



MAKING THE
CONNECTIONS

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County

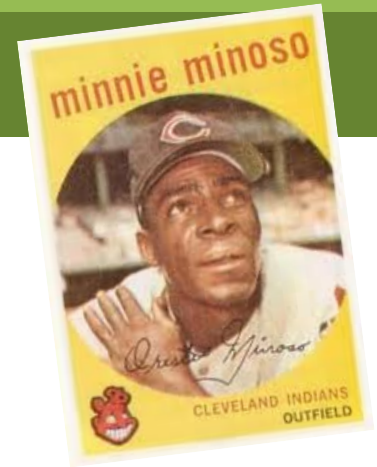
February 2012

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MARK IT DOWN

- Feb 15 Bd. of Trustee Meeting
@7:30, Sonnen Room



FROM THE EDITOR Angela Randall-West

This is not a normal Northeast winter—not by last year's standard, anyway. By this time last year, there had been record snowfall. How much was it on the ground? Was it three feet or more piled up to the roof of my car? I had paid enough money to the guy that comes to shovel my drive- and walkway to justify adding him as a dependant on my tax return. My faith in ice melt, snowplows that push snow back in front of my driveway, and groundhog sightings had seemed to wane.

Winter has not yet ended, but the ground is clear. As we look forward to spring, in an upcoming sermon (see *Sermon Teasers*) Rev. Deb (February 19) will talk to us about the spiritual benefits of Groundhog Day. We can read about unsung heroes (*From Darrell's Desk*, p. 2) while we ready our mitts for Opening Day of Major League baseball season (April 4). On February 5, Rev. Cornell Brooks will talk to us about the pursuit of a just economic recovery. As the Republican Primary closes in, consider the religion of the first Republican president on February 12. Lastly, can we really hear the words of the Lord? Find out in the sermon "Dem Dry Bones", on February 26, with Rev. Darrell Berger.

From Darrell's Desk

Minnie, Mudcat and Vic

Unsung heroes

Allow me take you back a few years. It was 1959; the first year of my baseball fandom. Living in the country about a hundred miles west of Cleveland, I listened to a great many games on radio, watched several on television, and attended one—which was a very, very big deal for me.

The Indians finished second to the White Sox and contended almost to the end, a very exciting season. My favorite players were Orestes “Minnie” Minoso from Cuba, Jim “Mudcat” Grant from miniscule Ladoochee, Florida, and Vic Power from Puerto Rico. Most kids I knew liked these guys a lot. They also happened to be the only three black players on the Indians that year, thirteen years after Jackie Robinson joined the Dodgers.

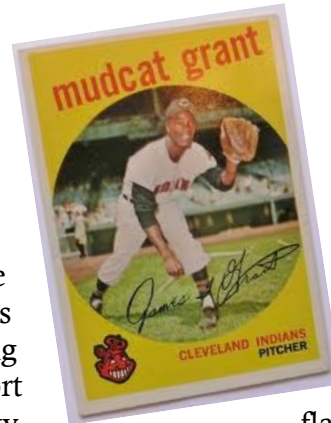
Minnie was a good outfielder and hitter. He swung so hard he nearly screwed himself into the ground.

At the game I attended, he threw ball after ball to the kids in the bleachers during batting

practice. His career began in the Negro Leagues; it was not long before he went to the majors. He was never a star in the Negro Leagues but his time there caused his big league totals to fall short of Hall of Fame quantity. That its door remains shut to him is an injustice.

Mudcat was in his second big league year as a pitcher. He started and relieved, though his best year was 1965 when he won 21 games for the pennant-winning Twins, after the Indians, as was their wont, traded him for almost nothing. In the offseason, he was a nightclub singer. Years later he formed the Black Aces. Admission is limited to African American pitchers who have won twenty or more games in a season. Members often appear together to aid various fund-raising efforts.

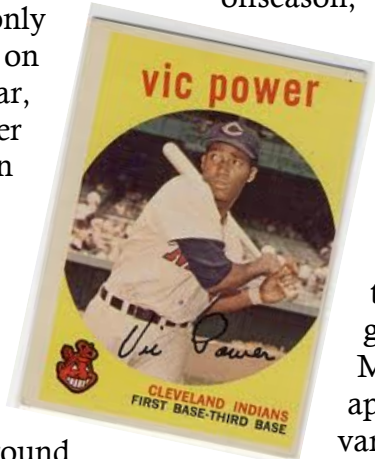
Vic Power excelled for the Yankees' minor league



teams, but was traded before he could become the first black Yankee. As a Puerto Rican he was unfamiliar with the rules of Jim Crow and was simply too

flashy for such a conservative organization. He played mostly first base, though he played everywhere except pitcher and catcher before he was through. He played baseball like Carlos Santana plays guitar, a virtuoso's technique flavored with controlled ecstasy.

Those that break down doors, like Jackie Robinson and Rosa Parks, have considerable support. Jackie's general manager was Branch Rickey. Rosa Parks' lawyer was Thurgood Marshall. Heroes that soon followed suffered almost as much, but without nearly the support. Minnie, Mudcat, and Vic will never get their own stamp or holiday, but they, too, were heroic, especially to the kids around Cleveland—black and white.



Minister's email
minister@essexuu.org

February 2012 at a Glance

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 <i>Sermon: "An Uncertain Recovery"</i>	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 <i>Sermon: "Abraham Lincoln's Religion"</i>	13	14	15 <i>Board of Trustees Mtg, 7:30 Sonen Room</i>	16	17	18
19 <i>Sermon: "The Groundhog as Spiritual Guide"</i>	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 <i>Sermon: "Dem Dry Bones"</i>	27	28	29			

February Coffee Hour Coordinator

Ross Miller

Sermon Teasers

February 5 *An Uncertain Recovery, Unrealized Dreams and Unrepentant Hope*

Rev. Cornell Brooks
Music: Dave Braham
Senior Usher: Paul Axel-Lute

Rev. Brooks will preach about seeking a just economic recovery as well as finding the strength to pursue justice when both jobs and even hope are in short supply.

The Rev. Brooks, a fourth-generation ordained minister, was honored as a Martin Luther King Scholar at Boston University School of Theology. He later earned a JD from Yale Law School. Currently, Rev. Brooks serves on the Boards of East Orange General Hospital and the NJN/Public Broadcasting Authority. He previously served as senior counsel for the Federal Communications Commission and he was a trial attorney for the US Department of Justice. It was there that he secured the largest government settlement for victims of housing discrimination.

The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice was founded ten years ago in Newark as an urban research and advocacy organization dedicated to the advancement of New Jersey's urban areas and residents. It has advocated and helped pass legislation to aid previously incarcerated persons to rebuild their lives and has created WomenBuild, a training program for women in non-traditional fields of employment.

February 12

Abraham Lincoln's Religion

Rev. Darrell Berger
Music: Bill Stafford
Senior Usher: Greg Giacobe

With so much attention being given to the religion of the various Republican candidates for President, I thought it might be of interest to examine the religion of the first Republican president.

February 19

The Groundhog as Spiritual Guide

Rev. Deborah Roth
Music: Dave Braham
Senior Usher: Ann E. Lang

Prophecy and purification are the recurrent themes of midwinter festivals worldwide. What do we need to sweep out of our inner landscape to make way for the possibilities of spring? We will explore the ancient origins of Groundhog Day and its relevance to us in modern times.

Deborah Roth is an Interfaith Minister and Spiritual Life Coach. She is a longtime member of the 4th Universalist Society in New York City where she has convened *New Moon and Full Moon SisterCircles* for the past 15 years. "Rev Deb" can be reached through <http://www.SpiritedLiving.com>.

February 26

Dem Dry Bones

Rev. Darrell Berger
Music: Bill Stafford
Senior Usher: Ann Miller

"Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones" are the lyrics to one of the most enduring gospel songs. To whose bones, exactly, do they refer? The *Book of Ezekiel* may hold the answer.

Meetings & Events

Board of Trustees, Wednesday, February 15, 7:30 P, Sonen Room

Thank You...

To the guests that visited our church on Jazz Sunday, January 29, 2012. We look forward to you joining us again. If you would like more information about Unitarian Universalism or have questions regarding becoming a member, please contact the church office at 973-674-0010 or email info@essexuu.org

Note: A new church directory is available on the Members Download page at <http://essexuu.org/members/downloads.html> in either plain text or in booklet layout. A few hardcopies will be available for those without email access and for new members.

WHERE EVERY MIND IS FREE AND EVERY SOUL IS WELCOME!

**MAKING THE
CONNECTIONS**

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
OF ESSEX COUNTY**

**Mailing Address: P. O. Box 998
Orange NJ 07051-0998**

**Meeting Address: 35 Cleveland St.
Orange, NJ 07050**

**Church Phone: (973) 674-0010
Minister's Email: minister@essexuu.org**

Office Email: office@essexuu.org



**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 1892-93. 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.

**Darrell E. Berger, Minister
Flore Dorcely, President
Greg Giacobe, Church Administrator
Angela Randall-West, Newsletter Editor**

We are on the web!
www.essexuu.org

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P. O. Box 998
Orange, NJ 07051-0998**

