



## SUNDAY SERVICES

**Sunday, October 4** 10:30a **Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

### FILTHY LUCRE: Reflecting on Spirituality, Purity, and the World in Which We Live

Most religions make a strong division between the profane and the sacred. Often this divide is found in sexual mores and in how we relate to money. Possibly, most Unitarian Universalists believe the spiritual and the material are one thing. James will explore what this might mean for us in our lives.

*Young people begin in classrooms and worship in Chapel.*

Following the service, our Development and Finance Ministry will offer information about our various stewardship programs and how you can get involved.

**Sunday, October 11** 10:30a **Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

### THE ART OF CONVERSATION

Over the past few years, a particularly Unitarian Universalist spiritual practice has emerged. Under various names, but in most congregations called Small Group Ministry, it has proven a worthy support for people seeking a simple but powerful way to explore the deeper questions of life. In our congregation, this program has been dubbed Chalice Circles. James will reflect on what he likes to call the Art of Conversation.

*Young people begin in classrooms and worship in Chapel.*

**Sunday, October 18** 10:30a **Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

### LET THE SOFT ANIMAL OF YOUR BODY LOVE WHAT IT LOVES

Annie Dillard sings to us about how "the world offers itself to your imagination, calls to you..." James wants to explore that call within the image of spirit, of breath, and what it means, or might mean, for us as we try to live whole lives in a broken world.

*Young people begin in classrooms and worship in Chapel.*

Following the service, our Spiritual Development Ministry will offer information about the various programs in this area of church life and ways for you to get involved.

**Sunday, October 25** 10:30a **Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

### TO BE OF USE

What does it mean to be of use? Marge Piercy tells us "the pitcher cries for water to carry and a person for work that is real." What is that longing? And how do we fulfill it? James will explore the various ways we might find fulfillment in our work.

*Young people begin in classrooms and worship in Chapel.*

Following the service, our Community Life and Heritage Ministry will offer information about the various programs in this area of church life and ways for you to get involved.

**Sunday, November 1** 10:30a **DRE Cathy Seggel and Rev. James Ishmael Ford**

### FESTIVALS OF THE DEAD - A Multigenerational Service

In the Western religious calendar the ancient festivals of All Hallows and All Saints are joined in a moment where the boundaries of the worlds of the living and the dead are stretched so thin that holes appear and magic happens

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

*Origins, Play Circle, and Preschool classrooms are open.*

Following the service, we will celebrate the first of four Communion services scheduled for this year.



## The Monthly Newsletter for

**The First Unitarian Church of Providence**  
Corner of Benefit and Benevolent Streets

### ALL PARISH EVENTS

#### Development and Finance Ministry Fair

Sunday, October 4

#### Chalice Circle Sampler

Sunday, October 11

#### All-Parish Supper

Friday, October 16

#### Spiritual Development Ministry Fair

Sunday, October 18

#### Community Life and Heritage Ministry Fair

Sunday, October 25

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### S T A F F

Rev. James Ishmael Ford, Minister  
 Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education  
 Frederick Jodry, Music Director  
 Rev. Christana Wille McKnight, Community Minister  
 Posey Kooris, Administrator  
 Walter O. Sotelo, Administrative Assistant  
 Katy Killilea, Membership Coordinator  
 Jaime Durango, Building Manager  
 Paul Webber, Evening Security  
 Jose Urena, Sunday Building Manager

### N E W S L E T T E R

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

### Lay Ministry: We're Here to Serve

The Lay Ministry and the Care Crew are ready to help those in the congregation who are in need. Please call on us if you, or someone you know in the congregation, needs a hand. Just a friendly word at the time of a death in the family, an illness or injury, or even the happy event of a new addition to the family.

While we cannot provide ongoing services, we are able to provide the following:

- Calls and cards
- Visits
- Rides to the doctor's office
- Emergency babysitting
- Emergency elderly companionship
- Meals delivered

If you are interested in volunteering to be part of the Care Crew, please email Posey Kooris at [admin@firstunitarianprov.org](mailto:admin@firstunitarianprov.org) or call the office 401.421.7970 and one of the Lay Ministers will contact you.

The Lay Ministers: Stewart Armstrong,  
Mary Frappier, Mary Frey, Martha Manno,  
Kate Menard, Janet Noble

### Hats Off!

To last month's Coffee Hour Providers: Mary Frappier, Janet Downing Taylor, Kate Adams, Angela Semonelli, Marilyn Van Erp, Mimo Gordon Riley, Claudine Blanchard, Roberta Groch, Sara Cappelli, Erica Napolitano, Barbara Gloria, Anne Connor and all of you who brought something in to the church kitchen before the Sunday service to surprise us.

To Judy Bowden, Sally and Ralph Caruso, Lincoln Oliver O'Neil, Flannery Brown, Noelle, Ella Walters, and all those who participated in the Homecoming Service.



## Monkey Mind

Recently I attended a workshop for the new initiative from the UUA, "Standing on the Side of Love." They tried to show a bunch of ministers how to be interviewed by the media. The presenter was great, we students, well . . . I did get one take-away drummed into me: they said to say three things about what you're being interviewed for. This, of course, is not an interview, but I would like to apply that lesson to the idea of covenant.

A covenant is a promise that two or more people make to each other, in the face of their deep values. And I have three things to say about covenants.

First, a covenant is important for Unitarian Universalists. Second, we here at First Unitarian haven't looked at our covenant in over a hundred years. And, third, it's probably well past time to do so. And so, if you attended our worship service on Sunday, September 20, you know that - among the many things we're doing this year - we're embarked together on an exploration of covenant.

We often respond to those who criticize our liberal faith for not having a clear creed that we are not creedal, but rather covenantal. So it seems really important for us to have a handle on our covenants. Of course, like those related words mission and vision, covenant can mean different things and so needs some unpacking. Our covenantal roots go back to the Jewish covenant between God and the Jewish people. From this beginning, covenant has come to lie near the heart of all Western religion, although for us it has more immediate roots in the Puritan foundation of the Congregational way. Walter Herz lays out that foundation for us:

Almost four hundred years ago a small band of hard-headed idealists landed on the shores of Massachusetts and implanted a revolutionary idea: the free church. They formed autonomous, self-governing congregations that counseled and supported each other. Covenanting in these congregations - the process of the members learning to live together in loving and supporting relationships, or right relation - gave them extraordinary power, guided in action by the vision of a "city set upon a hill," the biblical reference for the perfect new Israel the Puritans envisioned that their community would become. And that vision helped to shape a new nation, to win its independence, to create its republican form of governance, and to serve as its social justice witness for many decades.

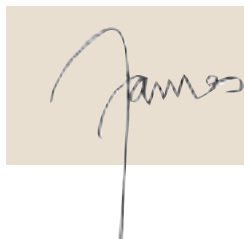
We are the direct descendants of those hard-headed idealists, our spiritual ancestors having through the covenant of relationship with each other in the light of higher intimations - which, for us, might be better expressed as our foundational values - created something wonderful. We have followed that light wherever it led, and it led to our contemporary liberal religion, to Unitarian Universalism.

Now, covenants within our tradition are not once and for all things. They are mutable documents that need to be revisited from time to time. I strongly suspect every year or even every decade is probably too frequent for such a document. And I'm happy to report we at the First Unitarian Church haven't played fast and loose with our covenants. However, the last time we reviewed and re-covenanted was well over a hundred years ago. And that is probably too long.

So, we are launched into a reflection on what would be an appropriate covenant for us as the First Unitarian Church of Providence. Elsewhere in this newsletter you'll see an outline of the plan. There will be a number of chances for you to share your reflections on these issues: the values that drive us, the promises we're willing to make, and the promises we want.

Out of this process, I believe, we have an opportunity to reflect and renew, not just our old church, but ourselves. Not a bad thing, I feel . . .

See you in church,



Rev. James Ishmael Ford, Minister  
Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday,  
9:00a -12:00p Appointments are recommended.  
[min@firstunitarianprov.org](mailto:min@firstunitarianprov.org)



## Time to Tend the Trails

At UUA General Assembly in June, I was honored to attend the Sophia Fahs Lecture where I listened to Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso speak about the spirituality of children. She stressed that people of all ages constantly receive messages and images of what is important in our culture - and very little quiet, reflection time. If we believe that human spirituality is rooted in experience and encounters with the self, others, and the world, then our time here in church provides a key element for nurturing or exercising souls. If you don't exercise muscles, they atrophy. Rabbi Sasso suggests that the same is true for souls. Our primary role in the Spiritual Pathways program is to encourage these special moments of awareness of the sacred by ensuring the time and a safe space for them to happen.

As always, the fall is filled with the promise that new beginnings bring. The Jewish tradition's Days of Awe sums up the season, wisely. There are personal, reflective, introspective aspects of this period, as well as reconciliation and increased generosity and giving. In *earth bound*, Brian Nelson remarks that wilderness trails quickly deteriorate without careful maintenance. He goes on to recommend that our own social spheres need tending, too. Often the cycle continues with increasingly heavy workloads, followed by a gauntlet of holidays. "Amidst all the craziness, don't let the pathways, the delicate trails that connect you to what you care about, become overgrown. Take the time to tend to them now, so that you can find your way when you really need to."

This particular church year, rich in a promise process, will ask us to identify and acknowledge what matters; that is, the congregational covenanting process: affirming that which we promise to one another, to our larger community, and even to the world. Our children and youth will join the adult congregation in learning more about our Unitarian Universalist faith and the promises we choose to make. May we decide to take good care of ourselves, others, and our planet.

Looking forward to a good year in the book of life,

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

## Parent Open Houses: Making Connections in Our Sunday School

This school year, the Religious Education Committee for Children and Youth and I will provide unique opportunities for parents, volunteer teachers, students, and staff to get together for breakfast gatherings on Sunday mornings. These open houses will be scheduled throughout the fall and will replace the traditional one-day, Coffee Hour open house.

Invitations will be mailed to all registered families and all open houses will be announced in the weekly *Meeting House Times* and in church emails. These smaller events are intended to help families get to know one another, while providing a time for teachers and parents to communicate. We hope that parents and children will join their volunteer teachers.

### Open House Schedule

- 9:30a, Sunday, September 27 - Parents of Senior High (10th, 11th, 12th graders)
- 9:30a, Sunday, October 4 - Parents of 6th and 7th graders
- 12:00-3:00p, Sunday, October 4 - Parents of 8th and 9th graders (Coming of Age)
- 9:30am, Sunday, October 18 - Parents of 1st - 5th graders
- 9:30a, Sunday, November 8 - Parents of Preschoolers and Kindergarteners

## Religious Education Committee for Children and Youth

Patricia Wilhelm (Chair), Kathy Ahlquist, Sally Caruso, Roberta Groch, Susan Harrison, Jon Henson, Jen Karl, Lisa Voutes, Amy Webb

### RE Staff

Cathy S. Seggel, M.T.S., Director of Religious Education; Marcia Taylor, Youth Music Director; Dana Guterman, DRE Assistant; Kate Guilbault, Sunday Assistant; Sally Ann Dilorio, Nursery Coordinator; Kiera and Katherine Wilhelm, Childcare Staff; Chelsea Waite, Playcircle staff

## The 2009-2010 Church School Year:

### Teacher Teams, RE Liaisons, and Curriculum

#### Origins (0-24months)

RE Committee Liaison: Tricia Wilhelm  
Staff: Sally Diorio, Kiera Wilhelm, Katherine Wilhelm, Erin Capra

#### Play Circle (2-3-1/2 years): *Celebrating Me and My World*

RE Committee Liaison: Tricia Wilhelm  
Staff: Chelsea Waite  
Volunteer Teachers: Tricia Wilhelm, Amy House, Samantha Sasse

#### Pre-K (3-1/2-4 Yrs): *We Are Many, We Are One*

RE Committee Liaison: Tricia Wilhelm  
Teachers: Cindy Hiatt, Charlie Hunt, Emily Sasse, Heidi Vasquez (Joe Grady, Sub)

#### Kindergarten: *Creating Home*

RE Committee Liaison: Kathy Ahlquist  
Teachers: Kathy Ahlquist, Dena Quilici, Sarah Sasse, Liz Palter (1/month), Sarah Capelli

#### 1st/2nd Grades: *Wonderful Welcome and Treasure Hunting*

RE Committee Liaison: Jenn Karl  
Teachers: Kristin Curry, April O'Malley, Chris Matos, Dee Bento

#### 3rd Grade: *Moral Tales*

RE Committee Liaison: Lisa Voutes  
Teachers: Cynthia Rosengard, Morgan Ivens-Duran, Carol Drewes, Michael Capelli

#### 4th Grade: *Bibleodeon*

RE Committee Liaison: Susan Harrison  
Teachers: Paul Brule, Glenn Wurz, Ariadne Greenberg, Erin Lawson

#### 5th Grade: *Toolbox Of Faith and UU Traditions*

RE Committee Liaison: Roberta Groch  
Teachers: Noelle Walters, Philip Swayze, Michael Dawkins, Ellen Anderson

#### 6th/7th Grades

RE Committee Liaison: Sally Caruso  
Teachers: Norm Seggel, Judy Bowden, Lenny Bento, Tamara Barney, Deb Mcdade

#### 8th Grade: *Coming Of Age*

RE Committee Liaison: Amy Webb  
Teachers: Odile Mattiauda, Rita Rossi, Jim Edwards, Tom Epstein  
Mentor Coordinator: Anne Connor

#### Senior High Youth Group (10th-12th Grades)

RE Committee Liaison: Jon Henson  
Teachers: Maia Bailey, Cindy Bapties, Dorothy Fibriger, Lach Franquemont, Joe Killilea

## Development and Finance Fair

Sunday, October 4 during Coffee Hour

The Development and Finance Ministry includes the Stewardship Committee (which plans the annual canvass), the Finance and Investment Committee (which oversees the activities of our endowments), and the Buildings and Grounds Committee (which maintains our physical plant). Together, we serve as stewards of our historic buildings, our financial legacy, and our support of the programs and operations that make up the life of First Unitarian.

While it is not hard to imagine why many people could be drawn to learn more about the endowment and architectural aspects of the Development and Finance Ministry, some people are in the habit of running in the other direction whenever they learn that the Stewardship Committee is present. Given that they are mostly aware of us during the annual fund drive, this may not be surprising.

The Stewardship Committee will not use the Ministry Fair as a time for fundraising, or for asking anything of you other than your interest and enthusiasm for all that is made possible by your financial participation in this congregation. It will be an opportunity to learn about our committee, about where your pledge dollars go, why your contributions are important, and (if you are interested) how you might be able to help with specific tasks (many of which are non-fundraising tasks) to further the health of the congregation. We look forward to seeing you on October 4.

The Finance and Development Ministry Fair will present the opportunity for interested First Unitarian members to learn how this ministry supports the work of the church and how interested members will be able to volunteer to become involved.

We look forward to seeing you on October 4!



## Sight Lines

In June, I attended my first GA (General Assembly) of the Unitarian Universalist Association, which occurred in Salt Lake City, Utah. I found it exhilarating to spend four days in the company of several thousand UUs from all over the world, particularly in the large plenary gatherings where we did the work of the Association. Here, I heard the proposed changes to the UU Principles debated and then narrowly voted down without rancor on either side. I was most moved when the youth and then the young adult caucuses spoke passionately in favor of the changes. Our movement excels in empowering our youth and young adults to think for themselves and to advocate for their beliefs. In addition, the worship services with most attendees gathered together were incredibly inspiring. Singing "Gather the Spirit" with over a thousand UUs is quite an experience!

The "big event" of the Assembly was the election of Rev. Peter Morales as the new president of the Association. We hope that he will fill our pulpit before the year is out so that you can hear his vision for our movement.

I spent most of my time at GA attending a two-day workshop on good governance in churches as preparation for my year as president of First Unitarian. This workshop focused on a model called Policy Governance, which many UU churches have adopted and which our church has been studying. In organizations using Policy Governance, the board focuses on identifying the core values and mission of the organization and on seeing that the church's programs emerge from those values.

My take-away from my time spent in the GA workshop is that we all share in the governance of our church. We try to live out our beliefs both in our activities within the church, be it in worship, community gatherings, social justice activities, or cleaning up the church grounds, as well as in the world at large.

I believe that our board (the Prudential Committee, fondly called the PruComm) already does this to a large extent. But we need to hear from you - I, and the other members of the PruComm, want to know what you most value and how our community can improve how we live out our mission and dreams.

Martha Rice Sanders, President  
pres@firstunitarianprov.org





## Community Life and Heritage

### October All-Parish Supper

*Friday, October 16 (Note the date: one week later than usual)*

Everyone - young and old and in-between - is invited to the All-Parish suppers.

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

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

**7:45p Program: The Best of Atwater and Donnelly**

Our after-dinner program features the talented and popular folk artists Aubrey Atwater and Elwood Donnelly, who will bring us a performance of American and Celtic folk songs, a cappella pieces, hymns, dance tunes, and original works. They have chosen their best and favorite numbers to perform for us and will encourage audience participation. Their career as a team stems back to the late 1980s when they were part of our church family. Aubrey and Elwood are excited to be performing for us again. Don't miss this outstanding musical event!

Reservations for this event are requested. Please fill out the form in the Meeting House Times and leave it at the church office, call the church office at 401.421.7970, or see Jim Estey at Coffee Hour. Childcare is available for toddlers and young children if requested. Call Jim Estey at 401.351.1748 to sign up.

### November All-Parish Supper

*Friday, November 13, 2009*

**Program: Pearls, Politics, and Power: The Challenges Women Face in Public Life**

Our after-dinner program will consist of an exciting and thought-provoking dramatic presentation by a group of Rhode Island actresses known as the Living Literature performers. Their words will be those of some of America's famous female political figures, such as Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, and Diane Feinstein. How have these women coped with the stresses of public life and how have they made change happen? What are the barriers that make it difficult for women and girls to think of themselves as future politicians . . . or future presidents? A discussion involving the actresses and the audience will follow. Please plan to be there.

### October Saturday Socials

*Saturday, October 24*

These Saturday evening potluck suppers are for adults, except where noted. Newcomers, old-timers, and in-betweeners who would like to meet new friends in the congregation are all welcome to participate.

#### In the East Bay . . .

Host: Katy Killilea  
19 Martin Avenue  
Barrington, Rhode Island  
6:00p Social Hour

7:00p Dinner

Katy requests that guests help her experiment with how wonderful a menu of only local foods can be. Remember to bring your own beverage.

#### On the East Side . . .

Hosts: Neil and Cheryl Bartholomew  
357 Rochambeau Avenue  
Providence, Rhode Island  
6:00p Social Hour

7:00p Dinner

Please bring your own beverage.

Space is limited and reservations are required. For reservations, menu planning, and directions for both dinners, call Carol Adams (401.433.4365) in advance.

### Knitting Connection

*Every Tuesday, 7:00p*

Join other knitters and crocheters in the congregation for an evening of crafting and conversation. Share your techniques, skills, and ideas. Beginners are always welcome!

Contact: Julie Meyers (kelmey@cox.net)

### Be a Coffee Hour Baker

The generous amount of baked goods each Sunday comes from people in the congregation who bake or buy goodies for Coffee Hour for all of us to enjoy. Sign up at the table in the first parlor any Sunday during Coffee Hour. You will go home with a reminder so you won't forget!

Janet Downing Taylor is now signing up volunteers for October and November: it takes six people each Sunday to keep up with the ravenous crowd! Besides cookies, brownies, fruit and nut breads, remember that cheese, crackers, sandwich squares, or bite-size fruit pieces are welcome also.

### Save these Dates!

#### Saturday Socials and

#### Round-the-Table Dinners

*December 5, 2009 (Round-the-Table)*

*January 23; February 27, March 27, April 24 (RTT), May 29, June 26, 2010*



## Membership News

Katy Killilea, Membership Coordinator

After meeting so many newcomers over the summer, it was great to see them mixing right in to the big group when so many of us gathered on the front lawn the morning of September 13.

After church that day, Jenn Nardone led the Fellowship, Membership, and RE Committees in throwing an awesome ice cream social. Joe's Backyard Band performed, while brownies galore and ten gallons (=128 cups=256 servings) of luscious French vanilla were scooped and served. Reunited friends hugging, skirts twirling, and children eating cones filled exclusively with sprinkles were all witnessed. It was a good time!

As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, coming up on October 10 will be the first Path to Membership class of the church year. The class is geared toward all of those who are considering membership or who want to know more about UUism or how to become part of our church. Everyone is welcome!

As much as ever, friendly greeters are needed for Sunday mornings. Please contact me at [mem@firstunitarianprov.org](mailto:mem@firstunitarianprov.org) to volunteer. This is a fun and easy job and offers the opportunity to meet new people both newcomers and old/medium-timers. I am running a special in October: anyone who volunteers without being asked directly will get a yummy prize!

## A First Unitarian Bed and Breakfast Program?

Are you interested in a new way to become more involved with the church? Starting up a B&B program here seems like a delightful venture that would also raise money for the church. Many UU churches have a B&B program, and Providence seems an excellent place to have one, too. There are lots of parents who want to visit their children studying here (or hoping to study here) and we have WaterFire drawing visitors in the spring and summer months, plus many other attractions in our beautiful city.

**How it works:** People in the congregation sign up to host visiting UUs for overnight stays in their home. Hosts, who provide a bedroom and breakfast, enjoy getting to know fellow UUs from around the country and the world. The guest fees are paid to the church.

Contact Ginny Fox ([ginfox32@yahoo.com](mailto:ginfox32@yahoo.com)).



## Community Life and Heritage

### Community Life and Heritage Ministry Fair

Sunday, October 25 during Coffee Hour

The mission of our Community Life and Heritage Ministry is 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. The committees in this ministry include Membership, Fellowship, Lay Ministry, the Deacons, and the Women's Alliance

To learn about these and other opportunities, please come to the Spiritual Development Ministry Fair during Coffee Hour on October 25.

### Path to Membership Class

Saturday, October 10, 9:00a -12:00p

The Path to Membership class is for those interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism its values, history, and principles and about the First Unitarian Church and its programs and people. Current members of the congregation are also welcome to attend to meet newcomers and learn more about your church.

The class is led by Rev. James Ford, Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education, and Katy Killilea, Membership Coordinator. Brunch is prepared and served by the Deacons, There is an opportunity to join the congregation at the close of the class.

Childcare is provided for those who reserve in advance.

Registration is required by Monday, October 5. Please indicate the age of children you will bring.

Contact: Katy Killilea at [mem@firstunitarianprov.org](mailto:mem@firstunitarianprov.org) or call the church office at 401.421.7970.

### The Women's Alliance

Monday, October 5

Program and luncheon, 11:00a

The Women's Alliance is looking forward to stimulating programs, warm companionship, and good food this year. Our monthly gatherings are open to all.

The scheduled speaker for our first meeting is Roz Chua, Professor of Music emerita from Providence College, who will talk about how a Philippine-born Chinese woman ended up in Boston and Providence. The program is followed by a catered luncheon.

Board members meet at 9:30a; our monthly Business Meeting is at 10:30a.

Our dues are \$20 per year, and we invite you to become a member if you are not yet a member. The 2009-2010 Alliance Directory and Calendar, which includes a listing of the programs for the year, membership names and addresses, etc., is available to anyone who would like to have one; call the church office at 401.421.7970 to get a copy.

Contact: Alliance President Nancy Libby-Fisher (401.751.4298 or [nancylibbyfisher@aol.com](mailto:nancylibbyfisher@aol.com))

### Reiki I Training to Benefit the Women's Alliance

Saturday October 31, 10:00a -4:30p

Reiki is an easy-to-learn, time-honored healing method that produces beneficial physiological changes, as verified by NIH-funded scientific research. Reiki is offered by many hospitals for pain management and stress reduction.

Maureen Johanson will lead a Reiki Level I training, focused on self-healing. Maureen is a Reiki Master Teacher and former faculty member of the Barbara Brennan School of Healing in New York. Maureen will be in the foyer after church services on October 18, to answer questions and take registrations.

The fee is \$90, with all proceeds to benefit the Women's Alliance charitable programs. Advance registration required. Class limit: 6 students

Contact: Maureen Johanson (401.751.2001 or [eastsidewellness@comcast.net](mailto:eastsidewellness@comcast.net))



## Spiritual Development

### Spiritual Development Ministry Fair

Sunday, October 18 during Coffee Hour

The mission of our Spiritual Development Ministry is to uplift, inspire, and heal the mind, body, and spirit over one's lifespan by challenging and surprising members on their spiritual growth or journey. Ways to become involved in this ministry include volunteering to be a religious education teacher, participating in a Chalice Circle, singing in the choir, joining an ongoing discussion group, or ushering on Sunday mornings.

To learn about these and other opportunities, please come to the Spiritual Development Ministry Fair during Coffee Hour on October 18.

### Sample the Experience of Chalice Circles

Sunday, October 11, 11:30p

The activity previously known as Small Group Ministry will now go by the name of Chalice Circles!

Chalice Circles will still be a discussion group led by trained facilitators for six to ten people. It will still be about connecting to other members of the congregation in a personal way. It will still be a chance to ponder the mysteries of the universe and expand your spiritual journey.

Most Chalice Circles meet on a bi-weekly basis from October to December and February to May. Each meeting is usually two hours long; however, Chalice Circle schedules are open to an infinite number of possibilities. There is a Chalice Circle to fit everyone's schedule and all are welcome!

On October 11, you'll have an opportunity to participate in a Chalice Circle Sampler! For a half-hour after church, anyone can experience a brief sample of what it is like to be in a Chalice Circle.

Chalice Circles are forming now! For those who have tried to participate in the past and were not able to be placed in a group, for whatever reason, please try again!

Sign up at the Chalice Circle table in the Atrium after church, or e-mail Katy Killilea at [katykillilea@yahoo.com](mailto:katykillilea@yahoo.com) or Dianne Mailloux at [mailloux2@cox.net](mailto:mailloux2@cox.net) Leave your name, contact information, and your preferred days and times of availability to meet in a Chalice Circle.

### First Unitarian Women's Chorus

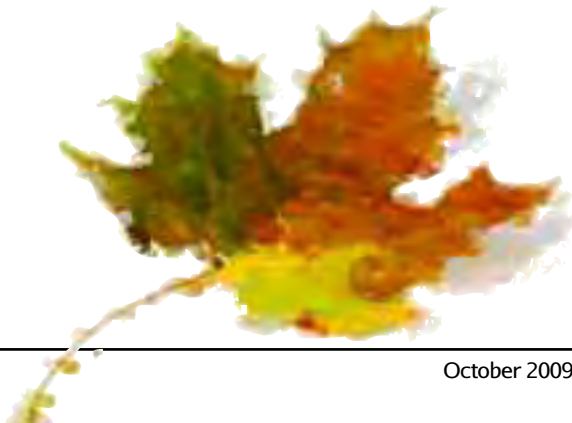
Sundays, October 11, 18, 25, November 1, 8, 15 at 12 noon

This is an opportunity for women of all ages (including teens) to get together to sing. Director Beth Armstrong has many years of experience singing in 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!

Advance registration is requested.

Contact: Beth Armstrong at [bestar3@aol.com](mailto:bestar3@aol.com)



### Continuing Programs

Unless otherwise indicated, programs are held in the Parish House and advance registration is not required.

#### Benevolent Street Zendo:

#### An Ongoing Zen Meditation Group

Every Monday at 7:00p

Brief instruction is available at 6:45p.

Boundless Way 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 also Unitarian Universalists.)

All are welcome. We are a member community of the Boundless Way Zen Sangha; visit [www.boundlesswayzen.org](http://www.boundlesswayzen.org) for more information.

Contacts: Jan Seymour-Ford and James Ford ([benevolentstreetzendo@gmail.com](mailto:benevolentstreetzendo@gmail.com))

#### Reimagining Religion

Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7:00p

In *Wrestling with God*, Lloyd Geering observes that the longevity of the Judaeo-Christian theological tradition resulted from its brilliant mythological description of the human condition. "But because we have now moved into a radically new age and express ourselves in a non-mythical medium," he argues, "it has now become necessary to enunciate a completely fresh world theology, . . . drawing appreciatively from all religious traditions . . . in the light of our new knowledge of the universe." Reimagining Religion seeks to employ the best recent scholarship in coming to grips with issues raised by radically new developments in the study of religion and achieving a fuller appreciation of what religious literacy entails in the twenty-first century.

Contact: Tom Hall (401.647.2925 or [tw2nd@aol.com](mailto:tw2nd@aol.com))

#### UUMeN

Third Sunday (note the later date),  
October 18, 7:00 - 9:00p

Topic: Flomax and Viagra: Men Getting Older  
We are all getting older. What happens to us as we age? What does it mean to be aging? Is aging the same for everybody? Are there ways to do it better? How can we as men support each other in the aging process? This UU Men's Group meets monthly for discussion and fellowship. All interested men are welcome.

October's Facilitator: Dr. Steven McCloy  
(401.244.5321)

## Spiritual Cinema

*Third Sunday, October 18, 7:00 - 9:00p*

Featured film: *The Dhamma Brothers - East Meets West in the Deep South*

An overcrowded maximum-security prison in Alabama is dramatically changed by the influence of an ancient meditation program. Behind security towers, barbed wire, and electric fence dwell a host of convicts who will never see the light of day. But for some of these men, a spark is ignited when it becomes the first prison in North America to hold a Vipassana retreat, a deeply demanding course of silent meditation lasting ten days. This provocative film candidly documents the mixed emotions and institutional conflicts aroused by the introduction of a Buddhist practice in a predominantly Christian prison.

Michael Currier and Ted Martin, two members of the congregation who are students of this meditation practice, will be available after the film for the discussion period.

Contact: Marilyn Eanet (401.433.1299 or meanet@cox.net) or Maureen Johanson (508.557.1173); more information at [www.spiritualcinema.com](http://www.spiritualcinema.com)

## Gaia's Hearth - CUUPS (Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans)

*First Thursday, October 1, 7:00 - 8:30p*

Gaia's Hearth was formed to promote:

- Networking among pagan-identified UUs and providing outreach of Unitarian Universalism to the local pagan community;
- Providing educational materials on paganism for our home congregation, First Unitarian Church of Providence, and the general public;
- Promoting interfaith dialogue, based on Earth- and nature-centered religious and spiritual perspectives;
- Encouraging greater use of music, dance, visual arts, poetry, story, and creative ritual in Unitarian Universalist worship and celebration;
- Providing support for pagan-identified UU religious professionals and ministerial students; and
- Fostering healing relationships with our mother Earth and all her children.

Contact: Artemis Ezikovich (nimuix@cox.net)



## Spiritual Development

### What's Up with All the God Talk?

### A Discussion for Theists, Atheists, and Agnostics

*Thursday, October 15, 7:00 - 8:30p*

In the middle of the twentieth century, it was possible for a Unitarian minister to lose her or his job for using the word God in the pulpit. Not 20 years ago, our current minister, James Ford, was approached by concerned members of the congregation he was serving, asking him to be more circumspect about being an atheist.

This evening James will make a brief presentation, to be followed by a discussion of the issues of God-talk in contemporary UU congregations.

Leader: Rev. James Ford

## Yoga for Anxiety and Depression

*Tuesday, October 20, 7:00p*

Anxiety and depression go hand in hand. Anxiety revs you up and burns up your energy, leaving you depleted and depressed. Simple and effective yogic techniques can help ease anxiety and elevate your mood. In this two-hour class, you will have an opportunity to learn about a basic yogic model of human energy that has a strong correlation with Western understanding of physiology. Experience the effects of calming and nourishing practices.

Teacher Karen Lee is a registered yoga therapist and owner of Breathing Time Yoga.

Registration requested but not required.

Contact: Karen Lee at 401.421.9876

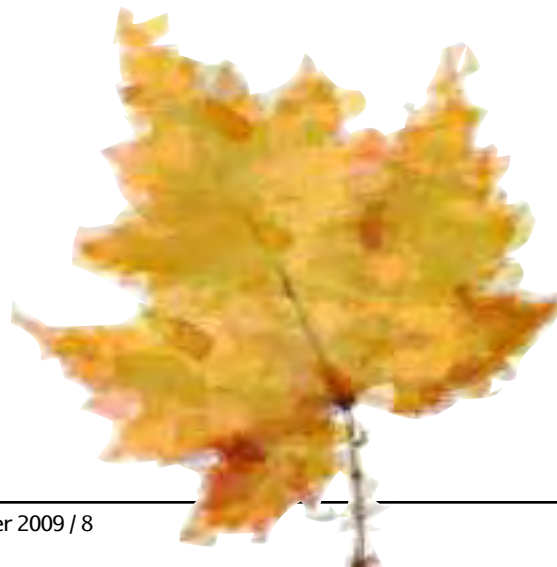
## A Principled Life

### A Conversation about the UU Principles

*Thursday, October 29, 7:00 - 8:30p*

The conversation begin with a brief overview of the current version of the UU Principles, with particular focus on the assertions about the worth of the individual and our being part of an interdependent web through the lens of the call to a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. We will then launch into a discussion of what these principles might actually mean for us as contemporary Unitarian Universalists.

Leaders: Rev. James Ford and Cathy Seggel, DRE





## Social Justice

### Volunteer Opportunities with Our Food Pantry Community

*Third Monday, October 19*

Community Food Share, our First U food pantry, serves more than 125 families each month and the numbers continue to rise. We need some hearty volunteers to help make it happen. Some very special volunteers have stepped down from the Pantry, which means we need your help all the more! So sign up for our next distribution day and find out what we do.

**We need shoppers!** Each week we purchase food at very reduced rates from the RI Food Bank in Cranston and transport it to First U. Currently we have only two volunteer shoppers transporting 400-1,000 lbs a week. To do this rewarding work you will need:

*Time* for one trip during the work week once or twice a month

*A strong back!*

*A vehicle* (van or hatchback) is helpful, but we can also hook you up with another driver. New volunteers will go with an experienced shopper to learn the ropes. Partnering with a friend also helps share the load.

**Distribution Day:** Third Monday of each month

1:00-3:00p - Set-up for our clients

3:00-5:00p - Distribution: assisting clients in making their selections

5:00-6:00p - Restock and clean-up

**Food Drive Coordinator:** We need a food drive coordinator to help raise awareness of food needs in the pantry and help facilitate various food drive efforts within the First Unitarian community.

**Food Donations:** Currently less than 1 percent of the food we distribute comes from direct donations from our congregation. As the demands on our state Food Bank continue to rise it is incumbent upon our congregation to try to contribute more. We would like to encourage everyone to consider opportunities for small food drives within our community. Through your office, school class, scouts, etc., small food drives can make a big difference.

To donate directly, we have a few guidelines that help to ensure safety and support the most needed items for our pantry.

**No glass, please!** We transport food several times throughout the month through shuttles and distribution. Glass products increase the risk of injury and clean up issues that we need to avoid.

**Needed staples:** We are grateful for all donations, but here are key items that are most helpful (and most costly for the food pantry to provide). Size recommendations are to help standardize storage and avoid complications at distribution.

**Protein items:** Peanut butter (18-24 oz. plastic jars)

Canned chicken or tuna (5-8 oz. cans)

Tomato sauce - meat or vegetarian (16-24 oz. cans)

Cereal and oatmeal (18 oz. or standard - not oversized - boxes)

Ground coffee and black tea - caffeinated or decaf (12 oz-1 lb.)

Please leave items in the barrel in the Meeting House entryway or contact Amy Webb for larger donations.

You can also leave your name and contact information with the office and we will call you.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who help (and will help) make this much needed service happen each month!

To help with shopping, contact Amy Webb (amy.webb7@verizon.net or 401.454.5929)

To help with distribution, contact Elesa Amand (elesa2@verizon.net)

### Village Bank

#### Global Poverty - You Can Make a Difference!



The Village Bank, First Unitarian's micro-finance project, will be working on its fifth bank this year. We have already established two banks in Guatemala and two in Haiti. This work is done through your generous contributions and the sale of fair-trade crafts. Our small committee would really appreciate the participation of several others in selecting the products and setting up and conducting our craft sale in early December.



For information about Village Banks, check out the website of our coordinating organization, FINCA at [www.villagebanking.org](http://www.villagebanking.org).

Contacts: Polly Walker (pwalker41@cox.net)

Marilyn Eanet (meanet@cox.net)



## Welcoming Congregation at First Unitarian Ongoing Plans

In June, First Unitarian voted to become an official UUA Welcoming Congregation. Potential visitors searching the UUA website now find the rainbow chalice symbol next to our church's name. The First Unitarian Welcoming Congregation Committee plans to publicize our new status by adding the symbol to our website, hanging a banner (or two) on the church building, and reaching out to the community with media announcements. We plan also to host a beautiful photo exhibit featuring BGLT families and to sponsor at least one workshop about transgender issues this year.

We're looking forward to a dynamic year, standing for and on the side of love! (see more below).

## Standing on the Side of Love

Standing on the Side of Love (SSL, pronounced "sizzle") is a new program introduced by the Unitarian Universalist Association in General Assembly in Salt Lake City. It challenges UUs to speak out and act for justice against oppression, and bigotry. Specifically targeted are injustices aimed at BGLT people, the immigrant community, and people of color. SSL challenges us to stand up as UUs and to go further by forging partnerships with other denominations and community groups.

A number of us are enthusiastic about this program, and ideas are starting to crackle. One of the first possibilities is a rally for marriage equality at the State House on October 11. This is National Coming-Out Day, and it's a great opportunity to come out and stand for love and civil rights.

Stay tuned for announcements and, in the meantime, read more about the UUA's Standing on the Side of Love program at [www.standingonthesideoflove.org](http://www.standingonthesideoflove.org).



## Social Justice

### Eviction and Foreclosure Forum

*Sunday, October 4 at 12:15p in the Parish House Auditorium*

The Neighborhood Social Justice Committee (NSJC) is sponsoring a forum on the legal rights and community resources available to those who are facing foreclosure, or tenant eviction due to foreclosure. Like many in the rest of the state, if you aren't facing the possibility of an eviction or foreclosure yourself, then you know someone who is. Did you know that in 2008, over 2,338 evictions happened in Rhode Island; that nearly 6,000 people were forced to move due to foreclosures; and that this crisis has disproportionately affected neighborhoods with high Black and Latino populations - the same low-income neighborhoods that were targeted by the predatory lenders that are largely responsible for this crisis?

Organizers from Providence's grassroots Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE) will lead a discussion about the current crisis, about many of the legal rights and community resources that homeowners and renters have, and about how we at First Unitarian can do something concrete to help those facing eviction or foreclosure in a very effective and substantive way - and with only a few hours of effort. DARE's mission is to organize low-income families in communities of color to win economic, social, and political justice. DARE's organizers are currently the only ones organizing homeowners and renters facing eviction/foreclosure, supporting the grassroots RI Bank Foreclosure and Tenant Association formed by the homeowners and renters who joined together for mutual support, and working with the Legal Aid Society to change the laws in RI to help provide protections to those facing evictions and foreclosure do to predatory lending.

The NSJC's mission is to provide spiritual growth opportunities to the members of First Unitarian through service to others who are facing social, legal, or economic injustice. Our next regular meeting is on Sunday, October 18 after services.

Contact: David St. Germain at 401.536.0715 or [ridavidstgermain@gmail.com](mailto:ridavidstgermain@gmail.com)

## 350.Org's World Climate Awareness Day: Workshops and Write-a-thon

*Saturday, October 24, 9:00a -12:00p in the Parish House*


Want to help tackle the world climate crisis? Join us for a morning of workshops and a write-a-thon as part of 350.Org's World Climate Awareness Day. Our event's objective is to raise awareness about the need to reduce atmospheric CO<sup>2</sup> from the current level of 388 ppm (parts per million) to less than 350 ppm, the safe upper limit for CO<sup>2</sup>. The workshops will educate participants in ways to limit their own CO<sup>2</sup> emissions, push for policy change, and affect public opinion through networking and newspaper OpEd pieces.

A write-a-thon will be held during and after the workshops for the production of letters to national leaders. The letters will urge our leaders to act at the December 2009 Copenhagen World Climate Conference to establish emission standards reducing CO<sup>2</sup> to less than 350 ppm by the year 2050. Knowledgeable letter writers will be encouraged to include suggestions on how CO<sup>2</sup> reduction can be accomplished with measures such as replacement of fossil fuels with renewable energy technology and energy conservation measures. Participants will leave the event with a better idea of both what to do individually and how to advocate for policy change.

To help with the event, contact David House ([dlhouse51@comcast.net](mailto:dlhouse51@comcast.net))

October 2009

"In seeking truth you have to get both sides of a story." -Walter Cronkite

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<u>1</u> Deacons 6:00p Gaia's Hearth 7:00p Stewardship Committee 7:00p	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u> BCD Fall Conference
<u>4</u> Covenant 9:30a Sunday Service 10:30a Finance Ministry Fair 11:30a COA Parent Orientation 12:00p NSJC 12:15p BUUUG 7:00p	<u>5</u> Women's Alliance Benevolent Street Zendo 7:00p	<u>6</u> Knitters 7:00p	<u>7</u> Prudential Committee 6:00p Fellowship Committee 6:30p	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u> Path to Membership Class 9:00a -12:30p
<u>11</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Chalice Circle Sampler 11:30a Women's Chorus 12:00p BUUUG 7:00p	<u>12</u> COLUMBUS DAY Benevolent Street Zendo 7:00p	<u>13</u> Covenant 7:00p Reimagining Religion 7:00p Knitters 7:00p	<u>14</u> Chalice Circle Facilitators 5:30p Religious Education Committee 5:30p	<u>15</u> Personnel Committee 12:00p God Talk 7:00p Stewardship Committee 7:00p	<u>16</u> Parish Supper 5:45p	<u>17</u>
<u>18</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Spiritual Ministry Fair 11:30a Membership 11:30a Women's Chorus 12:00p Mentor Orient. 12:15p BUUUG 7:00p UU Men 7:00p Spiritual Cinema 7:00p	<u>19</u> Food Pantry 4:00p Benevolent Street Zendo 7:00p Nominating Committee 7:00p	<u>20</u> Yoga 7:00p Knitters 7:00p	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u> Co6tvenant 7:00p	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u> 350.org Workshop 9:00a-12:00p Saturday Social Suppers
<u>25</u> Sunday Service 10:30a Community Life Fair 11:30a Women's Chorus 12:00p BUUUG 7:00p	<u>26</u> Benevolent Street Zendo 7:00p	<u>27</u> Reimagining Religion 7:00pm Knitters 7:00p	<u>28</u> Executive Committee 7:00p	<u>29</u> UU Principles 7:00p	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>

First U Providence Women

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Email: [min@firstunitarianprov.org](mailto:min@firstunitarianprov.org)  
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[mem@firstunitarianprov.org](mailto:mem@firstunitarianprov.org)



*The covenant book of the First Unitarian Church of Providence holds signatures of members from 1822 to the present, as well as the names of members since 1762.*

## Revisiting Our Covenant

This year, we as a congregation will be revisiting our covenant (see James's column on page 2 for the rationale). There will be three phases to the process.

During the fall, there will be several opportunities to join small-group discussions that will provide valuable input for updating the covenant. These discussions will focus on the nature of a congregational covenant and what should be at the core of our particular congregation's covenant.

On December 20, during our Sunday service, a Covenant Writers Group will receive the material generated from the small-group meetings. This will mark the start of their work to distill all of our input into a draft covenant.

In late February, a draft covenant will be presented to the congregation and on Sunday February 28, following Sunday service, a Congregational Conversation will be held to discuss the draft. Following the discussion, the Covenant Writers Group will finalize a proposed covenant to present for a vote at the congregation's April annual meeting.

The first and very important step in this process will be for everyone to participate in one of the small group discussions. Please be sure to register for one of the following sessions, all to be held in the Parish House:

- Sunday, October 4 at 9:00a
- Tuesday, October 13 at 7:00p
- Thursday, October 22 at 7:00p
- Sunday, November 8 at noon

You can register by calling the office at 401.421.7970.

Please be sure to sign up today!

The Covenant Committee: Cy O'Neil, chair; Carol Adams, Marilyn Eanet, Ted Martin, Rita Rossi

The Covenant Writers Group: Rev. James Ford, Margaret Balch-Gonzalez, Stephen Koelz, Martha Manno