



MAKING THE
CONNECTIONS

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County

March 2012

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Page 2 From Darrell's Desk
Page 3 March 2012 at a Glance
Page 4 Congregational Poll Update
Page 5 Sermon Teasers

MARK IT DOWN

- Mar 7 Celebrations & Music
@7:30, Sonen Room
Mar 10 Maggie Thompson
Memorial Service, 5-
9pm
Mar 17 March Social/Mini
Fundraiser, 7pm
Mar 21 Board of Trustees, @
7:30, Sonen Room

Please join us for a celebration of the

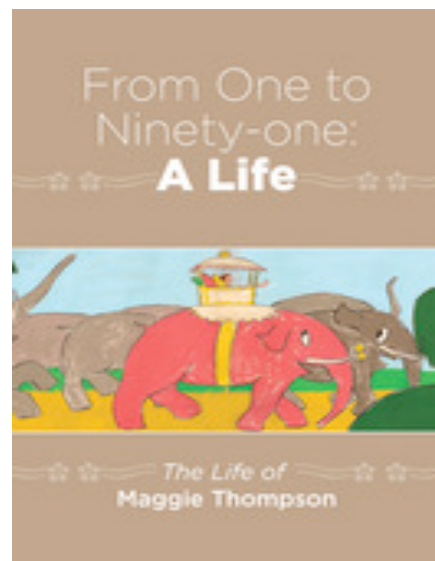
Life and Goodness of Maggie Thompson

who has left us to go on the Great Safari.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

March 10, 2012, 5pm to 9pm

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County
35 Cleveland Street
Orange, NJ 07050



From Darrell's Desk

What exactly is Unitarian Universalism?

On February 8, I spoke to the Spirituality in Social Work class in the graduate school of Rutgers at Newark. I spoke there last year at the request of Frank Barszcz, who was then taking the class. I was asked to return because, well, I was a hit.

The purpose of the class is two-fold. First is to acquaint the class with various faith worlds, to help them better understand the people they will serve. The second is to help open themselves to the spiritual dimensions of social work.

My task: to introduce Unitarian Universalism to a couple of dozen people who are likely never to have heard of us. With Greg Giacobe's help, I put together a handout consisting of a time line of Unitarian and Universalist history along with our Purposes and Principles, and tacked on our address and website. I had an hour.

I began with the Council of Nicea, which created both the doctrine of the trinity and what became the Unitarian heresy. I hit the usual high spots: Michael Servetus being burned at the stake by John Calvin himself, King Sigismund of Transylvania, the Unitarian king, who pronounced the first

edict of religious tolerance in Europe, the various liberal New England ministers, Transcendentalists and of course our own Norbert Capek.

I mentioned that while UU's make up less than one tenth of one percent of the population, we made up 100% of the white civil rights volunteers murdered in Selma, Alabama in 1965, James Reeb and Viola Liuzzo. I traced the arc of history bending toward justice from Emerson to Gandhi to King to Obama. I gave my own testimony, from working with prisoners to serving a church on Manhattan's Upper West Side that made "Seinfeld" look like a documentary.

I was asked what worship was like and when it began. I said both were a kind of continuing negotiation, then gave details. I said that we don't get much press but we are often somewhere in the mix of most progressive movements. I also did not spare them the sad limits of liberal religion, which can prefer "discussion of social justice" to actually doing the work. I said that what I liked about our congregation is that we do the work, even though it is often frustrating, tiring and uncertain.

I used many of my UU one-liner's, told stories of my faith experience and the unbroken line of which it is part. The students were very attentive and asked great questions. One man asked, "If there is no doctrine, what would you say is the one thing that UU's have in common?"

I don't think I had ever been asked that question in exactly that way. My answer was immediate. "An inquiring mind," I said. I think that's right. An open one doesn't hurt, either, along with a sense of humor and an appreciation of irony. My experience in the class also provided another feeling that I seldom entertain as a UU and perhaps should. I felt pride. I felt pride in our chosen faith. I felt proud of my ability to articulate it. I felt proud that I could sense a bit of wonder in some faces that such an approach to religion existed. Who knows, we might even see some of them at worship, whenever we begin.

Minister's email
minister@essexuu.org

March 2012 at a Glance

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|-----|-----|--|-----|-----|---|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 <i>Sermon: "Neither Slave nor Master"</i> | 5 | 6 | 7 <i>Celebrations & Music @7:30, Sonen Room</i> | 8 | 9 | 10 <i>Maggie Thompson Memorial Service, 5-9 pm</i> |
| 11 <i>Sermon: "Prophetic Imagination"</i> | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 <i>Social Event / Fundraiser @ 7pm</i> |
| 18 <i>Sermon: "Wearing Green on Thursday"</i> | 19 | 20 | 21 <i>Board of Trustees Mtg, 7:30 Sonen Room</i> | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 <i>Sermon: "The Universe Story"</i> | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

March Social Event /Mini Fundraiser March 17 @ 7pm

All are invited to our March Social Event/Mini-Fundraiser on Saturday, March 17 at 7 PM in the Parish Hall. We will enjoy a Back-of-the-Freezer-Potluck Supper. Perhaps you have a delicious dish in your freezer that you have been waiting for an opportunity to defrost and share with friends? This is the event you have been waiting for! Also, this evening will feature a Silent Auction. We encourage you to think of auction activities that are local, do-able and fun. Question/RSVP/auction items contact darcy@hall@aol.com or call Darcy at 973-763-5552.

2012 Congregational Poll Update

Last December it was announced that beginning on December 4, 2011, and extending for the next six weeks, Social & Earth Action would conduct a poll of the congregation on five proposed Congregational Study Action Issues (CSAIs) sent to us by the UUA Commission on Social Witness (CSW). The church was asked (and in turn S&EA asked church members) whether these CSAIs should be put on the Final Agenda for delegates at the upcoming General Assembly in Phoenix, AZ. The Congregational Poll for Social Witness was closed January 15, 2012.

Twelve ballots were received: 6 hand-ins and 6 by email. All the received ballots were verified; each item was tabulated and scored. Using a formula from previous polls, S&EA recommended how the congregation should vote on the official Congregational Ballot that is part of our congregational certification with the UUA February 1, 2012. These recommendations were given the Board of Trustees in report form at its January meeting. Using the scoring system, the following results and recommendation were obtained:

| Proposed Congregational Study/ Action Issues | Yes | No | Abstain | Score | Recom. |
|---|------------|-----------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Climate Action and Adaptation Plans: Why Greenhouse Gases and their Effects Matter to Us | 7 | | 5 | 4.5 | Yes |
| Ending Slavery | 8 | | 4 | 6 | Yes |
| Exploring Class Barriers | 5 | 1 | 6 | 2 | Abstain |
| Families, Population, and the Environment | 7 | 1 | 4 | 4 | Yes |
| Reproductive Justice: Expanding Our Social Justice Calling | 6 | 1 | 5 | 2.5 | Yes |

UUA Social Witness rules allow for up to five proposals to be included on the GA final agenda. What is useful about holding the poll in this fashion is that if anyone from our church serves as a delegate to GA this year, they can use the results of this poll in determining which CSAI will go forward as the issue for the 2012-16 Statement of Conscience cycle.

Thanks to all who participated in this ongoing expression of grassroots democracy and living out our free faith.

If you have any comments regarding how this ballot was held or could be improved, please contact the Social & Earth Action Chair, Georgiana Hart.

Sermon Teasers

March 4 *“Neither Slave nor Master”*

Rev. Darrell Berger
Music: Bill Stafford
Senior Usher: Paul Axel-Lute

Abraham Lincoln said, “As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master”. This is a statement of universal and radical equality, worthy of and implicit in the teachings of the great spiritual teachers of all times. What does this mean for a country that is just now beginning to acknowledge class struggle?

March 11 *“Prophetic Imagination”*

Lara Campbell
Music: Dave Braham
Senior Usher: Ann Lang

We will explore the role of our imagination in the lives of UU women in honor of women's history month. All are invited to ponder the possibility of their own prophetic imagination.

Lara Campbell is a fifth generation Unitarian, raised as a Unitarian Universalist in northern Minnesota. She served as the Director of Religious Education for Community Unitarian Church at White Plains from 2003-2012. Lara holds a MA in Marriage and Family Therapy from Michigan State University and a BA from the University of Minnesota. She is an Our Whole Lives trainer and a Consultant for the UU District of Metro NY. Lara is a candidate for UU ministry and will be graduating in May of this year with a Masters of Divinity from New York Theological Seminary.

March 18 *“Wearing Green on Thursday”*

Rev. Darrell Berger
Music: Dave Braham
Senior Usher: Greg Giacobe

In my high school, forty years ago, wearing green on Thursday meant that you were “queer”. For decades, I wondered if this was just something around my school, and how such foolishness got started. It so happens to have originated with the Roman and Christian conquest of Ireland, and the oppression of the native population.

March 25 *“The Universe Story”*

Rev. Phil Passantino
Music: Bill Stafford
Senior Usher: Ann Miller

What spiritual wisdom can be gained from examining the 13.7 billion-year history of the Universe? Are we the waking universe itself? Phil will give a musical sermon. He'll share songs he wrote that are inspired by the work of Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme, two leading theologians in the quest to integrate science and spirituality.

Phil Passantino is an ordained minister who has spoken in UU Fellowships from the Poconos to Ireland. He officiates unique and meaningful weddings, baptisms, and funerals for people of all faith backgrounds. He is also a singer who writes UU hymns. Find out more about Phil Passantino at his website www.AmazingCeremonies.com.

Meetings & Events

- Celebrations & Music, Wednesday, March 7, 7:30 PM, Sonen Room
- Maggie Thompson Memorial Service, March 10, 7 PM, Sanctuary
- March Social Event/Mini Fundraiser, Friday, March 17, 7PM, Sonen Room
- Board of Trustees, Wednesday, March 21, 7:30 PM, Sonen Room

March Coffee Hour Coordinator

Gregory Giacobe

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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Orange, NJ 07051-0998**

