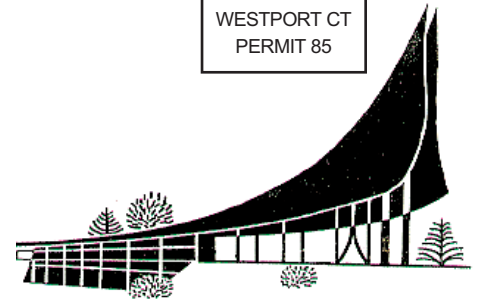


SOUNDINGS

The Unitarian Church in Westport
 10 Lyons Plains Road
 Westport, Connecticut 06880
 203 227-7205
 uuchurch@uuwestport.org
 www.uuwestport.org

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THE NEXT SOUNDINGS DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, DEC. 31

Dec. 26 - Jan. 15, 2011

A Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Dec. 26 Worship Service: 9 & 11 am No RE - Childcare available BOT Coffee Chat 10:15am & 12:15 pm Jan's Office Women of the Bible, Library, 4:00 pm	27	28	29 Chant & Meditation, M.H. ... 7:00 pm	30 No Choir Rehearsals UU Movie Discussion group, M.H., 7:30 pm	31 SOUNDINGS Deadline: 12 Noon Shawl Ministry, M.H....12:30 pm	Jan. 1
2 Service: 9 & 11 am K-6 Start in Sanctuary BOT Coffee Chat 10:15 am & 12:15 pm Jan's Office OWL Parent Gr., Lib.- ... 12:30 pm UN Committee, Chapel ... 12:30 pm	3 O&AF Rehearsal ... 7:45 pm	4 Microfinance, Fellowship Rm., ... 7:30 pm Chamber Choir, ... 7:45 pm	5 SOUNDINGS Mailing - 9:30 am Chant & Meditation M.H., ... 7:00 pm Men's Choir, ... 8:00 pm	6 Youth Choir - 5 pm Finance Com., M.H, ... 5:30 pm Teen Choir - 6 pm Bell Choir - 6:45pm Women's Choir, - 7:45 pm	7	8 Sight-singing for Beginners ... 9:30 am Circle Facilitators, Meeting Hse.. ... 10:00 am REEL Justice Film Sanct. ...7:30 pm
9 Worship Service: 9 & 11 am <i>Share the Plate Sunday</i> BOT Coffee Chat 10:15am & 12:15 pm Jan's Office OWL Parent Group, Library ... 12:30 pm	10 Board of Trustees, Fellowship Rm., ... 7:30 pm	11 Senior Luncheon, E.W. ... 11 am RE Council, Fellowship. Rm., ... 7:30 pm Social Justice Council, E.W. ... 7:30 pm	12 Chant & Meditation, M.H. ... 7:00 pm Men's Choir, ... 8:00 pm	13 Youth Choir - 5 pm Teen Choir - 6 pm Bell Choir - 6:45pm Women's Choir, - 7:45 pm	14 SOUNDINGS Deadline:12 Noon Shawl Ministry, M.H....12:30 pm Cabaret Rehearsal, ... 7:30 pm	15 Sight-singing for Beginners ... 9:30 am Small Group Facilitators, Meeting Hse., ... 10:00 am

SERMONS

December 26 ... 9 & 11 am Celebrating Some Epiphanies, Big and Small. Frank Hall <i>In the Christian calendar the Feast of the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of God the Son as a human being; it falls on January 6. A Humanist version celebrates insights into the deeper meanings, insights provided by poetry, music and art.</i>
January 2 ... 9 & 11 am Starting Over Frank Hall <i>In his poem Birches Robert Frost says, "I'd like to get away from earth awhile and then come back to it and begin again." Is it time to come back down to earth to start over?</i>
January 9... 9 & 11 am Credo Frank Hall <i>The word credo is Latin, meaning, "I believe." What's your credo?</i>

Explore Your Whole Wuurld!

Any questions? Send an email to mcmillane@yahoo.com.

4th Annual Jerry Davidoff Sermon Award

UUs for Jewish Awareness (UUJA) is sponsoring the competition for the sermon delivered in 2010 that best illustrates or exemplifies the contributions of Jewish theology, thought, or culture to UU tradition.



The first place award is a \$500 honorarium and an opportunity to present the sermon at the 2011 General Assembly (GA). Submit your sermon in Word or compatible word processing format, together with the date and location they were delivered, to Arthur Thexton, UUJA VP by March 15, 2011.

\$168 Round-Trip Airfare

...to Charlotte, NC. Why go there? It's the location of GA in 2011 (June 22-26). This year marks the 50th anniversary of the merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America to form the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association).

Join thousands of fellow UUs from across the country... Experience wonderful and uplifting worship services... Hear terrific speakers... Network with other congregational leaders... Connect with craftspeople and artisans, social action groups, and so much more... Look for more on GA next month. Meanwhile, purchase that plane ticket while it's cheap!

Beacon Press Holiday Sale

Beacon Press is the UUA's publishing house. Order any book before Dec. 31 and get 10% off your order and free standard shipping. Use the discount code LOVE10 at checkout to receive these discounts. For more information and to order, go to www.beacon.org.

Mary Oliver, *Swan: Poems and Prose Poems*

"Mary Oliver moves by instinct, faith, and determination. She is among our finest poets..." (Alicia Ostriker, *The Nation*). \$23.00 paperback

Margaret Regan, *The Death of Josseline:*

Immigration Stories from the Arizona Borderlands
"This should be required reading for everyone. . . ."
(Sandra Cisneros, author of *The House on Mango Street*)
\$15.00 paperback

Forrest Church, *The Cathedral of the World:*
A Universalist Theology. "Forrest Church is a towering

public intellectual... This last testament...is a gift of faith, hope, and love to us all!" (Cornel West)
\$16.00 paperback

Martin Luther King, Jr. *The Trumpet of Conscience*
Each oration encompasses a distinct theme and speaks prophetically to today's perils. The book concludes with "A Christmas Sermon on Peace"—a powerful lecture that was broadcast live from Ebenezer Baptist Church "A Christmas Sermon on Peace"—a powerful lecture that was broadcast live from Ebenezer Baptist Church Christmas Eve, 1967. In it King articulates his long-term vision of nonviolence as a path to world peace. \$24.95 hardcover with audio CD

Visit Mecca This Winter

Well, that's what some UUs call Boston, where the UUA headquarters are located. Here's a great deal for travelers. If you are a UU, a UU friend, or family member visiting Boston for business or pleasure consider this invitation to stay on scenic and historic Beacon Hill.

The Eliot & Pickett Houses is a B&B owned and operated by the UUA. These houses are located at the top of Beacon Hill next to the Mass. State House and the UUA headquarters. They are located close to the Freedom Trail, Faneuil Hall, the Boston Common, and many museums. Several colleges are nearby, including Emerson University, Boston University, Harvard University and Simmons College.

Both houses are 1830's style brick townhouses and include 20 guest bedrooms, 18 with private baths, and 2 with shared baths. Their kitchens are stocked for you to enjoy a complimentary, self-serve breakfast and are available for preparing other meals.

Make a new reservation for stays between now and February 27, 2011 and you will be eligible to receive one of two great offers.

- Get 20% off a 2-night stay

OR

- Stay for 3 (or more) nights & get either 1 additional night free, or a gift certificate at the same value of your previous nightly rate. (The gift certificate is redeemable at a later date of your choosing within one year depending upon room availability.)

Call: (617) 948-4679 or email e&p@uua.org for rates and availability.

Happy



Holidays

December 20, 2010

Dear Friends,

I remember getting a kaleidoscope one Christmas – I was five or six. I was dazzled by the colorful patterns and fascinated by the apparatus itself – a little tube with mirrors and multi-colored beads that toppled over one another to create new, endless patterns.

The word kaleidoscope is from the Greek words for beauty, form, and examination, hence the user becomes ‘an observer of beautiful forms.’

I was reminded of my kaleidoscope this morning as I walked along Compo Beach, dazzled by the colorful sunrise. The cold, crisp air contributes to the clarity of the colorful patterns bouncing off the early morning clouds – the rich blue of the sky provides a canvass for the display. I become an appreciative observer of those beautiful forms.

Every morning the sunrise display is different; the patterns depend on the low-lying clouds and the angle at which they are hit by the sun – and there’s hardly a morning without some scattered clouds to create a new, unique pattern. An overcast morning, though dull, only heightens the sense of appreciation for those sunlit mornings that throw a spectacular colorful display to dazzle the eye and spark the spirit.

The earth is an ever-changing kaleidoscope we look at from a different angle every day. It’s a verb in which we are active participants as we move through the years, even if it sometimes feels like we’re just observers. We’re involved in Creation.

Just as the view along the shore is invigorating, so is the view from our pulpit. Indeed, it is kaleidoscopic, combining the ever-changing collection of faces with the scenery outside the sanctuary windows, and I become an even more appreciative participant and observer. Often I have a sense of making a personal, one-to-one connection with a pair of eyes and sometimes those eyes well up with tears and I turn away, wanting to respect the sense of privacy those moments deserve.

Every Sunday morning gathering in our sanctuary is unique: never has this exact group been gathered in this particular configuration. The view from the pulpit is kaleidoscopic.

One of the benefits of getting older (and there are some benefits) is the enhanced sense of appreciation for another sunrise on another day into which we carry memories of those with whom we once shared the day, the sunrise and the sunset.

Living with a chronic illness has its benefits, too. We have a heightened sense of appreciation for the day, gratitude for the people with whom we’ve made a meaningful connection so far, and the possibility of making more and deeper connections.

The sun is setting on another year, and soon it will rise on a new one. I hope you welcome it in good health and spirits, turning the kaleidoscope and creating a new pattern and being inspired and nourished by it.

Yours,


“From moment to moment, from day to day, we search the eyes of others for that certain Yes.”

Martin Buber

.....
White Heron, *John Ciardi*

What lifts the heron leaning on the air
I praise without a name. A crouch, a flare,
a long stroke through the cumulus of trees,
a shaped thought at the sky — then gone. O rare!
Saint Francis, being happiest on his knees,
would have cried Father! Cry anything you please

But praise. By any name or none. But praise
the white original burst that lights
the heron on his two soft kissing kites.
When saints praise heaven lit by doves and rays,
I sit by pond scums till the air recites
It's heron back. And doubt all else. But praise.

.....
Look to this day, For it is life, the very life of life.
In its brief course Lie all the verities and realities of your existence.
The bliss of growth, The glory of action, The splendour of beauty.
For yesterday is but a dream, And tomorrow is only a vision;
But today well-lived, makes every yesterday a dream of happiness
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well therefore to this day;
Such is the salutation to the ever-new dawn!

Kalidasa, Hindu poet

.....
Is this the little girl I carried? Is this the little boy at play?
I don't remember growing older, When did they?
When did she get to be a beauty? When did he grow to be so tall?
Wasn't it yesterday when they were small?
Sunrise, sunset, Sunrise, sunset
Swiftly flow the days, Seedlings turn overnight to sunflowers
Blossoming even as we gaze
Sunrise, sunset, Sunrise, sunset, Swiftly fly the years
One season following another, Laden with happiness and tears.

From Fiddler on the Roof

Perry's Ponderings ...

A religious man who has been trained to believe in the truth of our Holy Law...and at the same time has been successful in his philosophical studies...finds it difficult to accept as correct the teaching based on the literal interpretation of the Law... Hence, he is lost in perplexity and anxiety.

~Maimonides

I remember as an older teenager distancing from my religion of origin, Judaism, because theologically it did not connect with what I found in my own mind or spirit. I had objections to the sexism, separation from other people, vengeance, and restrictive ideologies. I still connected to the family heritage but could not practice the religious beliefs with integrity. In Unitarian Universalism I found a religious community that enabled me to get in touch with my inner being, connect with others who had the same approach, and accentuate what I wanted to bring into the world.

After exploring faith questions as a Unitarian Universalist I was able to reconnect with aspects of Judaism that spoke to me. I remember returning to a worship service at temple and seeing it in a completely different light, one that allowed me to be moved in moments and let the rest be still. The religion was no longer about literal interpretation but my own perspective on the questions.

I was recently fascinated by various interpretations and representations of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam at the Three Faiths exhibit at the New York Public Library (<http://exhibitions.nypl.org/threefaiths/>). Artistic ancient texts of each faith, including their interpretive scripture writings - the Jewish Talmud, Christian Gospel Commentaries, and Islamic Tafsir - were surrounded by quotes and explanations.

Our 7th grade Neighboring Faiths class is doing their own experiential exploration of the three Abrahamic faiths as they visit Temple Israel, The Islamic Cultural Center of NY, a catholic church, a congregational church, and Quaker meeting house. After the Friday night Temple Israel worship, I showed some of our 7th grade youth the many years of confirmation class pictures on the wall. Amy exclaimed, "There you are," as she pointed at the picture taken of me as I began to move away from Judaism. In this return visit, I shared a learning experience with Amy and the other youth who will visit many religious communities to gain understanding. In having that opportunity, we hope they are able to find themselves in the picture of who we are.

RE CALENDAR

Sun., Dec 26

No RE, childcare available

Sun., Jan 29 & 11am

Regular RE for all ages

12:30pm OWL Parent Group - Lib.

Sun Jan 9

12:30pm OWL Parent Group - Lib.

Tue Jan 11

7:30pm RE Council-Fellowship

Over 90 people kicked off the holiday season at church on Dec. 11 with...



Gingerbread house making ...



a potluck ...



including James and Jocelyn working hard in the kitchen...



and Ed's holiday sing-a-long.

YOUTH OUTREACH/ Jamie Forbes

Holiday Boutique:

Your donations became someone else's treasure!!

Thank you to

Barbara Thormalen and Jean Northup for another very successful boutique!! We raised close to \$4,000.00 for our church!!

Thank you to

all of you who went through closets and cabinets and donated to the boutique.

Thank you to

all of you who shopped at the boutique and bought some treasures.

Thank you to

Bobby for the trips back and forth loading and unloading boxes of donated goods.

Thank you to

all of you who worked on the boutique. There was so much to be unpacked, displayed, priced and then tallied and wrapped! That list includes: Betsy Beach, Lauren Borchetta, Susan Brady, Jan Braunle, KC English, Monica Garrison, Karen Garrison, Sherry Jagerson, Felicity Medinger, Suzie Miller, Diane Moller, Mary Beth Mollica, Carol Porter, Marilyn Reed, Kathy Roberts, Mary Jo Romano, Joanne Turmelle Elaine Weinman and Karen Wright.

Youth Outreach Calendar

Saturdays, Jan. 8, 15, 29

Westbridge Coalition workdays

Saturday, Jan. 22

Beardsley/Barnes and Noble fundraiser

Tuesday, Jan. 9, 16, 23

Soup Lunch fundraisers for Youth Outreach service trips

Service Trip to Washington DC: February 19-26

I have reserved the first spots for people who have sent in forms and deposits. If you are interested, please contact me (jamie@uuwestport.org) so I can check on availability.

Congregational Based Community Organizing

On a rainy October 14th over 1,000 people gathered at Mt Aery Baptist Church in Bridgeport. It was standing room only. They were Catholic and Jewish, Baptists and Congregationalists, white, black, and brown, English and Spanish speaking, from Darien to West Haven. They represented 28 urban and suburban congregations that have formed the Connecticut Sponsoring Committee (CSC).

This is an emerging non-partisan, broad based, multifaith coalition based in New Haven and Fairfield Counties that's affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), a national community organizing network established in 1940.

It's called congregational based community organizing (CBCO). It's a model of community organizing, of social activism that fits our UU faith's belief in the pursuit of social, economic, and racial justice to create a better world to live in.

Part of our UU mission is to move beyond our walls and join in building bridges across the class, religious, and racial barriers that divide us. Congregational based community organizing does that. It's also a clear recognition that what we can achieve in working together is much greater than what we can achieve by working alone.

There Connecticut Sponsoring Committee is one of approximately 160 local CBCO groups around the country with more than 4,000 participating congregations and community organizations. Currently, over 100 of those member congregations are UU churches and fellowships.

After months of meeting in congregations and homes, CSC has honed in on three issues: affordable and accessible health care, equity and access in public education, and predatory lending. The meeting at Mt Aery was to present stories on these three specific issues to Democratic and Republican candidates for Governor, Attorney General, Treasurer, and Comptroller.

The candidates were asked two questions: if elected, will they be present at the CSC's upcoming official founding convention in 2011, and will they meet with representatives of the CSC within 30 days after the election to collaborate on three pressing concerns.

The election is over, the meetings have begun, the organizing continues.

Would you be interested in learning more about congregational based community organizing, the Connecticut Sponsoring Committee, and the possibility of our congregation's involvement? If so, please contact David Vita at david@uuwestport.org or 203.227.7205 x14.

Beardsley School:

*Request from our Principal
Amy Marshall*

Needed:

Gently used and clean children's uniforms in full, half, or husky sizes from 6 to 14.

For Boys and Girls:
white polo shirts, navy or khaki pants, navy sweatshirt/sweaters. Please leave in the yellow box on the social justice table, any time.
Thank you!

The Boxes Are Back!

But what if the boxes just aren't your thing?

We have Envelopes too!



Stop by the UUSC Supper Table

in the foyer and get your
Guest At Your Table Box
or UUSC Donation Envelope

GUEST AT YOUR TABLE: A UU Supper Conversation

You can help make UUSC's (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee) 70th anniversary a banner year for global human rights by celebrating Guest at Your Table.

Guest at Your Table is an annual tradition in which congregation members take home a box featuring images of people that UUSC has worked with recently.

These people are your 'guests,' and you are asked to share your blessings with them each meal by putting your spare change in the box.

As you give to your guests you can engage in conversations like the one below to help foster understanding and awareness of UUSC's human-rights work.

Maral is a teacher in Afghanistan where she was born and raised. She believes that no one should be treated less fairly than another for any reason, yet there are many girls and women in her country who are not aware that they have the right, just like the boys and men, to go to school. Because of this only about 1 out of every 8 women in Afghanistan knows how to read!

Conversation Starters

- *What would life be like if you could not read?*
- *Why do you think someone would want to deny someone else the right to go to school or to be treated equally?*
- *What other rights do you think should apply to all people?*

Your donations to the UUSC have helped start the Teacher Training for Human Rights program of which Maral is a graduate. Now, in addition to teaching her regular subjects, Maral helps students understand they are at school because they have a right to an education.

Please send us a picture of you and your family at the table with your Guest At Your Table box and some supper conversation snippets about this story or any stories of hope and goodwill that might touch your family.

ucwsupper@gmail.com

The Classic Book Group

will meet on Sun. Jan. 16 at 12:30 at the home of Rhoda Burnham. We will discuss "Great Expectations" by Charles Dickens, volumes one and two.

If your copy is not divided into volumes, read through Chapter 39. The balance of the book will be discussed at the Feb. 20 meeting.

For directions to Rhoda's home, a 5-minute drive from church, contact Marcia Mellett at 203-348-9576 or mamellett@gmail.com

All interested readers are invited to join us.

Business Matters

Happy New Years to all!
So comes to an end the calendar year 2010 and the first half of the church's fiscal year 2011 (confusing....right!).

The business office will be mailing out, in early January, giving statements for tax year 2010 along with a statement of your pledge activity for the current fiscal year.

Best wishes to all,
John



Flowers for November

November 21

For Jim Luongo -

Thanks for helping us all in our "own distinctive spiritual search," and for dancing with us " ... as if language no longer existed because words were no longer necessary ..."
Given with love from your cast.

November 29

In memory of Alice Graves
Given by Royal Graves

To order flowers
contact Jan Braunle in the church
office at 203 227-7205
or jan@uuwestport.org

Trumpet Needed

Do you have a trumpet in need of a new home, gathering dust as the years slip by? A student in Costa Rica has been playing a trumpet now beyond repair and in need of an improved model. With your help we can bring him a new trumpet for the New Year! Please contact Erik Paul if you have an instrument you can donate. eriklpaul@aol.com, or 203-336-9326.



U Matters - A reminder: On Sundays we invite you to "U Matters" conversations with members of your Board of Trustees. After each service each week, several members of the Board are available for 30 minutes of informal conversation in Jan's office. Let us know what is on your mind or ask us whatever you'd like to know about church matters. We plan on being there every week throughout the winter at least. We look forward to talking with you!

HEY YOU! YES! U!

Got an interest or a skill
or just knowledge
you would like to share?

Why not offer it to
ODYSSEY?

The Odyssey Committee is
seeking suggestions
and offerings for ODYSSEY
classes.

Don't be shy!

Contact Patrice Fitzgerald -
patricefitzgerald@gmail.com

- or any ODYSSEY

Committee member -
or leave suggestions in
ODYSSEY'S folder in the
back office.

WRITE YOURSELF FREE



So You Want to Write a Song?

Church member and Emmy award-winning songwriter, Andy (A.J.) Gundell joins Write Yourself Free for Songwriting Saturdays. Starting in January, A.J. will be teaching songwriting for teens and adults at Write Yourself Free, a local writing workshop collective.

In six Saturdays, students will learn how to write, polish, and perform one new song. And A.J. will discuss the ins and outs of getting your music into the right hands to sell it! A performance evening for friends and family will be the grand finale.

For more information please stop by Write Yourself Free or contact Tish Fried. Write Yourself Free 252 Post Road East, Westport, CT
tishpatrick@gmail.com, 203.557.4614

Happy



Holidays

SIGHT-SINGING CLASSES

This is a great opportunity for those who wish to improve their skill in reading music. It is painless, yet challenging; it is challenging, yet rewarding; it is rewarding, yet disciplined; it is disciplined, yet happy.

Dates: JANUARY 8, 15, 22, 29, FEBRUARY 5, 12;

Times: each class time is: 9:30 to 11:00.

This class is FREE, however, it is necessary to sign up by phoning or emailing Ed Thompson. Thank you. For questions and concerns, please be in touch with Ed.

VOICE CLASSES WITH MARCELLA

This focus of these group voice sessions is to improve your vocal production, your psychology about singing, your enjoyment of music, your general musicianship. . It is painless, yet challenging; it is challenging, yet rewarding; it is rewarding, yet disciplined; it is disciplined, yet happy. Come and share the magic!!

Dates: JANUARY 8, 15, 22, 29, FEBRUARY 5, 12, 19, 26.

Times: 11:30 to 1:30.

You may sign up for any number of classes (you need not attend all eight classes). Please be in touch with Marcella regarding details of finance and reserving your spot. Her email is: mc@marcellacalabi.com

Church Staff

- Frank Hall Senior Minister
frank@uuwestport.org
- EdWard Thompson Minister of Music
ed@uuwestport.org
- John Carroll..... Church Administrator/
Business Manager
john@uuwestport.org
- Jan Braunle Administrative Associate
jan@uuwestport.org
- Perry Montrose..... RE Director
perry@uuwestport.org
- Jamie Forbes Youth Outreach Dir.
jamie@uuwestport.org
- Lily Rappaport Youth Program Dir.
lily@uuwestport.org
- David Vita Social Justice Director
david@uuwestport.org
- Robert Santiago Sexton
bobby@uuwestport.org

Endorsed Community Minister

Rev. Debra Haffner ...debra@uuwestport.org

Board of Trustees

- Chuck Colletti Chair
- Randy Burnham Vice Chair
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- Steve Axthelm
- Lyn Hamilton
- Sherry Jagerson
- Kristen Leddy
- John Mason
- Sal Mollica
- Jane Sherman

SOUNDINGS Staff

Carol Porter Editor/Design

visit our website at
www.uuwestport.org

The next SOUNDINGS deadline is Friday, Dec. 31, at noon (or before). Please e-mail your copy to: carpo@optonline.net

The Schedule for Christmas Eveservices on December 24th:



4:00 - Christmas Pageant Service
Doors open at 3:30.

9:00 - Candlelight Service with Choir, Bells, Organ.
Doors open at 8:40.

11:00 - Candlelight Service with Soloists and Trumpet.
Doors open at 10:40.

Please, no prior seat reservations at these services.