

First Church

FIRST
UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH
OF ESSEX
COUNTY

SEPTEMBER
2012

Be the first to email or call the church office to identify the origin/artist of this needle point tapestry and get special mention in the October newsletter.



Inspiration BY ANGELA RANDALL-JOHNSTON, EDITOR

It can come from the darnedest sources

Inspiration to complete a task (as in my dissertation), tactics to problem solve, commit to a cause (see Share-the-Plate) or a relationship (hence my new name), or fulfill a dream can come from many a source. Major life events will surely get you off the fence of indecisiveness. But, sometimes something trivial can be that needed catalyst. There may be a word on a page, a picture, a comment a child, a story told (perhaps too many

times), a moment in nature, or an article in a magazine (see FROM DARRELL'S DESK) that is just the needed nudge.

Check out what UU members connecting on Facebook are saying about internet ministry, social justice, religious and civil liberties. Or, join the conversations with the First Church Social & Earth Action Committee. As we start our new year, this newsletter, those conversations, our church services, committees, and discussions of UU supported causes will inspire you.

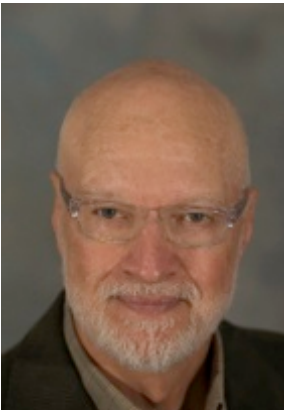
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2012

September 9, 2012, marks the end of our summer hiatus, and the beginning of our 2012 congregational year. Service will begin at 10am. Join us for our opening Ingathering processional. Bring some cookies or lemonade to share. Also bring some real (or symbolic) water from a place you have been this summer.



from Darrell's desk

Truth, Never a Disservice to a Just Cause

BY DARRELL E. BERGER

I recently purchased the April 21, 1967, issue of *Life* magazine for five dollars from an antique store in Massachusetts. It had a rave review of the first album by a new singing group, Simon and Garfunkel. The reviewer enjoyed both the words and music, especially compared to Bob Dylan's, which he called "sadly dated." The new 1967 Cadillac show machines in an advertisement were so grotesquely elongated, now, they can only remind one of dinosaurs.

"Women's rights are fundamentally connected to the economy."

The magazine also has an editorial titled "Dr. King's Disservice to His Cause." The reason: "in linking the civil rights movement with total opposition to our position in Vietnam, Dr. King comes close to betraying the cause for which he has worked so long." His calling the struggle a colonial war, suggesting "Negroes were dying in disproportionate numbers in Vietnam," and claiming that budgetary demands of the war were a hindrance to progress in civil rights, are all stated as undermining the cause of racial equality.

There is no claim that the points he was raising were false, just that raising them was somehow not helpful to his cause. They made people who might otherwise support him, hold back. Among those holding back, and then fighting back, were, we now know, the United States government. How interesting and melancholy these old magazines can be.

I wonder how current political topics will read when somebody in, say 2057, comes across the equivalent of *LIFE* magazine today, whatever form that might take. For instance, I recently heard what passes for a moderate Republican respond to the endless stream of ignorant, hateful statements from his colleagues on the topic of women's reproductive rights by saying, "I don't think this election will turn on abortion. It is about the economy."

However, just as Dr. King saw that there was a clear and tragic connection between civil rights and the Vietnam War, so ought we to recognize that women's rights are fundamentally connected to the economy. If there is one economic reality that can be demonstrated objectively, it is that the more women are free and equal to participate in a nation's economy, the more robust that economy becomes. The only exceptions are those nations sitting on huge oil reserves. Even they will eventually have to accept gender equality, or their wealth will disappear as surely as those gigantic Cadillacs.

It is almost impossible to imagine anyone would want women in the United States to participate in our economy on anything but an equal basis. But that is exactly where the attack on women's rights is leading. Dr. King paid a price for speaking about those things that connect people events, even—and most especially—when the truth is difficult. Let us follow his example, secure in the value, regardless of price.

SERMON TEASERS

A glimpse of upcoming services

SEPTEMBER 9 -
INGATHERING AND WATER
CEREMONY. SERMON:
"WATER SIBLINGS"

Please gather at 10am for our opening Ingathering processional. Bring some cookies or lemonade to share. Also bring some real (or symbolic) water from a place you have been this summer. This helps bring us together after our summer hiatus.

The title of the sermon is based on the concept of "water brother," from the science fiction novel, *Strangers in a Strange Land* (Robert A. Heinlein, 1987, Ace Books). An important spiritual text for many baby boomers, it seems almost forgotten now. How do we live as adults with the values formed in adolescence? How ought the values evolve as we age? Can we pick and choose what values are passed to the next generation?

continued on page 4

Life Magazine

First issue of the world-famous *Life* pictorial magazine was first published on November 23, 1936, and was continuously published until 1973

September Coffee Hour Coordinator: Georgiana Hart

September 9

Senior Ushers

Paul Axel-Lute

Musicians

Dave Braham

September 16

Greg Giacobe

Bill Stafford

September 23

Anne Lang

Dave Braham

September 30

Anne Miller

Dave Braham

Sharing-the-Plate Success BY GREGORY GIACOBE

Fall 2012 Update

It has been another successful year for our Share-The-Plate program. Overall, the church's Sunday collections this past year have experienced a noticeable



upturn over the year before. Total Sunday collections for 2010/2011 were \$ 1603.75, while for 2011/2012 collections were \$ 2037.00, an increase of 27.02%. Thank you all for making this program a success!

First launched in late 2008, Share-The-Plate is designed to help local under-funded and deserving charities in the Orange area. The program was envisioned as a way for our church community to live out its values and mission in a tangible way. Each fall and spring, our Social & Earth Action Committee collects and reviews any nominations we receive, and selects one the committee thinks most reflects the church's values and mission, as well as most in need. This selection is presented to the Board of Trustees for their approval. Soon afterwards,

after the charity is contacted and the collection period determined, the details are publicly announced, and collections begin. At least half of each Sunday's Offertory collection is set aside for the designated charity. At the end of the collection period, an announcement appears in the next edition of the church newsletter, a tally of the amount for that period's charity, as well as a running total for the program.

The recipient for the Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 Share-The-Plate was the Gale Center in East Orange, operated by Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan New Jersey. The collection period ran from September 11, 2011 to June 10, 2012 and raised a total of \$1493.50.

As of July 1, 2012, Share-The-Plate has collected and distributed \$4657.25 since its inception. This is all due to our church's giving spirit.

Thank you very much.

For details on how you can become involved and nominate a charity, see *Share-the-Plate Recipient* article on the following page.

Past Share-The-Plate Recipients

Feed The Needy (St. John the Evangelist RC Church, Orange, NJ)
\$695.50

Haitian Pastors Association, East Orange, NJ
\$1379.00

UUA/UUSC Pakistan Flood Relief Fund, Boston, MA
\$539.25

Anthony O'Brien (UNNOH), NYC, NY
\$550.00

Gale Center - Planned Parenthood of Metro NJ
\$1493.50

september 2012 at a glance

9

Ingathering and Water Ceremony; Sermon: "Water Siblings"

23

Speaker: Rev. Allen Wells "Begin Close in"
Music: Dave Braham

12

Board of Trustees Meeting; 7:30pm, Sonen Room

30

Speaker: Peter Rogen "Holistic Humanism of Rumi"
Music: Dave Braham

16

Sermon: Strong Walls and Open doors: On Membership Growth"

Sermon Teasers continued...

SEPTEMBER 16 -

SERMON: "STRONG WALLS AND OPEN DOORS: ON MEMBERSHIP GROWTH"

We began this discussion in the spring and want to continue it, both in worship and in a special, informal meeting following coffee hour. The board hopes this discussion will deepen a conversation that will inform their decision-making in the coming months and years.

SEPTEMBER 23 -

SERMON: "BEGIN CLOSE IN", REV. ALLEN WELLS

Today we are required to consider drastic decisions and make momentous changes as persons and institutions if we are to create a habitable planet and create a compassionate world. Should we focus more on the world or on ourselves? How shall we tackle issues so large? And where do we begin?

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.

SEPTEMBER 30 -

SERMON: "THE KEY TO LOVING", PETER ROGEN

"I am so small. How can this great Love be inside me?" asks Jalaluddin Rumi, the great 13th century Sufi mystic (and America's top selling poet). Love evolves and projects from a unity within oneself that expands to include our fellow human beings, the world around us, and finally the sacred, the Divine, God. Rumi is recognized as one of the world's great mystical poet-saint-geniuses. With love and compassion, wit and humor, he speaks poetically to the challenge of living a more spiritual life in a world that tends to impede the spiritual quest.

Peter Rogen, a resident of Woodstock NY and a well-known interpreter of the poetry of Rumi, and editor of "Rumi's Holistic Humanism", will give us the poet's answer through dramatically reciting a half-dozen of Rumi's verses, along with a brief introduction to the poems to provide context.

As a young man, Peter was awarded a Rockefeller Grant to Study in the American Theater, and performed Shakespeare at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. He then founded an international continued...

Sermon Teasers continued...

PETER ROGEN

communications consultancy which he led for more than twenty five years. In 2007, Peter discovered the mystical love poetry of the Sufis, and in particular the poetry of Rumi. He has toured with the "Whirling Dervishes from Konya (Turkey)" and presented Rumi's poetry at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The National Cathedral in Washington DC, and more than a hundred churches, synagogues, colleges, universities and cultural centers.



Celebration Space BY CELEBRATIONS & MUSIC COMMITTEE

Welcome back to you all. The members of the Celebrations & Music Committee hope you had a restful and enjoyable summer.

While you were away, we have been busy planning for the upcoming church year. We'll start off with Ingathering on September 9, with the traditional cookies & lemonade on the front lawn (weather permitting) starting at 10am. We will then proceed up to the corner of Main Street, before entering the church for the service that will include the water ceremony. We ask all members and friends to please bring their own portable musical instrument and/or noise maker for the procession.

Looking ahead, we have invited Peter Rogen to speak on the Holistic Humanism of Rumi on September 30. On October 14, Georgiana Hart will give us her impressions and report what occurred at this year's General Assembly. Farther out, we are planning the first of two jazz services in December.

At its August meeting, Celebrations & Music continued with plans for acquiring a CD/MP3 player and an MP3 recorder to augment out our sound system. We will also move to store our church's worship materials and hymnals in the newly renovated closet in the back of the sanctuary. Finally, pending Board approval, we would like to formally dedicate the Malcolm & Connie Blodgett Room (formally the church office) before the end of this church year.

Thank you all. See you at church.

Gregory Giacobe, Chair Celebrations & Music
ggiacobe@optonline.net

Fall 2012 "Share-the-Plate" Recipient

BY GEORGIANA HART

At its April 8, 2012 meeting, Social & Earth Action chose the next recipient for our "Share-The-Plate" program. There was one submission made and the committee endorsed it. *The Interfaith Food Pantry of the Oranges* is operated by five religious societies in the Oranges and housed at the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, 105 Main St. in Orange. This choice was confirmed by the Board of Trustees at its April 26, 2012 meeting. The Interfaith Food Pantry is open every Wednesday with 10-15 volunteers, and bags and hands out groceries to over 60 families. Clothes and household items are also distributed. It receives no federal funding, and raises all funds to purchase food by doing food drives and outreach to the community to help keep their shelves stocked with food. Their goal is to reduce hunger in the Orange communities and to fight hunger in New Jersey.

The collection period will run from September 9, 2012 through January 20, 2013. The program requires that at least half of the cumulative unrestricted donations made during our church offertory will be set aside for a designated charity. Checks made to the church as part of members' pledge fulfillment, or for any other previously announced appeal (such as Chalice Lighters), will not be included.

The goals of Share-The-Plate is to promote the congregation's stated vision "to be a life affirming liberal religious community where people of diverse beliefs, ideas and backgrounds come together to provide spiritual and intellectual growth to one another and to work together in Orange, New Jersey for a greater good in the world", and to fulfill the

"to provide support and care for our community"

congregation's mission "to study and practice religion in freedom and fellowship", and "[t]o provide support and care for our [religious] community and the community at large". It will also be seen as a way to enhance the meaning of the church's relationships with and among partners in the larger local community, build awareness, learn more about ourselves and the projects the church gives to, and to develop a philosophy of giving within the church community. However, the program is not intended to replace other regular and special funding appeals.

Members can submit potential candidate organizations and programs to Social & Earth Action, either directly, by mail or through the church web site (http://essexuu.org/share_the_plate.html). The committee will review submissions

to see if they fit with the church's mission, vision and the program's goals, before sending their choice to the Board of Trustees. All charities must be submitted by a church member, be either a 501(c) 3 or 501(c) 4 non-profit organizations, do work that is consistent with Unitarian Universalist principles, supply a name and description of the charitable organization or project, and supply contact information.

Separate checks for the charity, either given during the offertory or sent to the church for this purpose, should either be made out to the charity or to "The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County" with "Share the Plate" in the "Memo" line. To the extent allowed by law, checks written to the church will be acknowledged as a tax deductible donation. A church check for at least 50% of all unrestricted donations given during Sunday collections, as well as any received checks to be forwarded, will be sent with an acknowledgement letter no later than ten days after the last collection for that charity.

For more information, contact Georgiana Hart, Social & Earth Action Chair, at 973-763-1139 or luchahart@verizon.net.

WHERE EVERY MIND IS FREE AND EVERY SOUL IS WELCOME!

**MAKING THE
CONNECTIONS**

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
OF ESSEX COUNTY**

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**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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