



MAKING THE
CONNECTIONS

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County

April 2012

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Page 2 From Darrell's Desk
Page 3 April 2012 at a Glance
Page 4 Sermon Teasers
Page 5 Sermon Teasers cont.
Page 5 Coffee Hour Coordinators
Page 6 Mark it Down
Page 6 Does the Church Need an
Notification of Nominations

MARK IT DOWN

- April 4 Celebrations & Music
@7:30, Sonen Room
- April 13 Annual Church Seder @
6:30, Parish Hall
- April 15 Book Discussion Group,
Parish Hall, 12pm
- April 18 Board of Trustees, @ 7:30,
Sonen Room



FROM THE EDITOR Angela Randall-West

It began as a medium for sharing information with family and friends. Now social media has swelled into a platform for influencing public opinion, connecting advocates with similar opinions, broadening the audience reach of information, propaganda, marketing, and collaborating with like-minded individuals. Making a difference is the thesis of *Tipping Point* (Gladwell, 2000), a book that has been employed to describe a number of phenomenon. It can easily be applied to comprehending the changes that have and continue to occur in social movements and social media around the world.

In Gladwell's opinion, a social movement requires the uniqueness of three types of people: connectors, mavens, and salesmen (I would add Unitarians). There are consummate bloggers—people who begin and end their day posting, reading posts, and responding to posts. While other people wince at the perceived clutter of Facebook posts, the constant tweets from Twitter, and invites to get LinkedIn. Yet, they stay connected just the same. Social media is similar to the tulips in Georgiana Hart's spring picture (above). It does not matter if your voice is the sole voice in a field of differing popular opinion. What's more important to be able to create a movement that spreads requires focusing your opinion, testing ideas, and believing (Gladwell, 2000). The feminist movement (April 22nd sermon) is just one example. Just checkout the available apps on the market; there is a platform for every voice.

So, on the topic of social change, one thing is for sure. For years to come, literature will chronicle how the digital portals of social media has influenced and advanced politics, social change, public opinion, and public policy (Auer, 2011). Unitarians will certainly have their place in those history books. Tweet! Tweet!

From Darrell's Desk

Radical Acceptance

A few weeks ago Dharun Ravi, Tyler Clementi's roommate was found guilty of several counts of invasion of privacy and bias attack. The whole, sad incident left me feeling that Unitarian Universalist values ought to be trumpeted more loudly and more often.

Tyler Clementi's mother is a member of one of those mega churches which, to say the least, are not completely accepting of gay people. She was quoted in a recent *New Yorker* article, after Tyler came out to her, as being saddened that her son would not be able to get married and have a family. It is clear that while she loved her son, she may not have been as accepting and affirming as she might have been. Tyler seemed incapable of defending himself against the behaviors of his roommate. His feelings of isolation from everyone, including his family, had to be tremendous for him to take his own life.

Young Ravi, I believe, must have had his own troubles feeling like he fit in, and overcompensated in order to do it. His family members

are legal immigrants from India. He is a good-looking young man of slight physique, and a computer geek who played Ultimate Frisbee. This profile is often associated with the victim of bullying, rather than the bully. What better way to "fit in" than to pick on someone even less able to defend himself? This is nothing new to anyone who has traversed the dangerous terrain toward adulthood. What is new is the law and its enforcement. Ravi was offered a deal of community service in exchange for a guilty plea, which he rejected. His family obviously did not think he did anything criminal—years ago they would have been correct. However, those years, thankfully, seem to be over.

Sentencing, as well as appeals, is ahead for Ravi; and I don't think anyone wishes for two young lives to be ruined because of this. However, because congress has passed increasingly odious laws concerning immigrants, Ravi—though he has never lived in India—may face mandatory deportation. It seems as though the layers of American prejudice fold back onto themselves.

Unitarian Universalist youth groups, religious education curricula, and coming of age programs all teach and exhibit what might be called "radical acceptance." I use the word *radical* because it is so unusual for young people to find themselves in such environments where people are accepted in their diverse humanity for who they are. I can't help wishing that both Tyler and Dharun could have found their way to a UU youth group. What we do doesn't just help kids know themselves and get along. It saves lives.

Minister's email
minister@essexuu.org

April 2012 at a Glance

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <i>Sermon: "Last Supper and The First Communion"</i>	2	3	4 <i>Celebrations & Music @7:30, Sonen Room</i>	5	6	7
8 • <i>Sermon: "Do I Need a Savior?"</i> • <i>Social & Earth Action Comm, 11am</i>	9	10	11	12	13 <i>Annual Church Seder @ 6:30pm</i>	14
15 • <i>Sermon: "Soul of Cyborgs"</i> • <i>Book Discussion Group, 12pm, Parish Hall</i>	16	17	18 <i>Board of Trustees Mtg, 7:30 Sonen Room</i>	19	20	21
22 <i>Sermon: "The Rise of the Millennial Feminists"</i>	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 <i>Sermon: "Setting Ourselves Free"</i>	30	31				

Annual Church Seder April 13 @ 6:30 pm

All are invited to the Annual Church Seder on Friday, April 13th at 6:30pm in the Parish Hall. We will enjoy a meal that is Kosher for Passover—made of no bread or bread products, and anything with flour would need to be made with specially prepared flour for Passover (matzah meal). Poultry, all veggies, and fruits are acceptable. This is a great event. Invite your friends and bring kids. Please contact Melanie Axel-Lute mmaxelute@yahoo.com or Rickey Slazak to let them know what you will be bringing.

Sermon Teasers

April 1 *“The Last Supper and The First Communion”*

Rev. Darrell Berger
Music: Dave Braham

What exactly did Jesus establish at what is known as The Last Supper? Who is included and who is not? Who decides?

April 8 *“Do I Need a Savior?”*

Rev. Darrell Berger
Music: TBA

A friend recently asked, “What does a savior do, exactly, and why might I need one?” Good question; tough to answer. I’ll try on Easter Sunday.

April 15 *“Soul of Cyborgs”*

Rev. Allen Wells
Music: TBA

The Dalai Lama has said that he could be reincarnated into an advanced computer. We human beings will be transitioning through a cyborg existence into a trans-human life form faster than you might believe. Once a Luddite and skeptic, I am now making my peace with this evolution. I see now that every spiritual question we have ever raised is more important than ever. I'd like to take a look at some of these questions before us and consider how we might begin dealing with them now.

Rev. Allen Wells is currently Director of Allen Wells Counseling in Morristown, N.J. a holistic mind/body, spirit counseling center that specializes in Contemplative or Mindfulness Psychotherapy. He has served as minister of UU congregations in Weymouth, Mass., Hollis Queens and at The First Unitarian Church of Brooklyn as well as Director of Religious Education for the UU Congregation of Monmouth County and the Morristown Unitarian Fellowship. He graduated from the University of Chicago with a degree in counseling, and earned a postgraduate degree in counseling from the Institute of Religion and Health in NYC. Formerly a therapist of the DiMele Center for Counseling & Psychotherapy in Manhattan, Allen's life long interest has been in unifying the internal, personal, psychological world, commonly called "spiritual", and the external political, social, economic, environmental world—the material world. He defines himself as an earth-centered, Buddhist, UU.

April 22 *“The Rise of the Millennial Feminists”*

Rev. Darrell Berger
Music: Dave Braham

The millennial generation is now coming of age, having been born in the 1980's. Few have identified as “feminists.” I think this might be changing. Our Earth Day celebration will show how this generation might save the earth, or, more precisely, save humanity from itself.

COMMUNITY COOKBOOK

Do you have a great recipe you would like to share? Do you have a great dish for a Church Supper, Holiday Dinner or Potluck? An old-time "heritage dish"? If so, send it along to Anne Miller (awmiller123@verizon.net) or Darcy Hall (darcylhall@aol.com). A committee is currently forming to assemble a Church Cookbook. We are still in the early stages of planning, so volunteers/suggestions welcome for ideas relating to food, title, artwork and other aspects of the project. Current and former First UU members near and far plus friends and others in our Orange community are invited to submit their favorite recipes. Current and former First UU members near and far plus friends and others in our Orange community are invited to submit their favorite recipes.



Sermon Teasers

April 29 **“Setting Ourselves Free:
A UU Theology of Liberations”**

Jennifer Kelleher
Music: Dave Braham

Society can trap us. We are born into systems and structures of which, sometimes, we feel we have no control. How do our Unitarian Universalist values play into our day-to-day lives as we live within these constraints? How do we break free?

Jennifer Kelleher is the Ministerial Intern at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Cherry Hill and a Candidate for the Unitarian Universalist ministry. She began her path to ministry within her home congregation in central New Jersey, where she served as an active lay leader for almost a decade. She has served as chaplain at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. She has also worked at Cathedral Kitchen in Camden, NJ, a non-profit organization that provides meals and health services within the community.

Prior to professional ministry, she held a career in pharmaceutical marketing and has also worked in public relations and as a television news reporter. She is will receive her Masters of Divinity from Meadville Lombard Theological School, a Unitarian Universalist seminary located in Chicago, IL in May. Originally from New England, she was raised in the First Parish Church of Plymouth, Massachusetts, a Unitarian Universalist congregation.

Coffee Hour Coordinators

Gregory Giacobe – April 15, 2012

Ann E. Lang – April 8 & April 15, 2012

Ross E. Mill – April 22 & April 29

Senior Ushers

April, 1	Ann Lang
April, 8	Paul Axel-Lute
April, 15	Greg Giacobe
April, 22	Anne Miller
April, 29	Ann Lang

Meetings & Events

- Celebrations & Music, Wednesday, April 4, 7:30 pm, Sonen Room
- Social & Earth Action, Sunday, April 8, 11:45 am, Parish Hall
- Annual Church Seder, Friday, April 13, 6:30pm, Parish Hall
- Book Discussion: Death of Josseline (Chapters 9 & 10), Sunday, April 15, 12 pm, Parish Hall
- Board of Trustees, Wednesday, April 18, 7:30pm, Sonen Room

Does the Church Need an Investment Committee?

Rev. Darrell Berger

The Board has recently discussed whether we need an Investment Committee in addition to the Budget Committee. They requested I write this for the newsletter to stimulate discussion before our annual meeting.

The arguments favoring such a committee is that while a Budget Committee looks at the year ahead, an Investment Committee looks at the long term stewardship of our reserve and endowment funds. We have made great strides in our financial management recently and having both functions carried out by the Budget Committee has worked so far, but the Board sees a possible separate Investment Committee as a workable next step in good management.

That is, we need to have specific goals for the performance of our invested funds, and make sure they are met. This tends to be an afterthought for a Budget Committee, which is always dealing with the urgency of the next budget.

An argument against a separate Investment Committee is that we have been doing pretty well right

now the way things are. An even stronger argument is that we do not exactly have a surplus of volunteer time and expertise.

If we are to move toward a separate Investment Committee it would have to be with the promise that an appointment would not involve a lot of time, as members are likely to have other leadership roles. Indeed, once investment objectives are set, they need not change often, and only require examining from quarter to quarter. What is required is a bit of investing expertise, or the desire to find some.

This committee would be a logical next step away from emergency financial management to planning, but we need not take it. It may prove burdensome to our volunteer load. Budget Committees may feel they can attend to both immediate and longer range planning. If anyone finds that an Investment Committee suits their volunteer profile or that the time for such a committee is now, please speak to me, Greg Giacobe, or a member of the Board.

Notification of Nominations

Dear Members of the First UU Church of Essex County,

This is to notify you of the nominations for the Officers and Trustees to the First UU Church of Essex County Board of Trustees for the 2012-2013 Church year, in accordance to the Bylaws of the Church (Art. V, Sec. 4). The Nominating Committee has put forward its proposed slate of candidates, to join continuing Trustees Lucinda Long and Georgiana Hart whose terms run through June 2013 and June 2014, respectively. As of March 8, 2012, the candidates are:

President: Flore Dorcely (continuing)
Vice-President: Darcy Hall (continuing)
Secretary: Gregory Giacobe (continuing)
Treasurer: Ross Miller

Trustee (through 2015): Laura Rogers
Nominating Committee (through 2014): Anne Miller

Voting on the proposed slate shall take place at the Annual Congregational Meeting, on Sunday, 10 June 2012, at approximately 12 Noon. Any church member is eligible to stand for the above offices as long as they fulfill the requirements set forth in the Bylaws (Art. V, Sec. 2) and have ten members of the church who are eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting nominate that person. Notification of the intention to run, as well as a list of members supporting the nomination, must be given the Board Secretary in writing no later than April 1, 2012. The Secretary will then make a list of all nominees for church offices available to church members no later than ten days before the Annual Meeting.

Sincerely,

Gregory Giacobe,
Secretary, Board of Trustees

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

**First Unitarian Universalist Church
of Essex County
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