

MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

# FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ESSEX COUNTY

JANUARY 2010

## FROM DARRELL'S DESK- "LET'S TALK ABOUT IT"

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### MARK IT DOWN

- **Sunday, January 10th, Social and Earth Action, 12 noon, Parish Hall**
- **Thursday, January 14th, Board Meeting, 7:30 pm, Sonen Room**
- **Sunday, January 24th, Special Congregational Meeting, 12 noon, Parish Hall**

Unitarian Universalists are great talkers, sometimes not to our advantage. There is a famous example of how UU's do theology. If there is one sign saying "Heaven" and another saying "Discussion of Heaven," we head toward the discussion.

As Homer Simpson would say, "It's funny 'cause it's true." However, replace "Heaven" with "Social Justice and Equality" and suddenly choosing discussion isn't so funny.

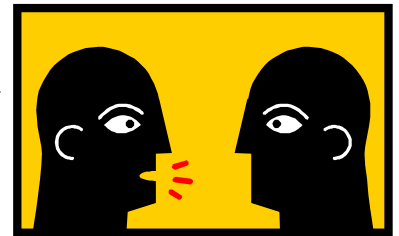
Yet, as Peter Seeger reminded us from the Old Testament, there is a time for every purpose unto both heaven and justice. In January and part of February, it is time to discuss.

Our book discussion of "Wrestling with Moses" by Anthony Flint begins January 11 from 6:30 to 8 PM in the minister's study. It tells the struggle between Jane Jacobs and Robert Moses for the heart and soul of New York, in the battles over urban renewal. Jacobs had

all the people behind her; Moses all the power. It is a good story about how communities sustain and re-create themselves.

We will meet six consecutive Mondays. The book can be obtained from Amazon.com and elsewhere on line. Molly Kaufman also has some complimentary copies available through the University of Orange. You can contact her at [molly.rose.kaufman@gmail.com](mailto:molly.rose.kaufman@gmail.com) or leave a message for her at HANDS at 973/678/3110. We will be discussing the introduction and the first two chapters on Jan. 11. Last year's discussion was lively and informative. Let's do it this year too!

After coffee hour following worship January 24, from 12:30-3 will be another chance for discussion. Doug Zelinski, Program Consultant from the Metro NY UU District, will lead what we are calling a planning session.



We have recently received a generous bequest from Jessie Turk's estate, earmarked for our "reserve fund." The Board has also been considering adding a quarter-time church administrator's position. We also need to decide how we want to fund and staff our Religious Education program for the near future. The January 24 meeting will give us an opportunity to share ideas and strategies before we need to make officially binding decisions at our annual meeting in the spring.

The early February pagan ritual of Imbolc symbolizes, among other things, the decision of what seeds to plant in the spring. This is what we are doing, using the most UU of all rituals: discussion. Do join us.



**JANUARY SUNDAY SERVICES**

Jan 3      **New Years—Quaker Style**      **Melanie Axel-Lute**  
**Senior Usher: Paul Axel-Lute**

We will renew our tradition of opening the new year by gathering for worship in the style of a Friends meeting. We will sit together in silence, and be in a spirit of receptiveness to the spirit. We will try to "come with heart and mind prepared" and to bring "neither a determination to speak nor a determination to remain silent."\* We will mark the beginning and end of the worship by lighting and extinguishing the chalice, but there will be no other formal structure.

\*[see <http://www.quakerinfo.org/quakerism/worship.html> ]

Jan 10      **A Thousand Weddings**      **Rev. Darrell Berger**  
**Musician: Bill Stafford, Senior Usher: Ann Lang**

January is the biggest month for wedding planning, or, at least, for getting the planning underway. I have performed about one thousand weddings, from 1974 through 2009. Today I will share some of the more unusual weddings I have performed, what I have learned over the years, and why the government ought to get out of the wedding business.

Jan 17      **How Martin Luther King Influenced my Life**      **Greg Giacobe**  
**Musician: David Braham, Senior Usher: Hal Heyman**

Members Jackie Diggs, Flore Dorcely, Cindy Long and Ben Rosenberg will share how Dr. King influenced why they became Unitarian Universalists.

Jan 24      **No Church is an Island**      **Rev. Darrell Berger**  
**Musician: Bill Stafford, Senior Usher: Greg Giacobe**

The ministers of the biggest UU churches often get high status from serving these congregations. Everybody always wants to know what did they do to grow their churches. I found that one of the main things they did was to serve churches in areas where a lot of UU's were moving. In the 1970's it was Atlanta, then San Diego, Seattle and Colorado.

Jesus told us that the kind of ground a seed falls on has a lot to do with how and if it grows. Our seed was planted in Orange over a century ago. Our roots are deep here. How healthy are our trunk, branches and leaves? How much can I torture this metaphor? Find out this Sunday!

Please stay for our planning meeting following coffee hour.

Jan 31      **The Ideal in the West**      **David Beardsley**  
**Musician: TBA, Senior Usher: Paul Axel-Lute**

The influence of Idealism has so penetrated our language and our thinking that we don't recognize it as perhaps the oldest continuously-operating philosophical system in the West. The Golden Age of Greece, the Florentine Renaissance, Nineteenth-century America; these are just some of the eras we will examine that were defined by what Plato called "the form of the Good." This is not good as opposed to evil, but the absolute source of all beneficence, beauty, and justice.


*David Beardsley wrote and directed the first video biography of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Emerson: The Ideal in America. He is currently developing a video series on The Ideal in the West.*

## REMINDER!! Congregational Poll Ballots Due By 10 January!!

Last month, The Social & Earth Action Team of the First UU Church of Essex County distributed Voting Kits and Ballots for six proposed Congregational Study/ Action Issues (CSAIs) and the current draft of the Statement of Conscience on “Peacemaking” as part of determining our church’s vote on these items will be presented to the delegates at next year’s General Assembly. In order to insure that this vote is valid, it is required that a minimum number of ballots be returned. Please be sure to return your ballot before the deadlines indicated below. Voting Kits are still available and an email version will be sent out by the time of this newsletter. All conclusions and tabulations will be reviewed by the church’s Board of Trustees.

To learn more about this poll, the CSAI process or any of the proposals, you can contact Georgiana Hart (973-763-1139 or [luchahart@verizon.net](mailto:luchahart@verizon.net)), Team Leader, or Gregory Giacobbe (201-823-2459 or [ggiacobbe@optonline.net](mailto:ggiacobbe@optonline.net)) or visit the Commission on Social Witness web page, <http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/issuesprocess/>. **Make your voice heard!**

# January 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 <small>Social and Earth Action, 12 noon, Parish Hall</small>	11	12	13	14 <small>Board Meeting 7:30, Sonen Room</small>	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 <small>Special Congregational Meeting, 12 noon Parish Hall</small>	25	26	27	28	29	30
31				Coffee Hour Coordinators for January: Theresa Combs		

## Guest At Your Table 2009 Call Back:

### Time to Hand Back Your Boxes & Envelopes

Starting 3 January, we ask that you return your Guest At Your Table boxes and envelopes. All boxes and envelopes should be handed in by 17 January. If you still wish to make a donation before we close our *Guest* program for this church year, please speak with Gregory Giacobbe, UUSC Local Representative, after service during coffee hour.



For those of you who took *Guest* collection boxes, we ask that you **please DO NOT hand in loose change or bills**. Instead, count up the money you have collected and write a check for that amount payable to the "Unitarian Universalist Service Committee". Write "Guest At Your Table 2009" in the memo line. Also, **don't forget to fill out the donation form located on the bottom of your collection box**, disconnect it and hand it in with your check. For those who took donation envelopes, simply place your check in the envelopes, fill out the form on the flap and seal it. If your donation is close to or above one of the membership levels, **please consider joining UUSC**. **General** membership is \$40, **Dual Adult** membership is \$75, **Youth/Student** is \$10, and **Senior** is \$20. All unrestricted donations (those not designated for any specific UUSC program or activity) of \$75 or more is matched by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset NY.

Thank you.



## Emerson: The Ideal in America

A video biography of "America's Founding Thinker," Ralph Waldo Emerson. "Why should we not also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should we not have a poetry and philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs?" (*Nature*, 1836)

*Sunday, January 31st*  
*Director David*  
*Beardsley speaks at*  
*First Church, 10:30 am*

*In front of the Old Manse in Concord, MA. Left to right are Dan Emerson (RWE's descendant), Kristen Bennett, (Production/Research Director) Robert Richardson (author of Emerson: The Mind on Fire), Jim Manley (president, RWE Institute), and kneeling are Reuben Kleiner (photographer), and David Beardsley (director).*



**We are on the web!**

**[www.essexuu.org](http://www.essexuu.org)**

**MAKING THE CONNECTIONS**

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# First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County

**WHERE EVERY MIND IS FREE AND  
EVERY SOUL IS WELCOME!**

Founded in Orange in 1890 as the First Unitarian Church of Essex County, the congregation has worshipped in the present Sanctuary since its construction in 1892-3. The Church continues the ministry of the Union Universalist Society (also known as the Church of the Redeemer), founded as the First Universalist Society of Newark in 1834.

The Reverend Darrell E. Berger

Frank Barszcz: President

Sandra Langley: Vice-President

Barrie Peterson: Chaplain

Donna Blaine: Sexton

Nina Barszcz: Newsletter Editor

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