children and adults.

Kidtalk (clf.uua.org/kidtalk/2010/02/index.html) connects children to Unitarian Universalism and to each other.

Between Sundays (clf.uua.org/betweensundays) is designed to help parents and other adults answer religious questions raised by children and youth.

Quest (clf.uua.org/quest/2010/02/index.html) is the monthly worship publication of the CLF. Available online, as a downloadable pdf file, and as an audio podcast, it provides spiritual resources that can be shared by UUs around the world.

The President's Column

What does it mean to be a member of our congregation? What are the benefits? What are the responsibilities? Our minister's column this month provides some enlightened, though by no means exclusive, answers to these questions. The issue of membership also reflects the number one goal for 2010 established by the Board of Trustees at their January 10th retreat.

For a church to mean something, it has to be doing something. The continued vitality of any congregation depends upon an active membership. But the level of activity among members varies widely and, for each member, can vary significantly over time as other demands in one's life ebb and flow. The challenge for any congregation is to develop a steady and consistent flow of energy directed towards the mission. So, when the energy from one member ebbs, as will naturally occur, we need the increased energy from one or more other members to fill in. Therefore, a goal of any congregation must be to provide a steady new source of energy. And, by energy, I refer to the time, passion, and financial resources that a member commits. This year, the Board will be exploring better ways by which to generate and sustain a steady flow of energy to do the work of this congregation.

The other goals adopted by the Board of Trustees are:

- Continue to pursue growth in space and membership;
- Strengthen the identity of the congregation within the greater Saratoga Springs community;
- Increase the opportunities for fellowship and adult enrichment;
- Develop a planned giving program.

These goals were developed from an afternoon discussion by the new Board of Trustees seeking to identify those issues that need the greatest attention within our congregational life. Over the balance of 2010, the Board will endeavor to address each of these goals.

I look forward to working with the Board as we tackle our challenges and invest our own energy into the solutions. And I would like to acknowledge each member of the Board and thank them for their commitment.

Gregg Pratt: Vice President; Harry Moran: Treasurer; Kimberley Debus: Secretary; Carol Holley, Trustee for Youth Programs; Ann Hebert, Trustee for Adult Programs; Bob Mohowski, Trustee for Building and Grounds; Peter Marino, Trustee for Social Justice; George Kirouac, Trustee for Long-Range Planning; Nikki Ferguson, Trustee for Membership.

As always, your feedback, complimentary or critical, is welcome.

Actually, as an inducement to provide some feedback and to test how many actually read this column, I will make a special \$75 donation to the congregation in honor of the tenth person who emails me to tell me that they read this column.

Brent Wilkes
bwilkes@neami.com

Revelations

Why would one join a UU congregation? What does it mean to sign the book?

The only reason I can think of to become a member is that you care about the institution enough to support it—that it would mean something to you if Saratoga Springs had no UU church. Caren Crotoof of our membership committee compares it to getting married. Marriage requires a deeper level of commitment than dating. Similarly, congregation members have a deeper level of commitment than friends.

In my mind, a member is one who:

- Attends services regularly, because s/he has chosen this community as the primary place and group of people with whom to work on his/her spiritual life;
- Sees value in spiritual practice and is intentional on a daily basis about paying attention to and caring for one's soul;
- Gives time and talent to the church, "serves" in order to build the beloved community, to be connected to others in the congregation, and to share something of ourselves;
- Participates in (listens, speaks, and votes at) business meetings because you take seriously the responsibility to govern the church wisely and well;
- Gives 3 to 5% of income to the church, not because it is "club dues," but because giving is part of our spiritual discipline as well as maintaining an institution we care about;
- Gives time and money to other causes in the community because a mature UU spirituality manifests in sharing of one's self and one's resources with our fellow humans.

Friends of the congregation have a much more casual relationship with the congregation, more like dating than marriage. You may drop in to services only occasionally. You may or may not pledge or contribute money. You may or may not serve on a committee or help in any other way. You don't attend business meetings because you're not that interested and can't vote anyway.

Many people say they come to church looking for community. And there's nothing wrong with that. But is the church primarily a social organization?

I would say no. If so, why would we require three to four years of specialized training for clergy? Training to be a social director could be accomplished in much shorter time!

I believe we are a full-service religious institution whose purpose is help people develop and live out a theology of love and service. To that end we:

- Become a community through worshipping together each week;
- Educate ourselves and our children about the world's religious traditions;
- Walk with one another as we experience life's joys and its sorrows;

- Give and serve both within and beyond the congregation;
- Seek to know about and meet the needs of the larger community in which we live;
- Grow spiritually through study and discussion and prayer and meditation; and
- Offer rites of passage for birth, coming of age, marriage, and death.

If you are considering becoming a member, please come and see me. I've love to talk with you about what it might mean in your life.

In peace,

Linda

Seven Principles of Life

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Or, in the words of our youth:

- Each and every person is important.
- All people should be treated fairly.
- Our congregations are places where all people are accepted.
- Each person must be free to search for what is true and right in life.
- Everyone should have a voice in things that concern them.
- We all are needed to work for a peaceful, fair, and free world.
- We are all stewards of our planet Earth.

The March Newsletter Lifeline Is February 24

The lifeline is 9 A.M. on the Wednesday before the last Sunday of the month. Please submit your articles to newsletter@saratoga-uu.org. This newsletter is also available by email subscription and at saratoga-uu.org/newsletter.html.

Alan Bartenhagen, editor
alanbart@nycap.rr.com

FEBRUARY 2010

UUCSS
624 North Broadway
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
584-1555 • saratoga-uu.org

Rev. Linda Hoddy
minister@saratoga-uu.org
584-1555 Tues–Fri, 12–4 p.m.
527-1238 Emergencies

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Chalice Group 7 p.m.	2 NA Meeting 6:45 p.m.	3 The Case for God 7:15 p.m. Buddhist Sangha 7:30 p.m.	4 EOC Food Pickup 9 a.m. League of Women Voters 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:15 p.m.	5	6
7 Service 9:30 a.m. Junior Youth Group 11:15 a.m. Service 11:15 a.m. Communications Comm. 12:30 p.m. 12-Step Meeting 7 p.m.	8 Worship Committee 7:15 p.m.	9 NA Meeting 6:45 p.m.	10 GDGLCC Youth Group 5:30 p.m. The Case for God 7:15 p.m. Buddhist Sangha 7:30 p.m.	11 EOC Food Pickup 9 a.m. Membership Committee 6:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:15 p.m.	12	13
14 Service 9:30 a.m. Service 11:15 a.m. 12-Step Meeting 7 p.m. Emerson Small Group 7:15 p.m.	15 Book Group 6 p.m.	16 NA Meeting 6:45 p.m. Board of Trustees 7:15 p.m.	17 The Case for God 7:15 p.m. Buddhist Sangha 7:30 p.m.	18 EOC Food Pickup 9 a.m. Social Justice Committee 7:15 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:15 p.m.	19	20 Women's Sexuality Seminar 9 a.m.
21 Service 9:30 a.m. Junior Youth Group 11:15 a.m. Service 11:15 a.m. Youth Planning Meeting 12:30 p.m. 12-Step Meeting 7 p.m.	22 Building & Grounds 7:15 p.m.	23 NA Meeting 6:45 p.m.	24 Newsletter Deadline 9 a.m. GDGLCC Youth Group 5:30 p.m. The Case for God 7:15 p.m. Buddhist Sangha 7:30 p.m.	25 EOC Food Pickup 9 a.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:15 p.m.	26	27
28 Service 9:30 a.m. Service 11:15 a.m. 12-Step Meeting 7 p.m.	<p>Church Office: 518-584-1555, Tues–Fri 11 a.m.–3 p.m.</p> <p>Updated Calendar Information: saratoga-uu.org</p> <p>Order of Service Announcements: announcements@saratoga-uu.org by 9 a.m. Friday</p>					

Meditation for February

VIA NEGATIVA

Why no! I never thought other than
That God is that great absence
In our lives, the empty silence
Within, the place where we go
Seeking, not in hope to
Arrive or find. He keeps the interstices
In our knowledge, the darkness
Between stars. His are the echoes
We follow, the footprints he has just
Left. We put our hands in
His side hoping to find
It warm. We look at people
And places as though he had looked
At them, too; but miss the reflection.

—R.S. Thomas
Later Poems 1972–1982



UUCSS
624 North Broadway
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866