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The Monthly Newsletter for
The First Unitarian Church of Providence
Corner of Benefit and Benevolent Streets
Providence, Rhode Island

N O V E M B E R 2 0 0 8

All-Parish Events

Youth Talent-palooza and UU Idol
Saturday, November 8

Picture Directory Photos
November 11 to 15

Two All-Parish Suppers
November 14 and 21

Thanksgiving Dinner
November 27

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S T A F F

Rev. James Ishmael Ford, Minister
Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
Posey Kooris, Administrator
Frederick Jodry, Music Director
Walter O. Sotelo, Administrative Assistant
Jaime Durango, Building Manager
Paul Webber, Evening Security
Tadesse Tsega, Sunday Building Manager

N E W S L E T T E R

Posey Kooris, Managing Editor
Susan Fisher, Editor
Carol Pentleton, Designer

Services in November



Standard Time
resumes today!

November 2

Days of the Dead – An Intergenerational Service

10:30a

Fred Jodry and the choir, Cathy Seggel, and Rev. James Ishmael Ford

Nearly all cultures notice that the fabric between life and death frays thin in the fall and observe it in many different ways, from the Latin American Dia de los Muertos to the Japanese Obon to the European Halloween. Cathy and James will reflect on this special time and what it might mean for all of us. The choir will offer portions of the Requiems of Brahms and Duruflé.

We will be constructing a memorial altar and everyone is invited to bring a symbolic marker (in the past people have brought a stone or a shell or other personally meaningful symbol) or picture of a loved one who has died. If it is self-standing, that would be helpful.

Young people in grades K and older participate in worship in the Meeting House.

Origins, Play Circle, and Preschool classrooms are open.

November 9

A Special Guest in the Pulpit

10:30a

Dr. William Murry

Bill Murry is one of the most respected ministers within our Association. He served for many years the senior minister of the River Road Unitarian Church in Bethesda, as well as president of Meadville Lombard, our UU seminary in Chicago. Bill earned his MDiv at Yale and his PhD in theology and culture at Drew University. A fierce advocate for social justice, Bill is also one of the most substantive voices for religious humanism. His most recent book, *Reason and Reverence*, has been met with critical acclaim within the liberal religious community. James will assist at this service.

Young people begin in classrooms and worship in Chapel.

November 16

Respect Your Mother

10:30a

Rev. James Ishmael Ford

James will explore various ideas of God, particularly as understood within our liberal religious communities. He is especially concerned with what ethical impulse might be found in the intuition of something greater to which we all belong, and how “traditional” theological language might be appropriately used in a community that includes both theists and nontheists. He promises this is more urgent and visceral than it might sound.

Young people begin in classrooms and worship in Chapel.

A Communion Service, led by James and the Deacons will follow. This communion, a continuing tradition at First Unitarian, will be a celebration of our spiritual humanist tradition.

November 23

With Thanksgiving – An Intergenerational Service

10:30a

Fred Jodry, Marcia Taylor, Cathy Seggel, James Ford, and others will weave together an intergenerational celebration of Thanksgiving. We will also distribute the Guest at Your Table boxes. Our Junior High Youth Group will be worship associates. You should expect this to be a spectacular time for all.

Young people in Preschool and older participate in worship in the Meeting House.

Origins and Play Circle classrooms are open.

November 30

The Dharma of Darwin

10:30a

Rev. James Ishmael Ford

James will reflect on the possible connections between Charles Darwin, Buddhism, and our constantly emerging Western liberal religion. He thinks there are connections. But you will be the judge of whether he's right.

Young people begin in classrooms and worship in Chapel.

NEWS AND NOTES

**Mark Your Calendar Now!
Installation Service for
Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

Sunday, February 8 at 3:00p

It's still some months away, but now's the time to mark your calendar for the installation of James Ford as the seventeenth settled minister in our church's 288-year history. The afternoon service will be our formal covenant with James and he with us. James has invited Rev. Laurel Hallman, who is a candidate for the UUA presidency, to give the installation sermon. Local and denominational guests will join us for a beautiful service of worship, celebration, and mutual commitment.

Deacons' Corner

This month, in addition to ongoing duties, the Deacons will assist Rev. James Ford with Communion on Sunday, November 16. The order of service is humanist, emphasizing themes of thanksgiving, remembrance, reconciliation, and interdependence. All are invited to join in this meaningful celebration of life and community.

— *Paul Brule and Mary Kollar,
Senior Deacons;*

*Richard Boober, Nancy Weiss Fried,
Robert O. Jones, Janet Downing Taylor,
Mary El Finger, Judy Bowden,
David Bridgehouse, and Russell Gifford*

WHEEL OF LIFE

Condolences to Karen McLennan and her family on the death of her husband, James, on September 30.

Congratulations to Greg Kniseley and Susie Dorr on the birth of their first grandchild, Charlotte Grace Hawkins.



MONKEY MIND

Recently UU blogger Will Shetterly pointed readers to a fascinating quote from “Two logical fallacies that we must avoid,” by Satoshi Kanazawa, reprinted from his *Psychology Today* blog, “The Scientific Fundamentalist.” (So, I’m reflecting on a reflection of a reflection. Don’t you love how we really are so interdependent?)

“The naturalistic fallacy, which was coined by the English philosopher George Edward Moore in the early twentieth century, though first identified much earlier by the Scottish philosopher David Hume, is the leap from *is* to *ought* – that is, the tendency to believe that what is natural is good; that what is, ought to be. For example, one might commit the error of the naturalist fallacy by saying, ‘Because people are genetically different and endowed with different innate abilities and talents, they ought to be treated differently.’

“The moralistic fallacy, coined by the Harvard microbiologist Bernard Davis in the 1970s, is the opposite of the naturalistic fallacy. It refers to the leap from *ought* to *is*, the claim that the way things should be is the way they are. This is the tendency to believe that what is good is natural; that what ought to be, is. For example, one might commit the error of the moralistic fallacy by saying, ‘Because everybody ought to be treated equally, there are no innate genetic differences between people.’ The science writer extraordinaire Matt Ridley calls it the ‘reverse naturalistic fallacy.’”

Now, these fallacies should be a concern for both spiritual liberals and conservatives, but my focus is at the liberal end of the spiritual spectrum. I believe at our best we aspire to live in the world that is and to work for a world that can be. I call this “naturalistic spirituality.”

I believe Kanazawa eloquently summarizes the primary dangers facing any naturalistic spirituality, the two horns, as it were, by which, if we’re not careful, we’ll get gored. And, therefore, two fallacies about which religious liberals need to be particularly careful. The one error is thinking that the way things are is the way things are supposed to be. The other, of course, is confusing our ideals for what actually is.

Starting with that first point. The late Patrick Moynihan famously observed how “Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not his own facts.” Admittedly, facts are slippery things. But, as we engage the world with both rigor and humility, I’m confident we can get a good enough sense of that “what is.”

With that “what is,” antinomianism – the inclination to say with “true knowledge” everything goes – is perhaps the danger for spiritual liberals. But I’m inclined to think our greater danger is, in fact, that second fallacy. When we assert any vision of a better world as the only way things should turn out, we tumble headlong down some steep stairs.

It is being possessed by the demon of certainty. And the spiritual liberal can fall for that demon as easily as the spiritual conservative. We need to be very careful about confusing “what we hope for” with “what is.” Bad premise, bad outcome. Almost always . . . My take-away here is that once again we’re called to genuine humility, to a profound not-knowing. Here be magic. Here we find ourselves invited into a world of many possibilities. And it is a glorious place. I really believe.

See you in church,

Rev. James Ishmael Ford, Minister
Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and
Thursday, 9:00a–12:00p
min@firstunitarianprov.org
Appointments are recommended.





SPIRITUAL
PATHWAYS

Table Blessings

These are anxious times, times when it is helpful to recall what we care about and why. National elections and seasonal gratitude call us to prioritize and be thankful. Still, the stressors are out there, jockeying for position. Maybe we all have the resources to keep them at bay, to pay attention, instead, to giving and receiving generosity and hospitality. I know that it helps me to put stock in the simple pleasures; the daily, repetitive happenings, like coffee at dawn and my morning walk. This year, there are greater blessings for me, like children moving back to the roost. Thanks. And regarding the bigger picture of our anxious era, I remain fervently hopeful that cultural change is on its way, positive, transformational, peaceful, just. Thanks.

It can be tricky to stay connected to what we hold dear. Some meditate, some pray or drum or sing. Rev. Victoria Safford shares this tale of family ritual. Maybe you have one, too.

At my house at supper we perform the most unholy and untidy little liturgy you can imagine, but usually I think it works. Other families, I know, conduct their affairs with more elegance and style, but elegance is not our strength.

At our house, the table grace we do does not look like religion; it looks like a hungry, tattered family at the end of a tattered day, sometimes at the end of its rope. We scramble to find the matches, to clear and set the table, to dislodge the cats and scrape our chairs into place. We clatter in, then get up again to wash somebody's hands, then finally sit down. We light the candles, reach for each other's hands, close our eyes, and sit in silence for as long as the youngest among us can stand it, which is generally up to as high as she can count. Then, on most nights, we sing something: *Dona Nobis Pacem*, *Shalom*, *Old Hundredth*, *Over the River and Through the Woods*, *The Wheels on the Bus Go Round*, *Taps*. We try to be serious, but really, it doesn't matter what we sing.

We are in a self-imposed time out. The smell of the food becomes real. The sound of our breath and the feel of our damp hands, still sticky, these are real. We are together, our circle invincible, in this one holy moment, and each of us is utterly alone in the dark solitude behind closed eyes. We are home, we have food. We recall that many don't, and sometimes someone says that this is a blessing. And where we may go that night or tomorrow fades away for a time, and we are infused and time is infused, and something wells up in us. Something like gratitude wells up, overflowing, overwhelming. The whole thing lasts, from candle to song, about two minutes, but the echo, the wake of it, lasts longer.

We are trying, all of us, in all of our houses, to be aware

We are trying to be quiet.

We are trying to slow down.

We are trying to remember our true and real life. We are trying to touch that, to call it up, trying to know we are alive, hoping to mold that knowing into good work – hopeful, brave, and helpful later on. We are trying to remember what we love and what to do, and how to be ourselves, good gifts.

These certainly are anxious times. They can also be times that bless all of our tables. Thanks.

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
401.421.7970
dre@firstunitarianprov.org
Office Hours: Monday-Friday and Sunday

NEWS AND NOTES

Welcoming a Guest at Your Table



Each year at this time, friends and families in our congregation participate in the UU Service Committee tradition of Guest at Your Table. By

bringing home a beautiful Guest box, families and individuals learn about how the Service Committee puts our shared principles into action here at home and around the world.

The Guest at Your Table box is placed in a prominent spot, often at the family meal table. When family and friends gather to enjoy their blessings, they can read from the booklet *Stories of Hope* that brings to life those Guests who are working hard to advance human rights – and protect their own rights – in partnership with UUSC. And they celebrate their own rights and share their blessings.

Through a potent combination of advocacy, education, and partnerships with grassroots organizations, UUSC promotes economic rights, advances environmental justice, defends civil liberties, and preserves the rights of people in times of humanitarian crisis. Sharing our blessings through Guest at Your Table ensures that UUSC's human rights work continues.

We will open our Guest at Your Table program with an intergenerational worship celebration on Sunday, November 23. The seventh-and-eighth-grade Junior High Youth Group will shepherd the project.

Fall Family Open Houses in Sunday School

The Religious Education Committee for Children and Youth has hosted the Senior High, Junior High, and sixth-grade families for munchies and community this fall. Parents of children in the Nursery, Play Circle, and Preschool groups are gathering during Coffee Hours in late October. Breakfast Open House invitations will be mailed to parents of children registered in grades 4/5, 2/3 and K/1 in November. So far, participating parents have appreciated this opportunity to meet one another and the teachers, learn about goals for the year, and ask questions.



NEWS AND NOTES

Goals of First Unitarian's Four Ministries

At the lay leaders retreat in late September, participants met with others in their Ministry group and developed the following overarching goals:

Spiritual Development Ministry: To uplift, delight, inspire, and heal the mind, body, and spirit over one's lifespan by challenging and surprising the members in their spiritual growth or journey.

Community Life Ministry: To develop and maintain a culture that fosters strong and authentic connections within the congregation and a sense of belonging to our larger spiritual community.

Social Justice Ministry: To move our values into action in the interconnected areas of concern in our community, city, state, and the world.

Stewardship Ministry: To ensure the healthy protection, maintenance, and development of the church's physical, financial, and human resources to enhance the generosity and spirituality of our congregation.

Coffee Hour with the PruComm

To encourage better communication with the congregation, the PruComm has scheduled several open conversations during Sunday Coffee Hour to talk with anyone interested about the issues on its agenda. The first of these sessions took place on October 26. Future dates include: January 11, March 8, and May 3. Watch for details in the Meeting House Times.

The Importance of Our Pledges

This is the time of year when a number of us pay down a sizeable amount of our annual pledge in order to benefit from the tax deduction. Unfortunately, this is the time the economy is making people more concerned than ever about their money. The point: Everyone's pledge is important to the financial health of the church; if your situation has changed and you are concerned about fulfilling your pledge, please contact our treasurer, Tony Allen (tonyallen112@aol.com). Much of our church budget is based directly on the pledges we made last spring, and each pledge is very important.



SIGHT LINES

Goings-on at the PruComm

The Prudential Committee has identified three main themes for its work this year: empowerment of our ministries, transparency in governance, and strengthening communication among congregational leaders and between leaders and the larger congregation.

Here's what we've been up to so far . . .

Our Emerging Ministries

In late September, the PruComm hosted a fall retreat for over 30 lay leaders from our congregation along with our professional staff. Much of the focus of discussion at the retreat centered on how to nurture and develop the four ministries of the congregation: Spiritual Development, Community Life, Social Justice, and Stewardship.

Over the past few years, we have begun to see that the core values of our congregation, the things that we care about most deeply, are expressed and realized through our programs – ongoing activities such as our religious education program, our small group ministry Chalice Circles, the Food Pantry, the Village Bank, to name just a few. We've also begun to see the value of better coordination among these programs by clustering them into our four ministries.

One important outcome of the retreat was that the lay leaders of our various programs met within their respective ministries and, for the first time, articulated an overarching goal for each ministry. Those goals are presented in the sidebar.

Developing Our People Resources

Within our four ministries and their programs, there is always the need for people to get involved. These needs range from serving as a committee chair to helping out with a specific task or event. This year, the PruComm and the Nominating Committee are experimenting with a new approach to address our people resource needs. The PruComm's liaisons to the ministries will help identify the people needs in their respective ministries. Then the Nominating Committee and the liaisons will develop and put into action a coordinated plan for recruiting and addressing those needs.

Empowerment and Transparency Through Clear Policy

One of the ongoing responsibilities of the PruComm is to articulate a clear set of policies regarding how things "work" in our congregation. Clear governing policies can serve to both empower the people who are doing the work of the congregation and provide transparency to the larger congregation regarding how decisions are made. This year, the PruComm is undertaking a review of a wide range of our policies. To do this, PruComm member Dan Kubas-Meyer is leading a policy review task force that includes Gail Brule, Graham Nye, and Mary Frey. Their charge is to 1) seek out from other churches similar to ours information about their policies; 2) review the existing policies of our congregation; and 3) report back to the PruComm with findings and recommendations by early March.

We welcome your comments, questions, concerns, and suggestions. Please join us for one of the Coffee Hours with the PruComm to be held several times over the year (details in the sidebar).

See you on Sunday.

Cy O'Neil, President
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TOGETHER IN FELLOWSHIP

November All-Parish Suppers – November 14 and November 21

Both of this month's programs are sponsored by the World Affairs Committee

Friday, November 14 (Note: this is *not* a potluck supper)

5:45p Social Hour

6:15p An African Dinner: A special meal prepared and served by Nancy Weiss-Fried, Judy Bowden, and crew. Reservations for this dinner are REQUIRED.

7:45p Program: Darfur Voices

We must not ignore or forget the continuing violence and genocide in Darfur. To help us better understand the conflict, actors from the Living Literature group will present a dramatic collage of stories and testimonies of actual people involved – refugees, displaced persons, resistance fighters, humanitarian workers, children, and others. Performers include Sharon Carpentier, JoAnn Peralta, and Barry Press. Representatives of the R.I. Darfur Action Network and the Sudan Association will also provide commentary. The audience will have an opportunity to make voluntary contributions to support relief efforts in Darfur.

Friday, November 21

5:45p Social Hour: Bring hors d'oeuvres to share and wine for your own party if you wish.

6:15p Potluck Dinner: Please bring a dish to share that serves at least 8 people. You can bring a main dish, a vegetable, a salad, or a dessert.

7:45p Program: Understanding Iran

Iran has been vilified by the Bush administration as a dangerous nation of terrorists and has been accused of refusing to conform to the parameters of international law. Should we be afraid of Iran? Are current U.S. policies toward Iran appropriate or misguided? Our presenter will be Professor JoAnn Hart, a dynamic speaker and a former professor of political science at Brown University for nine years. She is currently a scholar at the Watson Institute at Brown and teaches Middle East history and politics at Lesley College. A question-and-answer session will follow.

Reservations/Childcare: To reserve for the dinners, please fill out the sign-up slip in the Sunday *Meeting House Times* and put it in the collection plate or call the church office at 401.421.7970. Childcare is available for parents who request it; call Jim Estey at 401.351.1748 to sign up.

Annual Thanksgiving Day Dinner – Thursday, November 27, 1:00–5:00p

Members, friends, and their families are invited to gather in the Parish House from 1:00p to 5:00p to celebrate Thanksgiving with fireside conversations, games, and a communal Thanksgiving meal, which will start around 2:00p. Everyone will share in providing and serving the food. The Fellowship Committee is organizing the dinner: to reserve your space and coordinate your food contribution, please sign up at Coffee Hour on November 9 or 16 or call Kate Menard at 401.437.6322. There is a suggested donation of \$3/adult, \$1.50/child, with a maximum of \$10/family.

December All-Parish Supper – Friday, December 12

A family holiday celebration: the Aurea Ensemble's presentation of *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, by Dylan Thomas, read by actors Nigel Gore and Chris Turner, with old English carols and baroque chamber music. Fred Jodry, singer and harpsichordist, Charles and Consuelo Sherba, strings, and Chris Turner, harmonica.

SATURDAY SOCIALS

These Saturday evening potluck suppers are for adults – newcomers, old-timers, and in-betweeners – who would like to meet new friends in the congregation.

Reservations: Space is limited and reservations are required. To reserve space and select a menu item to bring, call Kate Menard at 401.437.6322.

Special Invitation: The supper at the Koelzes especially welcomes those on the younger side – single, coupled, and/or with young children – and anyone who would like to get together with folks in this segment of our congregation.

Saturday, November 1

Hosts: Doris and David Bridgehouse
138 Stillwater Road
Smithfield, Rhode Island
6:00–9:00p

Hosts: Stephen and Heidi Koelz
176 Oak Hill Avenue
Providence, Rhode Island
5:00–8:00p

Saturday, December 6

Host: Mary Frappier
210 Highland Avenue
Providence, Rhode Island
6:00–9:00p

Become a Saturday Social Supper Host

Have you thought about hosting one of our monthly Saturday Social potluck suppers? It's a wonderful way to meet new people and contribute to the building of our church community. Contact Carol Adams at 401.433.4365 or carol.adams6@cox.net

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

Fair-traded Coffee

Monday, November 3

10:30a **Business meeting**

11:00a **Program:** Our guest speaker is Richard Kleinfeldt, founder of New Harvest Coffee Roasters, a Rhode Island business that roasts and markets fair-traded, organic, shade-grown coffee that we sell each Sunday.

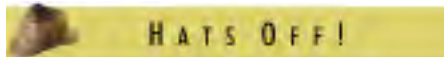
12:00p **Catered luncheon** (\$9, or bring a sandwich)

All-Church Picture Directory

If you have signed up to have your picture taken for the All-Church Picture Directory, you will soon receive a call from Olin Mills, the company producing the directory, reminding you of your appointment. If you have not signed up, you may also receive a call, giving you a last chance to be part of this important church opportunity. Remember – there is no obligation to purchase anything. You will receive a free 8x10 photo and a complimentary copy of the directory just for participating. You may love your picture so much that you will want copies for family and friends for the holidays.

Important Parking Alert!!

Let's be mindful that the designated handicap spaces in our parking lot are to be used for handicap parking only. Please display your official handicap certificate in an obvious location (your rearview mirror or dashboard). You can also find marked spaces on Benevolent Street for Sunday use. There is additional parking, *on Sunday mornings only*, at the Hope Club (across Benevolent Street). The City of Providence will be ticketing cars that are parked next to the church on Benevolent Street, since fire trucks are unable to get through.



To the many people who set up, serve, and/or clean up for the Friday All-Parish Suppers. Your help is crucial to the success of these large events.

To our Coffee Hour providers last month: Mary Finger, Anne Connor, Elizabeth O'Connell, Beth Armstrong, Ellen Anderson, Tom Getz, Barbara Gloria, Jacqui Nye, Melissa Guillet, Steve McCloy, Roberta Groch, Elsie Buffum, Lynne Fazzi, Michael Cappelli, Kate Menard, Ruth Worthen, Susan Harrison, Kate Adams, Mary Speare, Gerry Spremulli, Nancy Shand, Janet Noble, Jenny Boone, and all of you who brought something in to the church kitchen before the Sunday service to surprise us.

To Janet Downing Taylor for her years of Sunday morning dedication in scheduling our Coffee Hour bakers. Thanks, Janet!



CONGREGATIONAL NEWS AND EVENTS

Funding Our Fourth Village Bank

Proceeds from the Sunday, November 23, offering will be used to fund our church's second village bank in Haiti. Last November, members and friends donated enough money to support our first Haitian bank; earlier, the church funded two village banks in Guatemala.

The money raised will be sent to the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA), which provides small loans to help women in impoverished countries create their own jobs or enhance an existing business. Haiti is the least developed country in the Western Hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world; about 80% of the population lives in abject poverty. Micro-credit can help transform local economies by offering people the tools to move themselves out of poverty.

After the service, the Village Bank Task Force will be selling products purchased from UPAVIM, a nonprofit women's cooperative in Guatemala City dedicated to the sale of fair-trade crafts.

For more information: contact Sara Slate at 401.435.2039

History of a UU Bike Rack

Five or six years ago, at a Building and Grounds cleanup of the Meeting House basement, John D'Abate spied some old one-foot steel pipe that was headed for the dumpster. He took it back to his blacksmith shop in Johnston, sure he could use it for a project at the church – someday.

Time passed. In 2007, our interim minister Diane Miller planted the seeds for worthy projects by distributing \$100 checks to folks with big ideas. David Keller, an avid cyclist, was a happy recipient. While cycling on the Cape that summer, David used a bike rack made from recycled plastic. In September he approached B&G chair Art Lusignan about purchasing and installing such a rack.

Time passed. Art met with Helen Haynes from the Facilities Task Force in spring 2008 to look at locations for a bike rack. Helen suggested the transformer enclosure at the corner of the parking lot, a location that was out of sight from the street and would not impact any of the existing planting or parking around the church. They thought of John D'Abate as a local artisan who might build a bike rack from recycled materials. When approached, John said could use the pipe he recovered from the cleanup – and wouldn't accept any money for labor or materials.


Sometime in June, Art gave John a crude but dimensional sketch and they agreed that the rack would be installed in the fall. In mid-September, Art visited John's shop and found he had skillfully turned that crude sketch and the recycled pipe into a shiny new bike rack. It was installed later that month.

Even if you are not a cyclist, you can appreciate the value of our new bike rack both to the cyclists in our community and to the environment. You can see the end result in the transformer enclosure at the bottom of the parking lot.

Woman's Alliance News

Looking after the Parish House parlors is just one of the ways the Women's Alliance contributes to our community. During the summer, the two sofas and the window cushions in the middle parlor were recovered, partially funded by several donors and from funds earned from sale of baked goodies and fair-trade coffee.

The Alliance also collects Eastside Marketplace receipts to support the programming of Camp Street Ministries. If you shop at Eastside Marketplace, please save your receipts and put them in the box on the welcome table in the Atrium.



CONGREGATIONAL NEWS AND EVENTS

Rediscovering the Art of Gino Conti



The work of Rhode Island Italian-American artist Gino Conti (1900-1983) will be featured in an exhibition in the Atrium at First Unitarian from November 3 to 21, 2008. Conti studied at the Rhode Island School of Design and at the Académie Julian and the École des Beaux Arts in Paris; he also lived in France and Italy. In Providence, he focused on teaching children at the Gordon School, the First Unitarian Church Sunday School, and his eclectic studio, Penelope Court, on Planet Street.

Since his death, much of his acclaimed work has been forgotten. A former friend and Rhode Island native, Dr. William Tortolano, professor emeritus of Fine Arts and Music at Saint Michael's College in Vermont, is arranging this extensive retrospective of his work. The exhibition has been prepared in cooperation with Robert Schacht, Conti's attorney, former student as a child, and lifelong friend.

Paintings, sculptures, and works in other mediums have been gathered from many parts of the United States, including representative works from his close association with Native Americans in the Southwest and Mexico. During the Great Depression, Conti created murals for a number of public buildings; two large and well-preserved examples can be seen at the Samuel Slater Junior High School in Pawtucket.

Conti participated in many prestigious exhibitions during his lifetime, including the Providence Art Club, the Rhode Island School of Design, the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts, and the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford. His work is still on exhibition at the Municipal Art Gallery in Cesena, Italy.

The exhibition will be open Mondays to Fridays, from 9:00a to 5:00p. An opening reception will be held on Monday, November 3, from 5:00 to 7:00p.

For further information: contact Dr. William Tortolano at 802.654.2508; wtortolano@smcvt.edu; Robert Schacht at 401.738.4327; or the First Unitarian Church, 401.421.7970.

Unique Bookstore Coming Soon

No *New York Times* bestsellers here, but easy chairs for browsing and a "café" – the Coffee Hour – right around the corner will be the lure. It's called the Atrium Bookstore to make clear where it is and what it does. Books are selected with an eye to the particular interests of people at First Unitarian.

Poetry by Mary Oliver and Ric Masten and prose by James Ishmael Ford and Mary Elizabeth Finger will be among the offerings, as well as the voices of many other writers, some Unitarian and many not. There will be books for children and families, books on contemporary issues, and inspirational and meditation titles as well.

The primary goal of the bookstore is to offer all the intangibles that a good bookstore or library offers. On the tangible side, all profits will go to First Unitarian. The planned opening is in November, at a date to be announced.

For information, contact Irene Allen at iallen112@aol.com

OUR LARGER FAITH

Between Sundays

Between Sundays is a website designed to help parents and other adults answer religious questions raised by children and youth. What does it mean to be a Unitarian Universalist and how do our/your religious beliefs make a difference in the world? These are the two basic questions underlying the thematic presentation of questions and "answers" on this site. Lessons and activities to address specific questions at different ages are adapted from curricula published by the UUA, by independent authors, and by the Church of the Larger Fellowship. Some lessons and activities are suggested for a single age level; others are recommended for all ages.

You can browse the site by age level or subject category or search by key words. The categories are those used in curriculum development by the UUA's Lifespan Faith Development Department. In addition, a Resources section provides informative material just for adults using the site. Don't be concerned about your own level of knowledge or depth of personal understanding. Learn along with the children, explore religious concepts together – model the "search for truth and meaning" in an open and loving environment.

The web page for Between Sundays is one of many resources available at the Church of the Larger Fellowship. CLF membership offers you UU spirituality, education, and resources 24/7, while at the same time bringing Unitarian Universalism to isolated UUs all over the world.

For information about Between Sundays go to: www.clfuu.org/betweensundays

The Church of the Larger Fellowship Offers Seasonal Note Cards

Purchases made at the CLF Shop support the many UU ministries of the Church of the Larger Fellowship, serving UU individuals and small groups all over the world.

You can visit the CLF shop online at www.clfuu.org or call 617.948.6150.



CONTINUING PROGRAMS

New Connections

Every Sunday, 11:30a-12:00p

This alternative to the first part of the Sunday Coffee Hour offers discussions on a variety of spiritual topics of the group's choice.

BUUUG – A Gathering for College-Aged Young Adults

Every Sunday during college term, 6:00p

This campus ministry, the Brown University UU Group, provides an affirming and welcoming community for young adult UUs to meet and to further their spiritual growth and exploration. All young adults in the Providence area are welcome.

Contact: Chelsea Waite at chelsea_waite@brown.edu or Cathy Seggel at dre.firstunitarianprov.org

Green Sanctuary at First Unitarian

Second Sunday, November 9, 9:30a

A Green Sanctuary congregation lives its commitment to the Earth by creating a sustainable lifestyle for its members as individuals and as a faith community. Sustainable living is about more than material comfort; it is about choosing to live in a way that nurtures life, builds relationships, and rejects material consumption as the sole determinant of happiness. Program goals include building awareness of societal environmental issues and injustices, motivating community action, and fostering a connection between spiritual practice and environmental consciousness.

Registration not required.

Contact: Bekah Greenwald at bekah@apeiron.org or 401.521.3446

UUMeN

Second Sunday, November 9, 7:00-9:00p

Topic: Men and Solitude

What is solitude? Is it a retreat from reality? Or a quest for wisdom? What do we as men face when we take time to be alone with ourselves? We all carry images and stories that color our notions and our feelings about solitude. These are some of the things we will explore through discussion and story-telling. All interested men are welcome.

No registration necessary.

November facilitator: Ira Schaeffer
401.781.6868



GROWING IN WISDOM AND SPIRIT

New Programs

**Introduction to Spirit of Life:
Exploring Spirituality for Unitarian Universalists**

Sunday, November 2, 12:00-1:30p

Part of the new UUA Tapestry of Faith curriculum, Spirit of Life seeks to bring meaning, beauty, inclusivity and growth to Unitarian Universalist adults as they deepen their spiritual awareness and connections. The program taps into one of the central functions of religion, eloquently described by minister Kendyl Gibbons: "how we, each of us, in our uniquely constituted beings, recognize and understand and make sense of that unbidden, overwhelming awe at the wonder, magnificence, danger, demand, and delight of being alive."

Cathy Seggel, our Director of Religious Education, will lead the November 2 session, an introduction to the program, which offers participants space, time and community to explore their UU spirituality. Each session focuses on a different aspect of the spiritual life, framed by the lyrics of Carolyn McDade's song "Spirit of Life." Like the song, the workshops are designed to be welcoming to Unitarian Universalists of many spiritual and theological persuasions. Upcoming workshops in the series might include Sing in My Heart: Celebrations and Rituals, The Stirrings of Compassion: Caring for One Another, Move in the Hand: Living Our Spirituality in Our Day-to-day Lives.

Registration required.

Contact: Church office 401.421.7970 or email dre@firstunitarianprov.org

Benevolent Street Zendo: A Zen Meditation Group

Every Monday, 7:30p, beginning November 3

This month, Jan Seymour-Ford and James Ford inaugurate a weekly Zen meditation group. Everyone is welcome to participate. If you are new to Buddhist practice, please come at 7:15p for brief instruction. We are a member community of the Boundless Way Zen Sangha. Boundless Way (www.boundlesswayzen.org) is an interfaith Zen community, maintaining close connections with the Soto Zen Buddhist Association and the American Zen Teachers Association. (All three of its senior teachers, including our minister, James Ford, are Unitarian Universalists.)

Information: benevolentstreetzendo@gmail.com

The Environment and the Economy – One Solution?

Monday, November 10, 7:00p

Activist and author Van Jones delivered the Ware Lecture at this year's UU General Assembly to great acclaim. Jones's book *The Green-Collar Economy* has been called a twenty-first-century equivalent of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. This program is an opportunity to watch a DVD of his lecture and participate in a discussion of the ideas espoused by this internationally acclaimed and award-winning activist. Like those who heard him at GA, you will be inspired and encouraged!

Information: Marilyn Eanet at 401.433.1299 or meanet@cox.net

Sponsored by Green Sanctuary at First Unitarian





GROWING IN WISDOM AND SPIRIT

Knitting Connection's Project for the Year

Every Tuesday, 7:00p

The Knitting Connection has selected a project for the year: making warm items (mittens, hats, scarves, sweaters) for Latino immigrant families in Olneyville. Knitters and crocheters – both experienced and beginners – are most welcome to join these evenings of crafting and conversation. Bring your own project or join in the group project. No registration necessary.

Contact: Julie Meyers at kelmey@cox.net or 401.725.4611

First Unitarian Women's Chorus

Sundays, November 2, 9, 16, 12–1:30p

An opportunity for women of all ages (including teens) to get together to sing. Beth Armstrong will direct. She has years of experience singing and directing choruses of all types and special experience with women's voices. She also has a vast collection of songs that are accessible, not only to the experienced vocalist, but also to the beginner. Music reading is not required, so this is a good chance to grab your mom, your best friend, or your daughter and come to church to sing just for the joy of it. If the group chooses, it's possible that the chorus will sing in a Sunday service. Join us on all or any of the Sundays.

Registration requested.

Contact: Beth Armstrong at bestar3@cox.net

Gaia's Hearth

Cornerstones of Wicca

Thursdays, November 13 and 20, 7:00–8:30p

This ongoing class offers instruction in the basic tenets of Wicca as well as the practical techniques of magical work for an intensive, homework-oriented experience. Our members come from varied magical backgrounds and experiences; we welcome people of all faiths and paths to join us. November topics are:

November 13: Cleansing/Creating Sacred Space

November 20: Magical Tools and Altar Set-up

Registration requested.

Leader/contact: Diane Donnelly at dianednnlly@yahoo.com

Sylvan Circle

Second Sunday, November 9, 12:30–1:30p

At this family-friendly gathering, we all share, learn, and teach each other as we pass around a talking stick and explore all types of traditions. Each meeting starts with the Celtic tree of the month (November: Reed/Broom) and then “branch out” to explore and honor each other's paths. Children are welcome to participate, as sometimes they are the best teachers.

Registration not required.

Leader/contact: Arte Ezikovich nimuix@cox.net

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

UU Women

Second Tuesday, November 11, 7:00p

Topic: Being of Service

There is a long tradition of viewing volunteerism as something we do to others. The best volunteering includes another dimension: think about “being of service” as an exchange. We will examine those places in our lives (family, extended family, community) where this exchange has worked well – and not so well. We will also critique 27 very candid reasons people have for service, some even getting a giggle because they are so true, or bring your own list.

Registration not required.

Contact: Terri Smith at 401.941.6865

or essceteetee123@yahoo.com

Reimagining Religion

Second and fourth Tuesdays, November 11 and 25, at 7:00p

Reimagining Religion is an ongoing attempt to employ the best recent scholarship in coming to grips with issues raised by radically new developments in the study of religion and thereby achieving a fuller appreciation of what religious literacy entails in the twenty-first century. The current discussion draws on Lloyd Geering's autobiography, *Wrestling with God*, in which he argues that we need “to enunciate a completely fresh world theology ... in the light of our new knowledge of the universe.”

Registration not required.

Contact: Tom Hall at 401.647.2925 or

twh2nd@aol.com

Spiritual Cinema

Third Sunday, November 16, at 7:00p

Featured film: *King of California*

Sixteen-year-old Miranda (Evan Rachel Wood) is struggling to understand how to have a relationship with her mentally ill father, Charlie (Michael Douglas). Charlie takes Miranda on an adventure to find ancient Spanish treasure that he believes is buried under the local Costco. As Miranda navigates the ups and downs of Charlie's delusional episodes, an opening is created for grace and reconnection between them.

Contact: Marilyn Eanet at 401.433.1299 or

meanet@cox.net; or Maureen Johanson at

508.557.1173

Say It with Flowers

The flowers that grace our pulpit each Sunday are given in honor or remembrance of special people in their lives by members and friends of the congregation. If you would like to provide commemorative flowers, contact Betty Finn at 401.726.1867.

Community Food Share Food Pantry

Our monthly food pantry serves needy people in the Providence area. Each third Monday afternoon, we set up our "grocery store" in the Atrium, help clients select food items, and clean up afterwards. Our next distribution day is Monday, November 17. To get involved, contact Elesa Amand at 401.253.9602 or Sara Slate at 401.435.2039.

Habitat for Humanity Work Group

Our Habitat Work Group volunteers once a month with the Providence Habitat chapter. Volunteers of all skill levels are welcome – the only requirements are a willingness and ability to do physical work, and minimum age of 16. Our next work day is November 15. Sign-up is required as space on each month's crew is limited. Contact Peter Van Erp at 401.351.4881 or petervanerp@cox.net.

Coffee Hour Bakers Co-op

Coffee Hour is a cooperative effort. Each Sunday we need 6 to 8 people to bake or buy goodies to keep up with the ravenous crowd. Janet Downing Taylor is signing up goodies providers for November and December – look for her in the first parlor during Coffee Hour.

Empties4Cash Printer Cartridge Recycling Program

Recycle your printer cartridges – and help out First Unitarian! Just put your empty cartridges in the collection box in the Atrium – the church receives cash for the empty cartridges, which are recycled into new, compatible ones. You can buy these remanufactured cartridges at up to 80% savings at www.inksmile.com. Contact Posey Kooris at 401.421.7970 or admin@firstunitarianprov.org.



12th Annual Buy Nothing Day and Winter Coat Exchange

On November 28 – the busiest day in the American retail calendar and the unofficial start of the international Christmas-shopping season – thousands of activists and concerned citizens in 65 countries will take a 24-hour consumer detox as part of the annual Buy Nothing Day, a global phenomenon that originated in Vancouver, Canada.

Reasons for participating in Buy Nothing Day are as varied as the people who choose to participate. Some see it as an escape from the marketing mind games and frantic consumer binge that has come to characterize the holiday season, and our culture in general. Others use it to expose the environmental and ethical consequences of over-consumption.

In Rhode Island, as part of International Buy Nothing Day, we hold a Winter Coat Exchange at various sites around the state. There are over 60 co-sponsors of this event, including community organizations, places of worship, and civic and environmental groups.

- If you have a coat to give, drop it off at First Unitarian by Monday, November 24.
- If you need a coat, pick one up the day after Thanksgiving – Friday, November 28 from 10:00a to 2:00pm – on the State House lawn (across from Providence Place mall).

Rain/snow sites: St. Patrick's School, 244 Smith Street, Providence or the Blackstone Valley Visitors Center, 175 Main Street., Pawtucket

Other Coat Exchanges sites:

Newport – St Paul's Church 12 West Marlborough St. Maggie Bulmer 849-3537.

Wakefield – St. Francis Church, 114 High Street, 10am to Noon Tom Abbott 364-0778.

You can volunteer to help with this life-affirming event. In Providence: contact Greg Gerritt at 401.331.0529 or gerritt@mindspring.com; Phil Edmonds at 401.273.4650 or philwhistle@juno.com; in Pawtucket: contact Arthur Pitt 401.724.8915 or kingarthur02940@yahoo.com

Greening the Holidays with Green Sanctuary

Sundays, November 30, December 7 and 14, 12:15–1:15p

Looking for new spiritual pathways to celebrate this holiday season? First Unitarian's Green Sanctuary group can help you bring meaning and a sense of connection back to your holiday experience. For three Sundays before Christmas, join Green Sanctuary and a series of special presenters in the Haynes Room to explore holiday preparations, gift giving, and food preparation that reduce your eco-footprint. This series begins on November 30 with special guest Susan Shepard, who will lead participants in making recycled-material ornaments for their Christmas trees.

Families are most welcome, but registration is required.

To register, contact Bekah Greenwald at bekah@apeiron.org or 401.338.4126.

Save the Date: Write-a-thon for Human Rights on December 7

The traditional celebration of International Human Rights Day at First Unitarian is a Write-a-thon for Human Rights. Sponsored by the World Affairs Committee in collaboration with Amnesty International, the event is open to the public and suitable for young people and families. Participants write letters on behalf of prisoners of conscience in countries around the world. Refreshments, prizes, and guest speakers make this both a festive and meaningful event.



THIS MONTH @ FIRST UNITARIAN

November 2008

"Discovery consists of seeing what everybody has seen and thinking what nobody else has thought."—Jonathan Swift

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<u>1</u> Saturday Social Suppers
			<u>2</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Women's Chorus 12:00p Introduction to Spirit of Life 12:00p Gaia's Hearth 12:15p	<u>3</u> Women's Alliance 11:00a Benevolent Street Zendo 7:00p	<u>4</u> Knitters 7:00p	<u>5</u> Prudential Committee 6:00p
<u>9</u> Green Sanctuary 9:30a Sunday Service 10:30a Women's Chorus 12:00p Sylvan Circle 12:30p UU Men 7:00p	<u>10</u> R.E. Committee 6:30p Benevolent Street Zendo 7:00p Green Sanctuary Film 7:00p	<u>11</u> Re-imagining Religion 7:00p UU Women 7:00p Knitters 7:00p	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u> Worship 6:30p Stewardship 7:00p Wicca 7:00p	<u>14</u> Parish Supper 5:45p (Darfur)	<u>15</u>
<u>16</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Communion 11:30a Women's Chorus 12:00p Spiritual Cinema 7:00p	<u>17</u> Food Pantry 4:00p Benevolent Street Zendo 7:00p	<u>18</u> Knitters 7:00p	<u>19</u> Executive Committee 7:00p	<u>20</u> Wicca 7:00p	<u>21</u> Parish Supper 5:45p (Iran)	<u>22</u>
<u>23</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Village Bank Sale 11:30a <u>30</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Green Sanctuary 12:15p	<u>24</u> Benevolent Street Zendo 7:00p	<u>25</u> Re-imagining Religion 7:00p Knitters 7:00p	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u> THANKSGIVING Church Thanksgiving Dinner 1:00-5:00p	<u>28</u> Church Office Closed	<u>29</u>

First Unitarian Church of Providence
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Poster by Janet Downing Taylor

Sharing Our Gifts . . . Receiving the Bounty

Come support our talented UUs and the First Unitarian Church on
Saturday, November 8

This year's special fall fund-raiser features both youth and adult talent shows and a silent auction, complete with delicious hors d'oeuvres at a very affordable price. You'll be supporting your talented friends by voting (with your dollars!) for your favorite UU Idol, taking part in the 50/50 draw, and bidding on great items, including weekend vacations and restaurant certificates – and you'll be supporting First Unitarian at the same time.

UU Youth Talentpalooza!
Saturday afternoon, 1:00–3:00p

UU IDOL
and Silent Auction!
Saturday evening, 6:30–10:00p

Tickets are \$10 per person or \$25 per family, in advance or at the door. Your ticket is good for all events during the day. Even if you can't attend, buy a ticket and support First Unitarian! Look for the ticket sale table at Coffee Hour or contact Dave and Gerry Spremulli at 401.434.3346 or gspremulli@cox.net or dspremulli@cox.net
