



First Universalist Society of Salem

211 BRIDGE STREET, SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS • DECEMBER 2009

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

Rev. Marjorie Matty, Minister

Welcome to the holiday season!

There is a plethora of feelings that come with the winter and the darker times: a desire to hunker down and create home, to go within to reflect and/or to celebrate the Solstice and Christmas. This time of year is also a time when grief and loneliness can bring us down. A time when having a community such as First Universalist is a godsend, helping one to make it through hard times. With this in mind, I would like to encourage you to be bold and to invite those people around you, who do not have a community such as ours, to come for a visit. On December 6th, the First Universalist Society hosted a "Bring a Friend" Sunday, which was not as well attended with visitors as I had hoped for. In speaking to members I heard that there is a lot of pressure and anxiety in asking someone to attend church. Let me help reframe this. Think about what the First Universalist community means to you and remember this when you ask someone to come to church you are actually offering that

friend/visitor a gift, a way to become connected in a deeper way to a community of hope and transformation. Think about the hospitality that we offer those who visit and the care and encouragement that we are for one another. During this holiday season let us reach out and care for those who are seeking, lonely and grieving.

During the dark days of winter we may want to hunker down but what a perfect time to open up instead. What I mean by this is that we can make this time of year one in which we can strive to better understanding what helps us to find deeper meaning in life. What is it that touches us deeply that makes us feel connected to something more significant than our day-to-day existence? For me it is making time to read and meditate even though the world is hustling and bustling all around me. In those moments of reflection, I take the time to better understand and appreciate the importance of silence in my life as well as the connection that I share with others. This time of year challenges us to find and

maintain a balance and to do this we must realize what is most important in our lives. I invite you to join me in achieving a sense of balance as a spiritual practice this holiday season and I encourage you to be daring and caring enough on any given Sunday to invite those around you who could benefit from a community such as ours to the First Universalist Society.

Peace, Love and Light

Rev. Marjorie Matty

CONTENTS:

UPCOMING WORSHIP	2
BOARD OF TRUSTEES	3
NURSERY POLICY	3
HOUSE	6
CAROL SING!	5

UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

Worship and Religious Education
Begins at 10:45 AM

Nursery is available for babies and toddlers.

Childcare help is needed to assist Mary Radziewicz in the Nursery on December 24th (5-7 PM) Christmas Eve Service. Call Mary at (978) 948-7680 or see her at service.

December 6th

Bring a Friend

This Sunday we will welcome those visitors that you bring to worship. The sermon will be focusing on the importance of achieving balance in one's life and how we can use various practices to create a balanced life. Rev. Marjorie Matty will be preaching.

December 13th

Follow Your Bliss

What is Bliss, where do we find it and how do we follow it... Rev. Matty will be preaching about the concept of Bliss and how it pertains to our lives and the desire to go deeper and find more understanding on a day-to-day basis.

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. Please call the church office for specific information.

December 20th

In Search of the Light

This Sunday we will look at the traditions from around the world that find ways to make meaning and find solace during the dark days of the season.

December 24th

Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve will be a culmination of traditional and not-so-traditional elements - an intergenerational worship service celebrating the season through song, readings and a rendition of "How The Grinch Stole Christmas" led by our children. This service will begin at 6PM and will be followed by some seasonal treats.

December 27th

Readings For The New Year

Do you have a special poem, excerpt or story that inspires you? December 27th is an opportunity to share it. Join Deacon, Liz Duff at this lay-led, "Readings for the New Year." This is a chance to share our inspiration with each other. Please bring a short reading or song to share.



Staff

Minister: Rev. Marjorie Matty

Board of Trustees:

Chair: Christine DiSaia

Vice-Chair: Denise Regan

Director of Religious Education: Marlyn Miller

Accompanist: Michael Mazurkiewicz

Nursery Attendant: Mary Radziewicz

Sexton: Samuel Boylston

Church Administrator: Rosa Palomino

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

I hope that you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving Holiday.

The Board of Trustees held its annual retreat in November. We would like to thank the Deacons for providing lunch for the retreat. Beth Toolan told me that the decadent Hungarian Mushroom Soup was from the Moosewood Cookbook and Kara McGarigal's apple pie and cookies were absolutely delicious. Thanks to you all.

The retreat was facilitated by Sue Phillips from the Mass Bay District. It was a great day. We accomplished a lot and closed the retreat a stronger and more focused team. As we move forward we are exploring how the Board governs the Church and how we can better support and guide the Church Committees. The day was so successful that we are inviting Sue Phillips back for a second retreat sometime early next year to focus on improving our training and support of leadership and moving toward a system of policy governance.

As part of our new focus, we will be talking to all of the Church Committees to review the strategic plan and current budget and asking committees to begin thinking about budgeting requests for the next fiscal year. We will also be talking with each committee about their respective charges and communication plans with other committees and with the congregation as a whole. We seek to strengthen the interconnected web woven by our entire community.

Thank you to Rev. Matty and to the members of the Board, Kathleen, Rebecca and Denise for your dedication and hard work. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to work with each of you.

In peace,
Christine DiSaia

In order to provide a safe and supportive safe for our youngest members and their families, the Board of Trustees has adopted the following policy for our Nursery:

Nursery:

- Children under the age of 3 and their families are welcome in the nursery at all times;
- Nursery care is available during the Sunday services from 10:30 a.m. until 12:00. Nursery care may also be available during additional hours to accommodate meetings and special events;
- Staff member and volunteer must be in the nursery during the times when nursery care is available;
- all staff and volunteers must have completed CORI request on file;
- During times when nursery care is being provided, the nursery is limited to children under the age of three, staff, volunteers and parents attending to their own children.

The Board appreciates your respect and cooperation with this policy.

The Board is also in the process of editing our current CORI policy. If you have any questions, suggestions or feedback, please speak with me or any of the members of the Board of Trustees.

Thank you.

Christine DiSaia

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

PARENT'S NIGHT

This year the church is sponsoring a parents' night on Friday, December 4 from 6-9pm. Bring your kids to church for a fun-filled evening of games and activities, and take a few hours for yourself to do holiday shopping or spend some time with partners or friends. The childcare is free, although we do ask that parents bring some sort of healthy food to share. Please let Marlyn Miller know if your kids will attend as soon as possible, but no later than Sunday, November 29.

CHRISTMAS EVE

This year's Christmas Eve service will include a staging of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." We are currently looking for people to help out during the short term leading up to the play, either by assisting in the classroom or helping out with music, costumes, and props. The dates of the term are December 6, 13, and 20. Also, we will need to know which children will be present during the service itself in order to cast the play. Please let Marlyn Miller know whether your child will be able to attend, and whether you have time available to help out with the term.

If you miss picking up your **Guest at Your Table box** and *Stories of Hope*, you can do so at in the church office or by talking with our DRE, Marlyn Miller. We plan collecting them on January 10th, 2010.

Marlyn may be reached at marlynmiller@mac.com or (978) 462-8092

"HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS" - REHEARSALS

As part of the Christmas Eve service, we will be presenting our version of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." If your child is planning to be here and part of the performance, there will be two additional rehearsals. The first will be a short one after the service on 12/13 to go over the music - please have your children meet in the Sanctuary. The second will be at 5 PM on Christmas eve, just before the service. Please let Marlyn Miller know if your child cannot attend either of these rehearsals.

ASSISTANTS NEEDED

Our January term in religious education is approaching. Children will be able to choose from one of several activities, taught by generous (and expert) volunteers. We do, however, need four assistants for the three week term, which runs three Sundays in January. If you have not volunteered for RE before, this is a wonderful opportunity to get to know our fantastic kids, and to contribute something meaningful and lasting to their growth and development, and to the growth and development of Unitarian Universalism. If you are interested in assisting, please contact Marlyn Miller

THANKS TRICK-OR-TREATERS

A big thank you goes out to our trick-or-treaters for a cause this year. Our kids managed to distribute fair trade chocolate, as well as information about fair trade practices and child labor, to about fifty households. Our trick-or-treaters for UNICEF raised \$36.10, enough money to buy schoolbooks for 15 children, or deliver water to 600 needy kids!

MUSIC COMMITTEE

Caroling in Salem

Anyone interested in walking about Salem providing carols for visitors and shopping should meet at the church at 12:30PM on Saturday, December 19th. We will walk about town and sing from 1-3PM.

The **Annual Todd A. Phipps Memorial Carol Sing** will be held on Sunday, December 20th at 4 PM. The program will feature Bob Byrd playing the organ, readings and a variety of your favorite carols. Please join us for a much needed break from the hectic days before Christmas. Refreshments will be provided. This concert is held annually in memory of Todd who was the organist for many years at First Universalist. Todd loved Christmas music all year round and loved to hear people singing Christmas carols. Please join us to help celebrate his memory.

If you wish to volunteer that day or provide some baked goodies, please contact Becky. Otherwise, donations (cash, canned goods) will be accepted at the door.

Thank you,
Becky Christie
978-580-5016 or andantebc1@aol.com.

SALEM MISSION

Thank you to the Salem Mission November dinner prep volunteers - Francesca Ambrose, Nancy Bacigalupo, Donna Blume, Ruth Dougherty, Cody Dupuis, Tracy Keller, Joyce Prior, Kathleen Riley, Michelle Rust, Chris Weis. For more information on this important community outreach program, please contact Chris Weis at tizweis@yahoo.com, (617) 407-6767 or use the Salem Mission link on our church's web site.

SYMPHONY BY THE SEA

Their performance next dates are January 23, 2010 and April 24, 2010.

If you can help out or would like more information, please contact Roberta Neuman with Symphony by the Sea at (978) 922-1248 or neuman26@comcast.net. The bonus is free admission to the concert for volunteers.



HEARTHSIDE CLASSES ON HIATUS

Greetings to all of you.

As some of you know, I was in a car accident last month which totaled my vehicle and currently I'm relying heavily on public transportation and the kindness of my friends to get me from one place to another.

That being said and after much consideration, I will be putting Pagan 101 classes on hold for the time being partly because of the transportation issue and partly due to its small attendance.

Those who are already enrolled have been contacted and I have offered them the opportunity to either continue their studies with me personally online or through the internet classes that I have been running for several years.

I will still be running CUUPS and Spiral Scouts and will be coming out with a schedule for this month.

Thank you so very much for your understanding in this matter and as soon as transportation is no longer an issue we will be revisiting the idea of classes returning to the church.

Blessings
Donna Day
nehani1969@yahoo.com

CHURCH WEBSITE

As our church continues to grow and is becoming involved in more activities, we recognize that our web-site could use a little work to accurately reflect our church community. So, in early 2010 we are planning to redesign our web site to achieve the following goals:

- 1) To showcase our church -- to tell the public who we really are in an attractive, interesting "live" manner.
- 2) To make sure that information about all the church's activities are available.
- 3) To make the web site easily navigable -- everything should be just one or, at most, two clicks away.
- 4) To add a secure members (and "friends") section to the site which would allow members to:
 - Manage their pledges
 - Manage their volunteer efforts (e.g. see the schedules, sign up)
 - Access the church directory
 - Access to committee reports

This coming week we will be soliciting comments/suggestions for improvement - what would you like to see on the web site that isn't there? what is there that you like? A link to a site to be used as a "good example" and so on. Please contact Chris Weis or Christian McNiff with your suggestions.

Also if you are experienced with web design and wish to help with this effort or simply wish to be more involved, please contact Chris Weis (617-407-6767, tizweis@yahoo.com). Our first brainstorming session will be after church on December 13th.

HOUSE COMMITTEE UPDATE

The House Committee has been very busy so far this year with maintaining and making improvements to our beautiful buildings. We have continued to update our electrical system by adding new outlets in the Anna Hill Room and new lighting at the Ash St. entrance. We also sealed the parking lot and will be adding new lines in the spring. Also, in an effort to make our church more "green" and save us a few bucks in the process, we have divided the Annex Building into three heat zones. Previously, with only one thermostat, if a meeting was being held in the Anna Hill Room or the Library, it would be necessary to heat the entire building to get heat. Likewise, the Scottish Dancers would have to heat the entire building to get heat in Bolles Hall. Now all that has changed. There are separate thermostats for Bolles Hall, the Anna Hill Room & Library, and the remaining classrooms, nursery and foyer. The savings could be significant, but it's going to take everyone's cooperation to make sure the system is used correctly. Please read the instructions posted next to each thermostat and help us get the most out of our investment.

Meanwhile, our monthly Work Parties have continued to take on the smaller repairs and necessary tasks. We have re-hung the balcony door, fixed downspouts, and repaired the chancel table just to name a few. We also raked up all the leaves in the courtyard and hauled them off to the dump, saving us from having to pay an outside contractor as in previous years. If you would like to get involved and help out at one of

our Work Parties, just contact any one of our committee members. This year's committee members are Bill Smith, Sally Millice, Steve Brown, Carlos Huaman and Mark Lobsitz.

Thank you,
Steve Brown

PAUL MADORE CHORALE CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Salem based Paul Madore Chorale and orchestra will perform its annual Christmas concert Sunday Dec. 13 at 3:00 pm at St. Anne's Church on Jefferson Ave. Sally Millice is a member of the chorale. The concert will feature two choirs plus bell choir performing seasonal music, traditional and modern. Tickets are available at the door.



The First Universalist Society

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Established in 1805

211 Bridge Street

Salem, MA 01970-3951

(978) 744-3224

www.salemuu.org

firstunivsalem@verizon.net

December 2009 Newsletter

As schedules change or events are omitted due to space, please refer to the online calendar or the one posted on the church office door for last minute updates.

DECEMBER 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
CL = Classroom

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

		1 NAGLY 7P DK	2 House Mtng 6P LB Farm Coop 7 ³⁰ P AH	3 Board Mtng 7P LB Scot Danc 7 ³⁰ P BH	4	5
6 Meditation 10A ARE Worship 10:45A SN	7 Private Grp 7 ³⁰ P DK	8 NAGLY 7P DK	9 OFFICE CLOSED Salem Mission 4 ³⁰ P Pantry Bags 6P DK Spirituality Disc 7P	10 Staff Mtng 11A LB Scot Danc 7 ³⁰ P BH	11	12 Pantry 9 ³⁰ A Hearthside 6P
13 Meditation 10A ARE Worship 10:45A SN	14 Private Grp 7 ³⁰ P DK	15 NAGLY 7P DK	16 Religious Educators Meeting 10A AH	17 Scot Danc 7 ³⁰ P BH	18 Piano Tuning 9 ³⁰ A SN	19 Craft Circle 10A AH Spiral Scouts 10A ARE Carolng 12 ³⁰ P
20 Meditation 10A ARE Worship 10:45A SN	21 Red Tent 5P AH Private Grp 7 ³⁰ P DK	22 NAGLY 7P DK	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 6P SN Scot Danc 7 ³⁰ P BH ?	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26
27 Meditation 10A ARE Worship 10:45A SN	28 Private Grp 7 ³⁰ P DK	29 NAGLY 7P DK	30	31 Scot Danc 7 ³⁰ P BH	Jan 1 OFFICE CLOSED New Year's Day	Jan 2 Craft Circle 10A AH?