



First Universalist Society of Salem

211 BRIDGE STREET, SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS • MARCH 2009

Worship and Religious Education Begins at 10:45 AM • Nursery is available for babies and toddlers

Rev. Marjorie Matty, Minister

Identity – Who Are We...

A couple of months ago I shared my thoughts about identity in a sermon called "Who Am I." In that sermon I explained that, "In a moment we could lose the ability to self-identify because someone else has taken away our power to do so. They have decided for us, without our consent or knowledge, that we are not who we think we are but who they think we are. This, my friends is the crux of oppression." Once we make an assumption about who someone else is without their input or approval we treat him or her (if someone chooses to articulate gender) differently; we never give the person a chance to be themselves. In that sermon I pointed to a biblical reference in Exodus as an example. I shared the interaction between God and Moses where he asks God for his name (aka his calling card) to help the people of Israel realize that God sent Moses to release them from bondage. What God shared with Moses was, "I am who I am." (exodus 3:13-14)

This month we will be taking this construct of identity and oppression, because in many ways they

go hand in hand, and we will go deeper. As human beings we make assumptions about one another, initially because of our need to determine if we should fight or flight, which is a direct response from our reptilian brains. We also have a habit of establishing a belief about an individual and/or group, which informs us about them and we have a hard time believing that people can change or be something outside of our understanding of them. We look at people and situations and in an instant we determine if we are safe or not or if they are worthy of our time or not. These initial reactions are very limiting, to say the least, because if we took a few seconds longer to observe and get to know the other we may in fact realize that our initial assumptions were wrong and in the act of getting to know each other, we may actually gain a more fulfilling view and understanding of one another.

I invite us to go deeper this month to converse with other members of First Universalist and with acquaintances about what is most important to each of us. I invite us to listen when an-

other speaks because wisdom can and does exist everywhere you look and usually one can find it exactly where one wouldn't think to find it. I believe whole-heartedly that we have so much that we can learn from one another.

This month of March is going to be a very busy one with the 200th Anniversary Concert on February 28th, and Canvass/Covenant Sunday on March 1st at which members of First Universalist will share their stories. We will also welcome two young adult Unitarian Universalist men to our pulpit this month, Matt Myer and Sam Teital will both share their messages in unique and wonderful ways. On March 29th we will welcome our new members in a special ceremony and with a potluck or pancake breakfast. We have

good news for our church that our message of inclusiveness, love and hope has helped our

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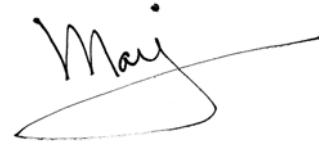
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membership to grow to 83 members this year, that is an addition of 17 new members in the last several months. Most of the new members are families with small children, which warms my heart and brings

such amazing energy to our Sunday school. This labor of love takes us all working together, inviting our friends and by doing a wonderful job of welcoming our visitors. These are amazing times at First Universalist, I am so proud of the work and fun that we are engaging in. Keep up the mo-

mentum and let us laugh, work, have fun and make the best of it together.

In faithful and loving service,



Rev. Marjorie J. Matty

UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

Worship and Religious Education Begins at 10:45 AM - Nursery is available for babies and toddlers.

March 1st

Canvass/Covenant Sunday

What is the difference between covenanting and canvass, and how much is enough? Some members of the congregation will share their stories of commitment and we will all engage in recovenanting \for the coming church year. Please read the canvass package that you received in the mail and think about what and how you would like to commit to the church financially and voluntarily in the coming year. Lunch will be served after worship.

March 8th

Matt Meyer: Drumming and a workshop after worship.

Matt Meyer is a graduate of the Berkley College of Music and has studied abroad in Cuba, Ghana, and Central America. Matt has led worships for dozens of UU congregations including General Assembly in

2006. He plays percussion for several bands around Boston, as well as teaching private lessons and leading workshops for schools and churches. Matt is active with the UU Young Adult movement and is always seeking new and better ways to combine music, spirituality and social justice work.

Matt's "Drumming and Spirituality" workshop is a chance for people of all skill levels to participate in hands on rhythm-making. We will experience the spirituality of community music-making through different activities, stories, games and discussions as well as look at how rhythm and music intersect with Unitarian Universalist values. Bring your own drum if you have one. For those who don't, drums will be provided. (617) 875-7694
Matt@RhythmRevelations.com
www.RhythmRevelations.com

March 15th

Identity - Melting Pot or Salad Bowl

Should we all be the same or can we be unique individuals. This Sunday we will look at the various ways being in community can homogenize us as individuals.

March 22nd

Sam Teitel is our guest in the pulpit. He is a Massachusetts poet and is known for his poetry slams.

March 29th

New Member Sunday

What does it mean to be a new member and how do we continue to grow a healthy and happy church. How does our collective identity evolve as we grow and how does the church look in a different light?

Staff

Minister: Rev. Marjorie Matty
Chair of the Board of Trustees: Christine DiSaia
Director of Religious Education: Mandy Neff
Choir Director: Donna Murphy

Accompanist: Michael Mazurkiewicz
Nursery Attendant: Mary Radziewicz
Sexton: Jane Camarda
Church Administrator: Rosa Palomino

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This month the RE Committee will meet on Sun. March 8 at 9:30AM in the library. We encourage you to attend if you have an interest in next year's curriculum.

Teachers have been busy at work in our two bustling classrooms. Our younger class toured the building and are learning about our chalice symbol by creating them in different media. The older class is working on a timeline of our own church's history, which you can see in Classroom 2. Last week they began exploring their own personal histories with an autobiography as well. It is a delight to get to know them. This month RE also completed a Strategic Plan and a budget for the coming year.

Even if it feels early, it is indeed time for us to start planning for next year's program. An early part of our decision will be the topics we want to cover next year. This year the children have learned about such topics as creation myths, anti-racism, social action, UU history, and worship. Next year some possibilities include: the 7 principles of our faith, Jewish and Christian teachings, Earth-centered teachings, social action projects, and Our Whole Lives sexuality education. We encourage you to get involved in this process and let us know what is most important to you and your family. Which topics do you feel young UUs need to learn in order to live out our vital faith in the world?

Deb Di Giullio, DRE at First Church on Essex St., has expressed interest in a joint Reli-

gious Education retreat facilitated by Mass Bay District Program Coordinator Rev. Sue Phillips. We hope to meet in April/May to work out roles, curriculum planning basics, and expectations for RE. Thanks to the great work the Strategic Planning committee has been doing, we are off to a great start.

In faith,
Mandy Neff
Director of Religious Education
mandyneff@verizon.net
(781) 481-9232



The First Universalist Society in Salem is a Welcoming Congregation which celebrates and supports the lives, the relationships and contributions of its lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and heterosexual members and friends. We affirm and promote full participation of all in the life of the congregation and community. We pledge our congregation's commitment to continue to enlighten and educate our members, friends, children and community regarding sexual orientation and gender identification.

We welcome people with disabilities. We are partially accessible and striving to become more so.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER: STEVE BROWN

Profile by Sally Millice

Steve Brown's journey to our church started when he saw the ad "Is God Keeping You From Going to Church?" The ad campaign, run nationally by the UUA, intrigued Steve who had not attended church for more than 40 years. He began visiting North Shore area UU churches. "I felt the most welcome at First Universalist," he said. "I liked the people and the building. The UU message where all are welcome, all viewpoints respected and appreciated...this really appealed to me." Steve started attending regularly last year and joined the church in the Fall.

A mechanical engineer for a small company, Steve is a native New Englander who grew up in Beverly and moved back 13 years ago. He graduated from Lowell Tech. "I have always been a tinkerer and enjoy collecting and repairing old wind up clocks, and repairing computers." Steve has brought his talents to the church, repairing doors, locks, installing shelves and other tasks as a member of the building committee.

Steve is a vegetarian and enjoys cooking healthy low fat vegan meals. In 2000 he had a heart attack and began making lifestyle changes to prevent another attack. He belongs to a support group at Union Hospital that offers yoga, meditation, medical and diet information and enjoys being with like-minded people in community. Steve is co-president of his neighborhood's Civic Association which sponsors activities for kids and adults and also a Fourth of July parade. Steve's wife of 30 years, Carol, supports his journey. They have a son Tom 16 and daughter Allison 19.

In addition to helping with building chores, Steve enjoys our church potlucks (to which he brings delicious homemade dishes) and movie nights. He also attends meditation class before service. We are grateful to Steve for his participation and enthusiasm. Welcome to the congregation.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER: NATALIE JOHNSEN

Profile by Tracy Keller

Natalie Johnsen, who lives in Salem with her husband, Timothy, joined First Universalist in October after taking the membership class here.

Natalie grew up in a non-church-going family in a small rural town in upstate New York, but said she felt she has a "real genetic predisposition to seek spiritually." She read everything she could get her hands on about spiritual matters and found herself interested in Goddess-centered religions. However, in her tiny town, there was no one she could bounce ideas off of and she learned on her own without any direction.

While in college, Natalie took a bunch of feminist studies courses. After college, while living in the Burbank section of Los Angeles, she joined an association called Covenant of the Goddess, an umbrella organization of pagans with no set doctrine.

Natalie discovered Unitarian Universalism while living in Rochester, N.Y., where she moved after living in L.A. for two years. She was new in town and out walking one Sunday when she came upon a church service. "It kind of clicked with me. It felt like home," she said.

Basically, Natalie said she believes in one creative spiritual force but sees it as having a feminine energy. "I communicate spiritually in a sort of Quaker way; I wait for the divine voice to speak to me.

Her association with Unitarian Universalism took a respite when she moved to Vermont. There was no UU church nearby so she attended a Methodist church.

When her husband's work brought them to Sa-

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lem, Natalie looked for a UU church to attend. She settled on First Universalist because she found the atmosphere here to be welcoming and friendly without being overbearing.

The open spiritual atmosphere of First Universalist also appealed to Natalie. "I wanted exploration to be part of my spiritual journey," she said, adding that the church gives its members the tools to work on one's own spiritual journey.

She has been attending the Pagan 101 courses led by Donna Day and participating in the Saturday morning Craft Circle as well as pagan celebrations held at the church.

When she is not at church, Natalie works in fundraising and development at Beverly Hospital. Previously, she worked in marketing and ticketing in theater, most recently at the Stoneham Theatre. She met her husband when she was living and working in Vermont.

SOMETHING MISSING IN THE SANCTUARY?

For those of you who have been in church the last few weeks you may have noticed a missing pew. In order to facilitate a welcoming environment for everyone we have removed a pew so those with mobility concerns i.e. wheelchairs/scooters as well as baby strollers can more easily be accommodated.

When the work party removed the pew (keeping all parts) it was discovered that the plank for the back of the seating spanned the entire length of that half of the aisle.

By the time you read this the repainting of the area will be finished as well.

From,
The Aesthetics Committee
Chris Makary, Mark Stevens, Brenda Briana,
Helen Jacoby, Rev. Marjorie Matty
aesthetics_com@verizon.net

FLEA MARKET ANNOUNCEMENT

It's time for the annual Flea Market again!

Please donate your clean and gently used clothing, tchotchkes, books, kitchenware and the like.

Due to the cost of having unsold items hauled away, we *cannot* accept any donation of electronics: i.e. no computer monitors or other components, no televisions. We appreciate your consideration in this matter.

The dates of the market will be the evening of Friday, April 17, and the morning and early afternoon of Saturday, April 18.

We need set up crews to help set up on Wednesday, April 15 and Thursday, April 16, as well as late Friday afternoon. Cleanup crews are needed that Sunday after church and on the following Monday to pack up unsold items. We also need help running the actual sale on Friday and Saturday.

New this year: we need someone to serve as an Exit Coordinator to arrange for charity pickups of items not sold. Ideally, this would be someone who is available during the day.

A sign up sheet will be placed in the Anna Hill Room.

For further information, please contact Jan Costa (978) 821-5000 or Tracy Keller (978) 774-7327.

Sincerely,
Jan Costa and Tracy Keller



Make sure to
set your
clocks
forward
before bed on
March 7th

PERMANENT FUNDS REPORT

By Sally Millice with input from Greg Stevens, CFP, Cabot Money Management, Inc.

The fourth quarter of 2008 was one of the worst in equity market history according to many observers. Deteriorating credit conditions, collapse of major financial institutions, and increasing job losses led to a deep recession. Massive amounts of leverage used to finance growth and consumption all came crashing down when the housing market imploded. No one could have anticipated how big the leverage bubble from the housing market had become and how bad the fallout would be when it burst. Our management advisors and others expect market volatility to continue through 2009. The economic condition appears to be worsening as the government works to come up with a plan to get things back on track.

In an effort to control the downside risks of our portfolio, Cabot Management has increased our allocation to high quality bonds (i.e. government agencies, high grade corporate bonds, treasuries, etc.) along with a high level of cash (money market funds). Our stock allocation of 20% includes approximately 6% in gold (a good inflation/weak dollar hedge).

The current allocation of our invested funds is 30% cash, 50% bonds, and 20% equities. The performance of the securities in the portfolio is -22% since January of 2008 compared to the S&P index, which was down -37% for the same annual period. The Dow Jones Index dropped -32%, the worst year since 1931.

Portfolio value at end of September 2008 was \$765,571. At end of December 2008, value was \$673,408. (In December of 2007, the value was \$992,528). Keep in mind; the church withdraws \$136,860 per year for operating expense, so the decline in value includes these withdrawals.

We also paid fees to Cabot Management totaling \$6,663 in 2008.) The net income from the invested portfolio for the year was \$21,451.

Other invested accounts value on Dec 31, 2008: (These accounts are held at Wachovia, formerly AG Edwards)

Lendall/Brown Building Fund	\$187,944
Emergency Fund	12,783
Organ Concert Fund	3,294
Flowers and Guest Ministers	37,836
Organ Restoration Fund	529

\$1,500 was withdrawn from the organ restoration fund during the fourth quarter of 2008 to repair the organ.

\$15,000 was withdrawn from the Lendall/Brown account for upkeep on the building.

Any questions or concerns regarding the Permanent Funds may be addressed to the Trustees Tom Gifford, Rebecca Greene or Sally Millice.



HEARTHSIDE

Merry Meet!

February 1st welcomed the first Hearthside CUUPS event here at the church! It was well attended by not only members of this church; but attendees of surrounding UU churches such as Swampscott and Marblehead.

Marie and Tony from PRANCE the Witches Path held place as High Priest and High Priestess for the evening using a ritual that I had written specifically for this event. A story was read and a journey written and performed by Josef Tabbi helped to make it a special event.

Sherry Pepin had raffles to sponsor monetary donations towards CUUPS and raised \$45.00 towards future events.

Overall it was a wonderful start to a renewed CUUPS program and another Sabbat is planned for March 21st at 6PM. I invite each of you to attend this event. The donation is \$5.00 at the door and a potluck of the season to share with others. All donations go into CUUPS in order to run future events.

On a different note, there has been much discussion about starting a program for the Pagan children in our congregation as well as in the Salem community and outlying areas. I have been looking at starting a Spiral Scouts program which I hope to have up and running very early in the Spring so that we can hold special "meetings" for our next generation. For more information on this program please go to www.spiralscouts.org. Our first planning meeting is March 15th at 12:30PM in the Adult RE Room.

Please get in touch with me either by phone

(978) 375-2583 or via email nehani36@hotmail.com and I would be happy to enroll your child into this very special program.

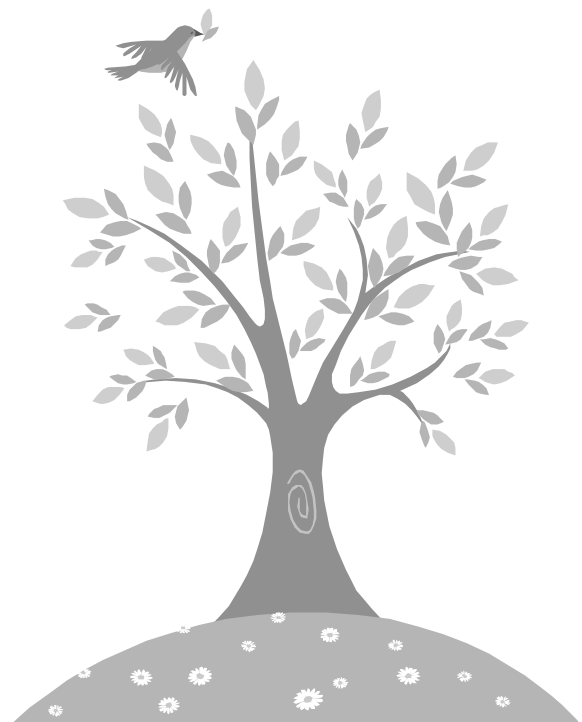
Flyers will be posted with information as well!

CUUPS HAS A NEW WEBSITE

Hearthside CUUPS has been fortunate enough to have a brand new website to have interested community view. Please feel free to visit www.hearthsidecuups.com

All of our rituals will be placed on their, member information, upcoming events, pictures etc....will be uploaded to this site. Please check back from time to time for updated information!

Blessings
Donna



The First Universalist Society

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Established in 1805

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March 2009

Newsletter

MARCH 2009

AH= Anna Hill Room, ARE= Adult RE Room
 DK(k)= Dickson Room (kitchen), SN= Sanctuary
 MO=Minister's Office, BH=Bolles Hall
 LB=Library, TR= Treasurer's Office

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1 Worship 10:45 A SN Lunch after Worship HearthsideClass ARE	2	3 NAGLY 7P DK	4 Choir Rehrsl 7:30P SN	5 Board 7P AH Scot Danc 7:30P BH	6	7
8 Worship 10:45 A SN RE Mtng 9:30A LB	9	10 NAGLY 7P BH Symphony by the Sea 5P until Late SN	11 Symphony by the Sea 5P until Late SN Salem Mission 4:30P	12 Deacons 7P AH Scot Danc 7:30P BH Choir Rehrsl 7:30P SN	13 Symphony by the Sea 4P until Late SN	14 Symphony by the Sea 4P until Late SN Craft Circle 10A AH
15 Worship 10:45 A SN HearthsideClass ARE	16	17 NAGLY 7P DK	18 Choir Rehrsl 7:30P SN	19 Scot Danc 7:30P BH	20	21 Hearthside (Ostara) 6PM AH
22 Worship 10:45 A SN Organ Concert 4P SN	23	24 NAGLY 7P DK	25 Choir Rehrsl 7:30P SN Pantry Bagging 6P DK Salem Mission 4:30P	26 Scot Danc 7:30P BH	27	28 Craft Circle 10A AH Pantry 9:30A DK
29 Worship 10:45 A SN	30	31 NAGLY 7P DK				