



The First Universalist Society of Hartland Unitarian Universalist

DECEMBER 2014

First Universalist Society
Hartland Four Corners
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Sunday Services & Religious Education Classes 10 am in the Church

Sunday Services

December 7 O Come, O Come Emmanuel Paul Sawyer

Tradition says that Emmanuel means "God with us." Christmas, Hanukkah, and Yule are very different celebrations, but they all carry some sense of divinity becoming manifest and real on earth and among human communities. In this service we'll reflect on the nearness of spirit in the dark times of the year. We'll also be decorating the sanctuary tree during the service.

This service will be followed by the Semi-Annual Meeting of our Society. The collection will benefit Windsor County Partners.

**December 14 Paul Sawyer
Annual Intergenerational Impromptu Holiday Pageant!**

In the darkest week of the year, we'll warm our hearts by singing and sharing in acting out a lovely holiday story for all ages. *Gifts for the Hartland Christmas Project will be collected in this service.*

The collection will support the UU Service Committee.

December 21 Joy to the World Paul Sawyer

On this fourth Sunday of Advent, a service for the Christmas Spirit, whatever your faith. *The collection will benefit the Minister's Discretionary Fund, used to support people in need.*

**Sunday, December 21, 7:00 pm Paul Sawyer
Welcome Yule! Celebration of the Solstice**

Our annual celebration of Yule and the Earth-Centered New Year! A brief service followed by a bonfire and fellowship. Come help us welcome back the sun!

continued on pg. 4

Official Warning for Annual Meeting

to be held on December 7, 2014

This is a warning of the annual meeting of the First Universalist Society of Hartland to be held after the 10:00 am church service and brief coffee hour, December 7, 2014.

Agenda as follows:

1. Elect Meeting Moderator
2. Minister's report on collections
3. Report from the Trustees Committee
4. Yes/No Vote to approve the budget as proposed (Please see page 7.)
By paper ballot
5. Shall the congregation apply to the Unitarian Universalist Association to be recognized officially as a Welcoming Congregation?
6. Shall the congregation vote to amend the by-laws of the Society, inserting the following new Article III "Welcoming " after the current Article II, and renumbering the subsequent current articles appropriately?

Article III – Welcoming

This congregation affirms and promotes the full participation of all persons in all our activities and endeavors including membership, programming, hiring practices, and the calling of religious professionals, without regard to race, color, gender, physical or mental challenge, affectional or sexual orientation, class or national origin.

This amendment has been proposed by the Welcoming Circle as part of the process of becoming a Welcoming Congregation.



OFFERING RECIPIENTS DECEMBER

We rely on the planned, committed, pledge support of our members and friends to support the needs of our church. We dedicate our collections during Sunday morning worship to organizations doing good work in our local communities or in society as a whole. Checks for the collection can be made out to "FUSH" and we will consolidate donations to pass on to the organization.

For those wishing to make a pledge payment, or a donation specifically to support our congregation's budget, there is a box on the welcoming table at the back of the sanctuary, or you can use the small manila envelopes available on that same table, or simply mark "for FUSH" in the memo line of your check.

Please contact Paul if you have nominations for organizations you feel would be good choices for our support.

December 7 — Windsor County Partners

Since 1974, Windsor County Partners has been connecting young people in need of support with one-on-one mentors and programs that help them embrace positive life choices and learning and build healthy, trusting relationships. In addition to financial contributions, WCP is always in need of adults willing to volunteer as mentors in our region. For more information, contact Bineke Oort, who has served as a mentor for WCP, or check them out at www.windsorcountypartners.org.

continued on pg. 5

From Your Minister

At the Semi-Annual Meeting of our Society on December 7, members of our congregation will vote to decide whether we will apply to be recognized by the Unitarian Universalist Association as a Welcoming Congregation, intentionally and determinedly committing ourselves to acceptance and support for people who are bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender, queer, and/or questioning.

If we do vote that day to become a Welcoming Congregation, which I sincerely hope and expect that we will, it will be an accomplishment to celebrate—but not because it will signify some great end or goal that we have met. The work of the Welcoming Circle over the past year-and-a-half has consistently lifted up the fact that Welcoming isn't an endpoint. It's not something you figure out and just do. Instead, it's a path and intention, a goal and an expectation that we set for ourselves, and then work tirelessly to meet, through whatever challenges and mistakes we may face along the way.

The Welcoming Congregation program of the UUA has been around now for 25 years. More than two-thirds of UU congregations in the United States have been recognized as Welcoming Congregations (and 90% of those in Canada). If you've been following the program since it's beginning, one thing that's hard not to notice is that the number of letters in the alphabet soup used to describe the program has been steadily increasing. What once was a program aimed at people who identified as "gay and lesbian" soon added "bisexual" and then later "transgender." In more recent years the "Q's" have joined in, with the addition of "queer" and sometimes "questioning."

It's possible for some people to see all these additions as a kind of ridiculous expansion of what was once a pretty simple idea. "We've done that work. We fought for same-sex marriage. Some of us have same-sex partners. We're already welcoming." Well, yes, in many ways, we are certainly a friendly and open church community, and that's a wonderful thing. But the Welcoming Congregation program, and our faith in general, call us to be even more. We are not called simply to congratulate ourselves for a pretty good record of success at not repelling people of many walks of life who come through our doors. We are called to search our hearts for the path of love, and to find ways to increase the works of that love as a living sense of justice in our lives and in the wider world. Love is never complete. Justice is never finished. Welcoming isn't something we've become, it's something we're working to build.

The addition of "queer" to the Welcoming Congregation description is a good example of the challenges of becoming truly welcoming as a whole community. Given the state of the world in most of our lifetimes, we grew up understanding "queer" as a slur, and many of

continued on pg. 4

From Your Minister
continued from pg. 3

us have heard that word hurled at us in anger and shame over the course of our lives, and many of us, too, if we are honest, have done the hurling. It's not a comfortable word for most of us, and even to say it out loud in the context of the Welcoming Congregation work, I'll admit, has been challenging for me.

Like many words, the meaning of "queer" depends greatly on how it's used, and by whom, and in what context. "Queer" is certainly still used in our society as a slur, but many people, however, have begun to find it to be a liberating term and a better description of their own sense of identity than the closed boxes of the more "acceptable" terms of description for gender and attractional identity, so they've decided to use "queer" in a way that reclaims the word from those who would use it simply in an attempt to bring shame.

That reclamation of a word may well challenge your sensibilities, and it may make you uncomfortable. And in many ways, that's the point.

Welcoming isn't easy. Opening our hearts to the true path of love isn't simple. It's not something you can say you've got figured out.

continued on pg. 5

Sunday Services, *continued from pg. 1*

Sunday Services

December 24, 7:00 pm & 9:00 pm

Paul Sawyer

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Join us for our annual spirited celebrations of Christmas Eve! The 7:00 service will be our traditional service of Lessons, Carols, Candles, and Joy. The 9:00 service will also honor the story and songs of the season in a fashion that is a bit shorter and more meditative.

December 28

NO WORSHIP OR RE!

We take one Sunday off from worship each year, the Sunday after Christmas. Take this opportunity to worship and celebrate the season in your own way at home!

January 4

Led by the Worship Team

A service led by our wonderful lay worship leaders, details will be available soon.



Youth - Be the Change

Our congregation offers activities for youth in grades 7-12 (or the home-school equivalent) through two youth groups—the Junior Youth Group, for those in grades 7 & 8, and the Senior Youth Group for high school students. Both groups are offered in conjunction with our friends and neighbors from the First Congregational Church in Hartland, and are led by the Reverends Lucia Jackson and Paul Sawyer.

Both groups offer fun, fellowship, games, and a youth-centered exploration and development of faith. We gather to support one another, to have a good time, and to think about some of the big questions of life in a safe environment. We have regular meetings with activities, time to check in, reflection, and games.

All events are on Sundays unless otherwise noted.

December 14—5:00-6:15 pm, Jr. Youth Holiday party with Yankee Swap! at UCC church
6:30-8:00 pm, Sr. Youth Holiday party with Yankee Swap! at UCC church

Save the Dates: This year's trip will take place July 26–August 1 and we will lead worship for both churches in a joint service on August 2.

From Your Minister
continued from pg. 4

If we saw it that way as a community, I guarantee it wouldn't be long until we'd been proven to be in some painful way that we were simply wrong. We are not called to be comfortable, we are called to face the challenges of the world with a compassionate soul. We are not called to feel sure that we're complete in our journey for justice, we are called to grow, every day, and every day to take one more step on the path of ever more acceptance, ever more welcoming, ever deeper love.

Offering Recipients
continued from pg. 3

December 14— The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Growing out of the merger of the Unitarian Service Committee and the Universalist Service Committee, the UUSC is an independent organization (not a branch of the Unitarian Universalist Association) that works to advance human rights and justice around the world by partnering strategically with local groups working to do justice work in areas of need. Both original Service Committees were formed in the 1930s and 40s in response to the growth of Fascism in Europe in the wake of World War I, and in those years members of both groups worked bravely to bring people to safety in the face of Nazi oppression. In more recent years, the UUSC has worked hard to identify and support organizations based in troubled areas that are effective at making a change in those areas.

continued on pg. 6

re: *RE*

We will start off the month with the favorite tradition: Jill will lead the fun in decorating the gingerbread church! This was such a welcome treat last year, and so beautiful to see at the front of the services in the following weeks. Bruce is also sharing his creativity this month right before Christmas when the children will decorate ornaments that they can bring home or hang on the tree in the Sanctuary.

The children are collecting coins during the UUSC's (UU Service Committee) annual fundraising program, Guest at Your Table. This human rights organization "fosters social justice and works toward a world free of oppression." Please find a marked box in the Fellowship Hall for donations.

Our annual Winterim session will begin on January 4. This year the children will prepare a service based on the history of the influential preacher Hosea Ballou. The RE Circle had a fruitful meeting in November which produced great ideas for this year's Winterim. The RE children will practice their roles and lines over five weeks in January into February, then give the service on February 8th.

Peace,

Sara
DRE

December RE Calendar

7	10:00 am	Faith in Action: Gingerbread Church with Jill
14	10:00 am	Intergenerational Service: Impromptu Holiday Play Bring in UUSC collections RE hosts coffee hour
21	10:00 am	Guest Artist: Ornaments with Bruce
28	NO SERVICE	

January RE Calendar

4	10:00 am	Winterim begins
11	10:00 am	Winterim practice
18	10:00 am	Winterim practice
25	10:00 am	Winterim practice



The Board's Broadcast

Offering Recipients
continued from pg. 5

For more information you can speak with Paul Sawyer, or check out their very good website at uusc.org. This collection is taking place in conjunction with our RE program's involvement in the UUSC "Guest at Your Table" program.

December 21 – The Minister's Discretionary Fund

The Minister's Discretionary Fund is used by our minister to support those in need in our congregation and wider community. It is funded entirely by donations from members and friends of our congregation and allows Paul to offer small, targeted, meaningful help in times of need. For more information, please speak with Paul Sawyer.

January 4 -- TBA

An appropriate recipient for the January 4 collection will be determined in consultation with the leaders of the service.



The Governing Board held its monthly meeting on November 10, 2014. In attendance were: Colleen Spence, Dan Poor, Sara Morin, Paul Sawyer, Doug Hart, Coral Lydon Ovitt, Mike Theroux, Tamara Ross, Mary Erdei

Meeting minutes review deferred to December meeting.

Treasurer's Report reviewed and approved.

The Board discussed and approved the proposed budget for the upcoming Semi-Annual Meeting. One of the greatest concerns the church faces is the reality that we continue to draw from the endowment fund to make ends meet. When the money from the fund is gone, creating a budget will look really different than it did this week. Doug Hart asks the Board to consider embracing a formal five year plan for walking back the amount of money we borrow from the fund each year. We are making progress. In 2013 we borrowed \$27,329 and this year we are on track to borrow approximately \$19,000. That's a huge difference and a trend I hope continues.

Our annual pledge drive launches this weekend with Diane Rochford at the helm. One of the themes we hope everyone takes to heart this year is the truth that every little bit helps. Some of us have more to give than others but pledging is about community and making sure the doors stay open and we all own some of the joy and burden in participating in that effort.

We've had good fortune to connect with a bookkeeper who has church finance experience and is available for hire at a very reasonable rate to take on the basic ledger work that the church needs to have done on an ongoing basis. We believe taking the ledger-entry function off of the role-responsibilities list of church Treasurer might make that position more desirable to hold. It also creates a robust set of checks and balances by separating money handling tasks and accounting tasks and receipt and bill recording tasks. The Board elected to hire a bookkeeper.

The Semi-Annual Meeting agenda is set. On December 7 we will vote on the budget and the Welcoming Congregation and hear reports on collections contributions and funds managed by the Trustees. A potluck will be held after the meeting. The Board asks that members of the congregation bring salads, sides, dessert or drinks. A sign-up sheet will be available in the church basement.

These are the brief notes from this month's meeting. The next Governing Board meeting is scheduled for December 8 at 7:00 pm. Our meetings are open for all to attend. You are always welcome.

Thank you to all,

Colleen Spence
FUSH Governing Board President

First Universalist Society of Hartland – Budget Planning – 2015

	2013	2014 BUDGET	2014 YTD 9/30/14	EST 2014	2015 Proposed 1 No raise	2015 Proposed 2 COL raise	2015 Proposed 3 2% raise
INCOME							
Pledges	71,347	80,000	53,152	75000	75000	82000	86000
Fund-raising (Net)	13,975	12,500	6,809	17000	15000	15000	15000
Non-Pledge Gifts	589	600	510	600	600	600	600
Funds, Memorial. Etc.	648	500	630	630	500	500	500
Misc	<u>1,693</u>	<u>1,600</u>	<u>1,144</u>	<u>1600</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>
TOTAL	88,252	95,200	62,245	94,830	91,600	98,600	102,600
EXPENSES							
Salaries							
Minister	43,392	44,268	31,274	44280	44280	45033	45,166
RE Director	9,000	9,180	6,120	9180	9180	9336	9,364
Music Director	7,512	7,662	5,108	7662	7662	7792	7,815
Administrator	3,396	3,468	2,312	3468	3468	3527	3,537
Sexton	<u>1,830</u>	<u>1,872</u>	<u>1,248</u>	<u>1872</u>	<u>1872</u>	<u>1904</u>	<u>1,909</u>
Total	65,130	66,450	46,062	66,462	66,462	67,592	67,791
Fringe Benefits	10,378	10,590	4,481	10590	10590	10815	10847
Minister's Prof. Exp.	6,037	6,000	3,102	6000	6000	6000	6,000
Property, Church							
Utilities, Services	6,498	7,200	4,890	6500	5500	5500	5,500
Insurance	3,877	4,000	2,016	4032	4032	4032	4,048
Maintenance	<u>1,334</u>	<u>2,400</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1200</u>	<u>1200</u>	<u>1200</u>	<u>1,200</u>
Total	11,709	13,600	6,906	11,732	10,732	10,732	10,748
Property, Parsonage							
Utilities, Services	3,015	3,200	2,021	2800	2800	2,800	2,800
Maintenance	<u>1,309</u>	<u>2,400</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>1,200</u>	<u>1,200</u>
Total	4,324	5,600	2,050	3,100	3,100	4,000	4,000
Other Expenses							
Membership, Publicity, Communications	2,334	2,400	316	500	500	750	1,000
Administration, Supplies, Misc.	2,805	2,400	1,785	2400	3000	3,000	3,500
RE: Supplies, Training, Equip't	949	1,200	1,538	1600	1300	1,500	1,600
RE: Professional Expenses	600	600	450	600	600	600	750
RE: Childcare	1,300	1,500	585	1300	1400	1,400	1,400
Music: Supplies, Conferences	2,029	2,200	1,441	2200	2200	2,200	2,200
Dues, UUA & Dist.	3,364	3,364	3,148	3148	3148	3,250	4,000
Debt Service	3,046	3,045	0	3045	3045	3,045	3,045
Sabbatical Fund/Worship Circle	0	600	156	600	600	600	600
Training	60	0	0	0	0	100	100
Total	<u>16,487</u>	<u>17,309</u>	<u>9,420</u>	<u>15,393</u>	<u>15,793</u>	<u>16,445</u>	<u>18,195</u>
TOTAL	114,065	119,549	72,020	113,277	112,677	115,584	117,581
NET OPER INCOME (LOSS)	-25,813	-24,349	-9,775	-18,447	-21,077	-16,984	-14,981
From Endowment	27,329	25,000		19,000	21,000	17,000	15,000

D Hart, 11/1/14, D Poor 11/3/14, Dpoor 11/9/14

Connections Circle

The Connections Circle explores new ideas as to how we can achieve “connections” within FUSH and within the community. We would love to have anyone interested join us. The present members of our circle are: Patti Eckels, Joan Fariel, Debra Hart, Judy Howland, Bineke Oort, Sue & Dave Taylor, and Nancy Walker.

Our next meeting will be on Friday, December 5 at 3:30 pm in the parsonage.

Coffee Hour

We thank Becky Howe and John Osborne, Patti Eckels and Mary Erdei, Mariet and Robert Jaarsma, Judy Howland and Debra Hart, and Bineke and Bram Oort who have provided delicious snacks and organized coffee hour for us in October and the first weeks in November.

We still need some more people for the rest of November and December! We will send directions to each team the week before and the directions are on the coffee pots and on the wall by the coffee pots. There is also always someone to help when you are doing Coffee Hour for the first time! The hospitality and hard work are appreciated by the congregation. We hope that everyone will sign up to host two Coffee Hours a year so that we can all enjoy a cup of coffee after the services. If everyone signs up then we could have one person in charge of set up and one in charge of clean up so it is not overwhelming for anyone.

Pictures of Our Members and Friends

Nancy and Glenn Walker have done a terrific job in painting the bulletin board and organizing all the pictures. Thank you!!! If you are not on the bulletin board either bring a picture (4”x 6”) or David Taylor will take your picture so we can include you in our gallery.

Fundraising

Hartland Four Corners UU Bed and Breakfast Program

If you need extra space for family or friends visiting the Upper Valley during the holiday season, want to learn more about the program, or want to sign up to be a host go to <http://www.hartlanduu.com/bnb/> for more information or contact Sara Morin.



A BIG THANK YOU

to everybody who participated in
Sunday afternoon's Work Party
on November 16.

Many important jobs
were accomplished.

Adult Choir

Adult Choir will rehearse at 9:00 am on Sunday, December 14 and Sunday, December 21, to sing in the service on the 21st.

International Hour of Peace

December 31, 2014
6:45 am in the sanctuary



Join members and friends of our congregation and of our wider community for a celebration honoring the International Hour of Peace, taking place the morning of New Year's Eve day, December 31.

This celebration happens around the world at Greenwich Mean Time noon (7:00 am our time), and has been marked in our community for many years with meditation, music, poetry, and a potluck breakfast.

Come along to the sanctuary that day at 6:45 am, and bring something to share for the potluck. And if you'd like to offer a song or reading or some words of peace, please contact Michael Denmeade, who is serving as the coordinator of this event. You can reach Michael by phone at 802-296-1465 or by e-mail at truwarrrior63@gmail.com

Collaborate on the Collection

The two handles on our lovely collection boxes are there for a reason! If you're sitting on the aisle, with other people in your pew, take hold of the handle of the box that's toward you (at this point the person who's taking the collection should let go of it) and pass the box on to the others in the pew. Then hand it back to the collector who will be glad not to have had to try to stretch to the opposite end of the pew!

Wood Bees

A big THANK YOU to all who made possible our successful firewood project. We have about four cords of seasoned wood ready for those in need.

It all started last fall with Harry Leister. One of his neighbors wanted wood taken away and Harry offered to do just that. He and Belle must have made three or four trips with their pickup. The wood has been drying out and is ready for this fall.

After my surgery, Deb Hart called to say that she and Steve wanted to come and help me with my firewood. I was happy to tell her that this season's wood is already in the basement and next year's is stacked and seasoning, but I'd love to have them come and work on the church's give-away firewood. She readily agreed. She and Steve were joined by Jake and Gabe Ross who got a lot of the wood split and stacked one Saturday morning.

I put out a call and two Saturdays later we had a good-sized crew sawing, splitting and stacking the rest of Harry Leister's wood but also had Dave Taylor and my wonderful neighbor, Mill Moore, felling and bucking up dead trees in my woods and on the Maxham Farm next door. That Saturday's crew was: Kelly Blue and her son Patrick (who readily learned to drive my little tractor), Mary Erdei, Joan Fariel, Ellen Sauer, Dave Taylor, Michael Theroux and Mill Moore and his Ford Tractor.

Doug Hart



Calendar - December 2014

4	Thurs.		Announcements due
5	Fri.	8-10am	Food Shelf
		3:30pm	Connections Circle
7	Sun.	10am	Worship Service & RE
		After serv.	Semi-Annual Meeting Potluck lunch
8	Mon.	7pm	Governing Board
11	Thurs.		Announcements due
12	Fri.	8-10am	Food Shelf
14	Sun.	9am	Adult Choir rehearsal
		10	Worship Service & RE
		5-6:15pm	Jr. Youth at UCC
		6:30-8	Sr. Youth at UCC
18	Thurs.		Announcements due
		10am	Deadline for January newsletter
19	Fri.	8-10am	Food Shelf
21	Sun	9am	Adult Choir rehearsal & sing
		10	Worship Service & RE
		7pm	Solstice Celebration
24	Weds.	7pm	Christmas Eve Service
		9	Christmas Eve Service
26	Fri.	8-10am	Food Shelf
28	Sun.	10am	NO SERVICE or RE
31	Weds.	6:45am	International Hour of Peace



THE FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY
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DECEMBER