



# First Universalist Society of Salem

211 BRIDGE STREET, SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS • JANUARY 2009

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

Rev. Marjorie Matty, Minister

*Hope for the Future  
a Strategic Plan*

I have never felt so hopeful in the face of adversity in my life. Is it just me or does this time in history feel somewhat paradoxical? To be facing incredible economic challenges, poverty, hunger, homelessness and a broken system in this country and yet to feel that we have the potential to make incredible change, if the right team is in place and we are all committed to working together for the common good. We can aspire to build a system that responds to the needs of all its citizens. What does it take to create and hold such a culture of hope, to live with the belief that one person, a team of people and a country that is well-informed and well-lead could in fact change for the better? In my opinion it begins with faith. Easy for me to say (I am a spiritual person) that in fact it can be done, that one person can in fact make a difference in the face of insurmountable adversity. And with this deep-seated faith I believe that we must be ready to respond to a call to action that we will receive in the coming days, months and years. It will take

each one of us working together to change the course of history. I am reminded of other times that have come before when change for the better did happen. I am reminded of Franklin D. Roosevelt bringing this country out of the Great Depression of the 1930's and his "New Deal," which saved a people. I am reminded of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s musing about "Having a Dream" where children of all colors would stand together in the beloved community and the ensuing civil rights movement and the push for racial justice. I think of where we have been and where we are today and I concede that there is still much work to be done but I have faith and I too have a dream for our future. My dream is small; it begins with our ability to believe in our future as a religious community, to have faith and then to work together to build a healthier and more vibrant Church. But my dream does not stop there. It expands out and has us working together to improve the city of Salem and eventually sharing a message of hope with the world in our own unique way.

Building a healthier and more vibrant religious community may seem like a tall order, taking lots of resources and focus. It begins with us planning for our future, then taking the steps together to realize our dreams and to build the community that we envision. If we start here at home and just stay the course one task, step and goal at a time we will eventually expand our efforts beyond the walls of our spiritual home.

So this month as we focus on our theme of "Hope," lets us create some. Let us be reminded that we affect our individual lives and the world with our thoughts and our actions. I ask you to be mindful of what we hope for as we enter into one of the most intense phases of this process of strategic planning that we will encounter here at First Universalist. Be certain that you will be contacted by a sub-

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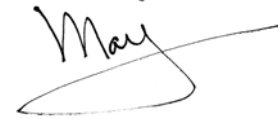
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committee of the strategic planning task force and they will ask you to dream with them and to help them to set goals for the next five years. I invite you to dare to dream in the next two months, to think big and

outside of old paradigms... I ask you to wonder about what a spiritual community might look like that would engage you deeply and help you to change your life for the better and then let's get to work and build that beloved community together.

I love what Gandhi once said, "Be the change that we want to see in the world." The time has come for us to be so bold.

In faithful service,



Rev. Marjorie J. Matty

## UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

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

### January 11<sup>th</sup>

*YouTube Sunday*

This Sunday will be comprised of three small sermons of 5 minutes or less which will be filmed and uploaded on YouTube. The topics will revolve around Faith, Hope and Love in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in a secular society. Wikipedia describes YouTube as "a video sharing website where users can upload, view and share video clips."

Noon – A Special Meeting about Coffee Hour. Details on page 7.

### January 18<sup>th</sup>

*Identity*

What is it, how is it foisted upon us and how can we communicate who we are to others.

### January 25<sup>th</sup>

Our guest in the pulpit is Rev. Megan Lynes

**Time to bring back Guest At Your Table Boxes! Please make sure to fill out your box and make checks payable to UUSC**

### *Our Mission Statement*

*We are a vibrant, loving church community rooted in a tradition of liberal religious thought.*

*We come together from many religious traditions, seeking spiritual and personal truths.*

*We live our faith and Unitarian Universalist Purposes and Principles by working for social justice and by actively engaging in worship, service and education.*



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

We welcome people with disabilities. We are partially accessible and striving to become more so. Please call the church office for specific information.

### Staff

Minister: Rev. Marjorie Matty

Chair of the Board of Trustees: Christine DiSaia

Director of Religious Education: Mandy Neff

Choir Director: Donna Murphy

Accompanist: Michael Mazurkiewicz

Nursery Attendant: Mary Radziewicz

Sexton: Jane Camarda

Church Administrator: Rosa Palomino

## DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

With January comes a mix of wanting to hunker down and recover from the busy holiday season, and the urge to create new goals and get a start on them. This month in RE, the kids will be able to indulge either impulse as they can choose what they're most interested in from our month of special offerings. Please take a few moments to read through this list with your child and help them figure out what they would like to participate in. The offerings this January include:

### Artist Funshop with Kathryn Baptista and Beth Toolan

Spend Sunday mornings playing with arts and crafts. Have fun with beads, clay, color and other fun things. CREATE!

### The Play's the Thing with Denise Regan

The children who select this session will perform in a wonderful play at the end of January! We will make costumes, the set, and rehearse. The selection of the play will depend on the age and number of children. Possible choices are "Fredrick," "Peter Rabbit," or an original production.

### Outdoor Adventures with Liz Duff

January 18th: What animals live in the forest? Winter tracks let us know. Liz Duff will be introducing the older children to some simple ways of recognizing mammal track patterns, and other evidence that wild animals have been about.

Following the church service you are invited to join us on a tracking adventure following the trail behind the South Campus of Salem State College, in the "Forest River Conservation Area." Off Loring Avenue; behind the South Campus of Salem State. Please dress for the weather. Hats, scarves, boots, and mittens are

recommended. Bring a bag lunch to eat in the car on our way over. Church members of all ages are welcome to join us! Please RSVP to Liz if you know you intend to join her at [lduff@massaudubon.org](mailto:lduff@massaudubon.org).

January 25th: Are you willing to share with the Polar Bears? Liz Duff will teach the Older children a song that invites us to take simple actions to share our planet with all species. We will create simple reminders to help us remember these actions in our daily life.

Look for other offerings to come!

I look forward to enjoying some creative time with all of you this January.

Mandy Neff  
Director of Religious Education  
[mandyneff@verizon.net](mailto:mandyneff@verizon.net)  
(781) 481-9232

## SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

### **ECCO Salem – Please Join Us!**

The next meeting of the Essex County Community Organization (ECCO) will be on Wednesday, January 14 at 7 PM at the Tabernacle Congregational Church at the corner of Essex and Washington Streets. ECCO is a faith-based community organization which includes ministers and congregants from a number of congregations, including several other UU churches. Everyone is welcome to attend. The January meeting will concentrate on identifying what community issues are most important to the various congregations. Eventually one or two issues will be chosen to work on.

Please consider joining me at this meeting. If you can't make it, but have a community issue that's important to you that you would like me to bring to the meeting, please contact me at [brickradio@aol.com](mailto:brickradio@aol.com) or (617) 548-0385.

Jan Brick  
Social Justice Committee

## AESTHETICS COMMITTEE

The newly formed aesthetics committee would like to introduce ourselves and give you an idea of what we are doing. We are charged by the Board of Trustees to make sure our church is a welcoming place. Many committees already do this in their own way. Our committee will focus on the appearance and feel of the church as a whole.

Some of the issues we have already talked about are:

- is the church warm enough? Can we get heaters for the hallway so that people are warmed as they enter our church.
- what kind of Christmas decorations do we want?
- what permanent symbols or objects should be in the sanctuary?
- should windows in a church have curtains?
- painting the hallway and replacing the outdated light fixtures.

We appreciate anyone who wants to make the church a more warm and welcoming place to be, however we are asking that members and friends contact the committee if they have ideas about decorating, donating furniture or adding items to the church that will affect the overall ambiance. We invite you to contact us if you have ideas or if you would like to serve as a member of the committee.

The committee will make a decision about any ideas that they receive and may need to poll members in order to make our decision. If you have a couch at home you want to donate, let us know. If you want to make pillows for the Anna Hill room, let us know.

Our goal is to have a consistent feel of welcoming to the Church.

Sincerely,

Chris Makary, Helen Jacoby, Brenda Briana,  
Mark Stevens, Marjorie Matty  
Email: aesthetics\_com@verizon.net

## UPCOMING JANUARY ACTIVITIES:

### Fundraising

There will be an informal gathering on Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at 12:15pm in the Library for those interested in brainstorming with FUN ideas in RAISING money for the church along with building the community. Mark your calendars! Look forward to seeing you there.

Brenda Briana

(978) 744-4099, [brenda\\_lunn@verizon.net](mailto:brenda_lunn@verizon.net)

### Salem Mission Dinner Volunteer Signup

Next Dates: January 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> - the sign-up is in the Anna Hill Room.

Prepare and serve dinner at the Salem Mission on Margin Street. No cleanup involved! Just show up at the mission -- they'll tell you what to do. Any questions, contact Chris Weis (617) 407-6767, [tizweis@yahoo.com](mailto:tizweis@yahoo.com)

### Potluck Supper and Game Night January 10

Start the new year with fun, warmth and community. Come to our first potluck and game night Saturday, January 10 at 5:00 PM. Bring a favorite dish and games you like. Enjoy a good meal and warm fellowship. All are welcome. Please sign up in the Anna Hill Room.

### Path to Membership Classes

If you are interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism and/or want to know more about church membership, please plan to attend the three membership classes held after church on February 8, 15 and 22<sup>nd</sup>. Lunch will be served and Rev. Matty will lead discussions of UU history, church polity and responsibilities and benefits of membership. All are welcome to attend.

Participation in classes is a prerequisite for membership in First Universalist. Please sign up in the Anna Hill Room.

### Save the Date

Saturday February 7 at 5:00 PM. Our first movie night and potluck supper of the new year. We will view and discuss the film "Ten Questions for the Dalai Lama."

## HEARTHESIDE

### CUUPS of the First Universalist Society of Salem

February 1, 2009 kicks off the first event held by our church's own CUUPS Chapter known as Hearthside. There will be an Imbolc Ritual being held at 6 PM in the Anna Hill Room. Even though we are still in the middle of winter, Imbolc celebrates the first early stirrings of Spring: the return of sun's light. It seems only fitting to welcome back a source of light to this church by celebrating Imbolc as the first Sabbath of 2009. The doors will open at 6 PM. The ritual will start at 6:30PM with a small gathering of coffee, drinks and snack following.

A "requested" \$5.00 donation would be appreciated. Donations such as this assure that we will be able to hold future events here at the church.

Blessings, Donna Day  
(978) 375-2583; nehani36@hotmail.com

### December's Yule Toy Drive

On Saturday December 20, 2008 PRANCE (Pagan Resource Network and Council of Education) and The Witches Path hosted a toy drive here in Bolles Hall to celebrate the Winter Solstice/Yule.

In spite of the weather conditions, there was a decent attendance and everyone enjoyed music, food, raffle prizes, ritual and of course a visit from Father Yule - much to the delight of our younger guests.

Toys that were collected went to the Salem Mission so that little ones there might enjoy a special gift on Christmas morning.

Toys weren't the only donations; there were animal supplies as well as a special donation left by an unknown visitor who left a donation of a bag of blankets and towels for shelter animals as well as a donation at the door.

The evening overall was magical in spite of the bitter cold and remnants of our first major storm. Everyone looks forward to making this joyous fundraiser an annual event.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Lynne St. Onge and Patti Welch  
Profile by Sally Millice

Lynne St. Onge and Patti Welch joined our church this fall. Residents of Salem, they married last July.

Lynne owns a dog walking service with several employees who provide visits and day care for pets. In addition, she is studying to become a tax preparer for H & R Block. A native of Clarksburg in Western Massachusetts, Lynne lived in New Hampshire for 28 years during her previous marriage. After a divorce she moved to North Andover and was a member of the UU church there. Her hobbies include gardening, fun movies and books and "real camping...out on the ground, in the woods with a tent".

Patti Welch is a Salem native and graduate of Salem State College. She was previously married and has a grown son and daughter who live in the area. Patti is a lab manager in the biology department at Salem State College. A woman of many pursuits, Patti admits "I don't do idle." She is always busy, particularly with her hands, making jewelry, or sewing, knitting, crocheting, and cross-stitching. Patti sings with the choral group Concert Singers and plays guitar, favoring folk music. She raised her children Catholic but was never interested in church. She receives spiritual nourishment from AA and has been in recovery for many years. She practices meditation and does therapeutic work as well.

Both Lynne and Patti were introduced to First Universalist by Kara McGarigle. Patti said they felt comfortable right away and like the atmosphere and intimacy of our community.

We welcome Lynne and Patti to our church family.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Profiles by Tracy Keller

**Sheri Grusheski** of Danvers, appreciates how the Unitarian Universalist Church encourages members to ask questions and find their own path versus dictating what they should believe, "You're not considered bad for asking questions."

Previously a member of a UU congregation in Billerica and having attended a congregation during summers in Hampton, N.H., Sheri joined First Universalist recently after completing the path to membership classes.

Growing up in Malden, Sheri was raised a Roman Catholic but began searching for a different spiritual path that defined her own truth as she reached adulthood. "As I grew up I realized you don't have to believe everything they tell you."

Unitarian Universalism's openness to different ideas appeals to Sheri: "I love learning what other people believe in." She herself is drawn to the Wiccan path and plans on taking the Pagan 101 classes offered by Donna Day and Josef Tabbi.

Sheri chose First Universalist because of the warm welcome she received. "As soon as I walked in it was 'Come to coffee with us afterward.' I didn't need to look anymore," she said.

She has volunteered with the nursery, the religious education program and the Salem Food Pantry. Her two daughters, Brenna, 4, and Megan, 3, attend with her.

A single mom, Sheri is a Tupperware consultant. The flexible hours work for her because her eldest daughter Brenna is medically fragile and Sheri needs to be free to take her to doctors' appointments. In the future, she would like to become a paramedic.

Sheri previously worked in banking for 13 years and survived two holdups at gunpoint, including one where the gun was held to the back of her head.

Sheri's other interests include reading and walking by the ocean. Although her family - parents and two brothers - live in Maynard, she opted to stay in Danvers so she could be by the sea.

A lover of animals, Sheri currently has two adopted cats, Roxie and Lu Lu. She defied her manager at one of her bank jobs years ago when, while working the drive up window she saw a customer

had a tiny kitten with her. The woman was bringing the kitten to a shelter to be put to sleep but Sheri insisted on taking him.

Nick was handed over to Sheri via the drive-through tray. She took him home and fed him with an eyedropper until he recovered and kept him until he passed away in 2006.

**Ruth Dougherty** of Salem recently became a member of First Universalist after taking the path to membership classes.

A native of a small town near Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Ruth's work in finance with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs brought her to several cities before she and her late husband Quentin settled down in Salem in 2005. The Doughertys lived in Texas, Seattle, WA, Northampton, MA and Richmond, VA, previously to Salem. She is now employed in the VA's Jamaica Plain office.

Quentin passed away from cancer in December 2007. He had a career in medical administration and is survived by family in western Massachusetts.

Raised Roman Catholic, Ruth developed an interest in Eastern religions during her 20s. She experimented with yoga and transcendental meditation and studied Buddhism.

Joining a church is something Ruth wanted to do for a long time. Her research led to her discovery that Buddhism and UU principles were compatible. She wanted to pursue her interest in Eastern traditions within a congregational setting in which she felt more comfortable.

First Universalist is defined by its members, said Ruth. "It allows you to find a spiritual home. It feels more like home than a lot of places," she said.

Since joining, Ruth has been attending the meditation meeting held each Sunday before the worship service and meditating on a daily basis.

When she's not working at the VA or attending church, Ruth enjoys reading, especially about history, looks forward to taking liberal arts classes on various subjects and being a member of both the Institute of Contemporary Art and the Museum of Fine Arts.

## SPECIAL MEETING SUNDAY, JANUARY 11TH

Our Church is growing - and we are exploding in kids. How wonderful!!!!

Just a few years ago we could all be assured of a nice, quiet coffee hour. Now we have a crowded coffee hour and we are all so busy greeting each other and welcoming newcomers. Sometimes, there is barely enough space in the Anna Hill Room for the adults and it is feeling crowded when all of the kids join us.

We need to provide a welcoming space for both adult conversation and appropriate play space for the kids. We need to have a welcoming space for parents with quiet children, parents with energetic children, and those who come to Church without children.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am inviting each of you to join us after the Service this Sunday, January 11, 2009 for a community conversation about how to make coffee hour a welcoming place for everyone. We need participation from experienced parents, new parents, foster-parents, soon-to-be parents, and non-parents alike. We need participation from RE, Hospitality, Membership and the Deacons.

We will try to start right at noon and expect the meeting to last about an hour. I am working on arranging child care. I will make sure that there is a substantial snack for the kids. (I was thinking PB&J - with no sugar added in my PB or my J - but if we need an alternative - please let me know.)

I hope you can join us. If you have any thoughts, questions or feedback, I am available this week by cell phone or email. Please use the contacts listed below.

Happy New Year  
Christine DiSaia  
cell: (781) 367-8641  
cdisaia@hotmail.com

## SAVE THE DATE

You are invited to  
a  
**CELEBRATORY  
CONCERT**  
In honor of  
the 200th Birthday  
of  
the First Universalist  
Society of Salem  
4:00 PM, February 28, 2009

## REHEARSALS FOR ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

Sunday, January 11 at 12:45 PM in one of the RE classrooms – look for Bill and a circle of chairs. First rehearsal for the 200th Anniversary Concert: Celebrating 200 years of the First Universalist Society in Salem. All are welcome.

Requirements:

- a desire to sing
- Appropriate behavior for all rehearsals and concert
- Attendance at all rehearsals; must speak to the Smiths for any exceptions

Rehearsals: Jan. 18, Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22 from 12:30 – 2 PM  
Concert will be held at 4 PM on Saturday, February 28, 2009.

Thank you, Sarah Smith  
sarahgregorysmith@verizon.net, (978) 741-2376

## RYAN BUCHANAN

### Coming in February: "Urinetown: the Musical"

Come see Ryan Buchanan play the heavy who charges people to use his public amenities made necessary by years of drought and water shortages in Salem High School's production of "Urinetown: the Musical." Sure, the title is nasty, but this triple Tony Award-winner contains great music and is a romp, spoofing every musical genre and even itself. At the high school (77 Willson Street) on February 6 (7:30 p.m.), 7 (7:30 p.m.), and 8 (2 p.m.). Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and seniors.

# The First Universalist Society

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Established in 1805

211 Bridge Street

Salem, MA 01970-3951

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January 2009

Newsletter

# JANUARY 2009

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

**Sun**

**Mon**

**Tue**

**Wed**

**Thu**

**Fri**

**Sat**

Symphony by the Sea will return January 20, 21, 23 and 24. NAGLY will meet in Bolles Hall on January 20th. MassEquality will be using the Dickson Room on Monday, February 9th at 6PM				1	2	3 Craft Circle 10A AH
4 Worship 10:45 A SN	5	6 NAGLY 7P DK Board 7P LB	7 Choir Rehrsl 7:30P SN	8 Deacons 7P LB Scot Danc 7:30P BH	9	10 Hearthside ADRE P <b>Potluck Supper &amp; Game Night 5P</b>
11 Worship 10:45 A SN RE Mtng Noon LB	12	13 NAGLY 7P DK	14 Salem Mission 4:30P Choir Rehrsl 7:30P SN	15 Scot Danc 7:30P BH	16	17 Craft Circle 10A AH
18 Worship 10:45 A SN	19	20 NAGLY 7P BH Symphony by the Sea 5P until Late SN	21 Symphony by the Sea 5P until Late SN	22 Scot Danc 7:30P BH Choir Rehrsl 7:30P SN	23 Symphony by the Sea 5P until Late SN	24 Symphony by the Sea 4P until Late SN
25 Worship 10:45 A SN	26	27 NAGLY 7P DK	28 Salem Mission 4:30P Choir Rehrsl 7:30P SN Pantry Bagging 6P DK	29 Scot Danc 7:30P BH	30	31 Craft Circle 10A AH Pantry 9:30A DK