

MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

# FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ESSEX COUNTY

DECEMBER 2009

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## MARK IT DOWN

- **Sunday, December 6th, Greening of the Church, 12:30 pm, Parish Hall**
- **Thursday, December 12th, Board Meeting, 7:30 pm, Sonen Room**
- **Tuesday, December 15th, Celebrations and Music, 7:30 pm, Sonen Room**
- **Social & Earth Action, Sunday 10 January 2010, 12 Noon, Parish Hall**

## FROM DARRELL'S DESK- BOOK DISCUSSION RESUMES IN JANUARY

Last winter several of us gathered to discuss Mindy Fullove's book *Root Shock*, which helped us understand the impact of decades of urban renewal on cities like Orange. Beginning Monday, January 11, in the minister's study we will read and study *Wrestling with Moses*: how Jane Jacobs took on New York's master builder and transformed the American city by Anthony Flint, which was published last July.

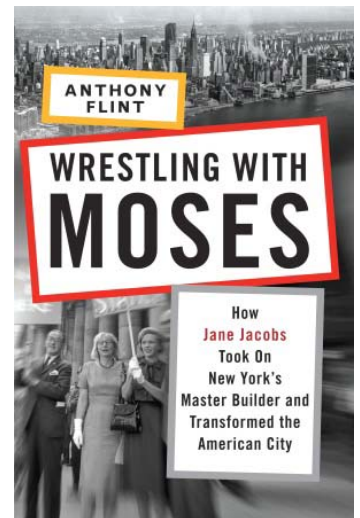
Jane Jacobs is the author of *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, published in 1961, which is the great critique of urban renewal. But she was not just a writer. She was also a community activist who organized against Robert Moses and his plans to build a super highway through Greenwich Village. *Wrestling with*

*Moses* is the story of that struggle and triumph.

*Wrestling with Moses* is available on line and in book stores. Molly Kaufman of the University of Orange also has copies. In fact, we hope to have some community folks join us, who have signed up for the discussion through the University of Orange.

Part of the fun and meaning of last year's discussion was having people in attendance who had lived in Newark, Pittsburgh and Orange when the urban renewal projects we were reading about were undertaken. I'm sure many of us will remember the Village before and after the times of this book.

This discussion is no mere intellectual exercise: it will help us understand what is required of



us to fulfill our mission of urban ministry in a revitalized neighborhood and city.

If you are interested, simply get the book on line, or from Molly, read the introduction and chapter one, and show up in my office on January 11 at 6:30.



## DECEMBER SUNDAY SERVICES


- Dec 6      **Common Ground: Rebuilding the Bridges between Islam & the Judeo-Christian West**      **Courtney Roberts, MA**  
**Musician: Bill Stafford, Senior Usher: Paul Axel-Lute**
- It's easy to lose sight of the fact that the three great monotheisms actually have a lot more in common than not. While each tradition celebrates a separate origin in divine revelation, the historical and sociological contexts reveal a much more inclusive story, and a shared set of core beliefs, all stemming from the influence of the Persian religion of the prophet Zoroaster. But who was Zoroaster? What did he teach?
- Courtney Roberts, MA, is a writer, teacher, and consultant, originally from Miami, FL. Her work reflects a unique perspective: a real passion for the 'big picture' that combines cosmology, religious studies and history with a lifetime of observing the dynamic interaction of spirit and cosmos. She received an MA in Cultural Astronomy and Astrology from Bath Spa University in England in 1978.*
- Dec 13      **December Pageant: Wintertide-Songs and Poems for Bright Days and Dark Nights**      **Darcy Hall**  
**Musician: David Braham, Senior Usher: Ann Lang**
- In darkest winter, we seek the warmth, comfort and inspiration of light; the church community and their family and friends are invited to "Songs and Poems for Bright Days and Dark Nights", a celebration of the holiday season written, in part, by the children of our Sunday School. The program will feature poems written for the occasion by the children, plus performances of poetry, stories, songs and music by church members and guest artists. The children have been working with Holly Scalera, a poet and poetry teacher, creating unique work for this very special program.
- Dec 20      **The Second of the Three Spirits**      **Rev. Darrell Berger**  
**Musician: David Braham, Senior Usher: Greg Giacobe**
- The title of this sermon is also the title of the chapter of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" that presents the Ghost of Christmas Present. He looks more than a little like Bacchus or Dionysus and is close to the hearts of many UU's. Getting to know this Second spirit is a good way of understanding the universal aspects of Winter Solstice holidays. Our choir will also participate in this service.
- Dec 24      **Candlelight Celebration—7 p.m.**      **Rev. Darrell Berger**
- Our candlelight worship will include traditional Christmas hymns, a somewhat briefer order of service, and a concluding ritual of candle lighting.
- Dec 27      **Kwanzaa**      **Flore Dorcely**  
**Musician: TBA, Senior Usher: Hay Heyman**
- Come celebrate our annual Kwanzaa service honoring the principles of the holiday! Excerpts from Founder, Dr. Karenga's special message will be delivered. ALL ARE WELCOME as we observe this uniquely African-American tradition.

***Greening of The Church - Help Needed!!***



Please help Celebrations & Music on Sunday afternoon, 6 December at approximately 12:30PM for our Holiday decorating. Holiday greens will be available. What we need are able hands to place them around the church. Please contact Gregory Giacobbe at 201-823-2459 or [ggiacobe@optonline.net](mailto:ggiacobe@optonline.net) for more information. Thank you.

**December 2009**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Greening of the Church, 12:30, Parish Hall	7	8	9	10 Board Meeting 7:30, Sonen Room	11	12
13	14	15 Celebrations and Music, 7:30, Sonen Room	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 	31 Coffee Hour Coordinators for December: Ann Lang		

## ***2010 Congregational Poll on Social Justice Items To Start 6 December!!***

*This year starts a new cycle in our Unitarian Universalist social witness process. The Social & Earth Action Team of the First UU Church of Essex County will undertake the task of coordinating and determining which proposed Congregational Study/ Action Issues (CSAIs) will be presented to the delegates at next year's General Assembly for study and action by member congregations over the next four years. The end result will be a new Statement of Conscience (SOC), a declarative statement by our denomination on a pressing social issue. Under this process, the UUA Commission on Social Witness (CSW) will send to all member congregations a list of proposed CSAIs – up to 10 – and ask which should appear on the Final Agenda of the 2010 General Assembly. Each congregation has the option to vote “Yes”, “No” or abstain. In the spirit of living out our Fifth Principle (“The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large”), the Social & Earth Action Team will undertake to gauge the views and opinions of congregational members on which proposed CSAIs to vote for or against on the official “Congregational Poll” Ballot. All actions by the Social & Earth Action Team will be reviewed by the church's Board of Trustees.*

*This year, the CSW has alerted congregations that six proposed CSAIs have been received and approved to undergo the study/action process. In addition, the poll will also include whether to approve the draft Statement of Conscience of “Peacemaking” for the 2010 GA Final Agenda. Each congregation has until 1 February to cast their vote. Social & Earth Action will compose a Members Voting Kit around these proposals as well as the draft SOC, and will be distributing them after service starting on 6 December. The kit and ballot will also be available for download and will be e-mailed to members by or on that date.*

*Also, Social & Earth Action will conduct listening posts during December and January during Coffee Hour to solicit comments and input for both the draft SOC on “Peacemaking” and on the 2008-12 draft CSAI on “Ethical Eating” (DATES TO BE ANNOUNCED.). Deadlines for all the forgoing are as follows: for hand-in and email ballots, 12 Noon on 10 January 2010; for post marked ballots, 6 January 2010; for comments of the “Peacemaking” draft SOC, 1 February; and for comments on draft CSAI “Ethical Eating”, 1 March.*

*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 Giacobe (201-823-2459 or [ggiacobe@optonline.net](mailto:ggiacobe@optonline.net)) or visit the Commission on Social Witness web page, <http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/issuesprocess/>. Make your voice heard!*

*Gregory Giacobe*

*[ggiacobe@optonline.net](mailto:ggiacobe@optonline.net)*

## Guest at Your Table 2009: A Story of Hope - La Voz de Tonyville

As a organization based on UU principles advancing human rights and social justice, UUSC works for long-term solutions to problems through partnerships with grassroots community-based and regional organizations in the US and around the world. Through a combination of advocacy, education and partnership, it seeks to protect and promote programs and policies that empower, defend and support people most in need. In that regard, here is one story of how UUSC made a difference.



In California, food is big business. Farms in the Golden State grow over half of all the fruits and vegetables we eat in this country, from lettuce to grapes to strawberries. They also make most of our milk and cheese. It takes a lot of water to make that much food, millions of gallons of fresh, clean water. But what about the people who live in California, near these big farms? Is their water clean enough to drink, or to cook with or take a bath? Ask California resident Guadalupe Nuñez about her water.

Guadalupe lives in the small town of Tonyville. Most people in Tonyville work as farmers or farm workers, and many speak Spanish. A few years ago, Guadalupe and her neighbors noticed that there was something wrong with their tap water during certain times of the year. What was wrong with it? "When we drank it, the water had the same metal taste as when you have a coin in your mouth," said Guadalupe. "It also smelled horrible."

Unable to drink the water in their homes, Guadalupe and her neighbors decided to investigate where their water comes from and why it sometimes tasted so bad. When they brought a water sample to a laboratory to be tested, they learned that it had dangerous levels of nitrate. Nitrate is used in fertilizers to make plants grow fast, and it is also found in livestock and animal wastes. Guadalupe and her neighbors decided to find out why the water company was not making their water clean and safe enough for families to drink year-round. They also wanted to know how the law could help them. With support from the Community Water Center, a UUSC partner based in California, Guadalupe and her neighbors created a special water group called La Voz de Tonyville ("The Voice of Tonyville").

Together, they convinced the state of California to issue an order requiring their water company to produce clean, safe drinking water all 12 months of the year. Now Guadalupe and her neighbors can drink the water that is piped into their homes. Across California, more and more people like Guadalupe are learning about their water and how to protect it. Community Water Center, UUSC, and hundreds of their friends, including the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry Action Network of California (UULMCA), Environmental Justice Coalition for Water, Alliance for Democracy, Food and Water Watch, and Urban Semillas lobbied hard in Sacramento, the California state capital, to help pass a new law entitled The Human Right to Water Act of 2009 (AB 1242). The bill, if passed by the state legislature and signed by the governor, would guarantee that all people have the right to clean water, for themselves and their families. AB 1242 was passed with bipartisan support by the California legislature, but was vetoed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on 11 October. While disappointed by the governor's decision, Guadalupe, La Voz de Tonyville, the Community Water Center and UUSC will continue to work for the human right to water and raise awareness of the injustice suffered by those denied it.

To learn more about these and other UUSC projects and campaigns, please visit the UUSC web site at <http://www.uusc.org/>. Your donation and membership helps UUSC to keep these programs and campaigns going. So please give generously and consider becoming a member. Thanks once again.

--Gregory Giacobe,  
UUSC Local Representative

**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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