

The First Universalist Society of Hartland Unitarian Universalist

FEBRUARY 2015

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

Sunday Services

February 1 May Nothing Evil Cross this Door Paul Sawyer

A reflection on February's worship theme of "Evil," investigating ideas of evil in the liberal religious tradition, and the challenges of facing evil in our often troubled times.

The collection will benefit the Green Dragon Farm fire recovery fund.

February 8 Children's Winterim Production

Join us for a special Winterim worship service, featuring a dramatic offering from the children of our religious education program. "If We Agree in Love," written by our own Laura Bergstresser, presents stories of Hosea Ballou and the ideas of our congregational commission. The children and their leaders have been preparing for this program for several weeks, and look forward to sharing it with you.

The collection will benefit Make-a-Wish Vermont.

The Chocolate Auction will follow the service.

February 15 Special Guest Minister

Paul will be joined by a guest minister. More information will be available soon!

The collection will benefit Vermont Interfaith Power and Light.

February 22 What Is Evil Bineke Oort

The collection will benefit WISE of the Upper Valley.



OFFERING RECIPIENTS

FEBRUARY

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.

February 1 -- Green Dragon Farm/Alicia Jenks Fire Recovery Fund

On January 2, a fire destroyed the farmhouse at Green Dragon Farm in Weathersfield, owned by Alicia Jenks and Glenn Selwitz. Until her retirement last year, Alicia served for many years as a guidance counselor at Hartland Elementary School, and her dedicated and caring work has touched the lives of many children and families in our community. Many of us also look forward every year to heading out to Green Dragon Farm to pick berries. An account has been established at the Hartland branch of Mascoma Bank to support Alicia and her family in this time of need, and it's our honor to join in this effort. You can contact Paul Sawyer for more information.

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From Your Minister

Engaging the Spirit—Evil

Dear Friends,

Our Engaging the Spirit worship theme for February is "Evil," and we'll be exploring that topic, as well as enjoying some special worship services on other themes, over the course of this month. As an introduction, I offer you these words, an excerpt from a sermon by my wise colleague, the Rev. Victoria Safford, concerning evil, good, and our liberal faith.

In Faith and Love,

Paul

Good and Evil

By the Rev. Victoria Safford

White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church, Mehtomedi, Minnesota
(Excerpt, full text available at <http://whitebearunitarian.org/worship/sermons/>)

How shall we speak about evil, and about good, each of which come about so gradually sometimes you barely notice till you're looking back at history (world history, or your own life story)? How shall we speak about evil as Unitarian Universalists? Surely not in the language of traditional religion, in which evil is a living force, a presence pulsing in the universe, with hideous power to catch hold of you, take you over, confound you and possess you, make you do bad things in spite of yourself.

The idea of a satanic, devilish entity called evil leads so easily to the idea of evil people, individuals who are just rotten through and through, who deserve to burn in hell. And this can lead before too long to demonizing entire groups of people, organized around everything that isn't good. That kind of evil begins quickly to include all the people whose politics or ideology or race or religion, or whatever, you just don't like, or just don't understand, or it just looks scary to you, and pretty soon it spills further to include all the people holding the power, the oil or the land, the weapons or water or money that you wish you had, that you believe you ought to have, and you become willing to do terrible things to get those things or to defend them.

These old ways of thinking are so ancient that they seem like caricatures, but you know they're very much alive in contemporary religion, in contemporary politics. In a liberal religious theology there is no evil entity out there, nor empire, no satanic force out there, nor in here [inside a human being]. There are not evil people.

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Offering Recipients
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February 8—Make-A-Wish Foundation of Vermont

Since their founding in 1989, the Vermont chapter of the Make-a-Wish Foundation has granted more than 700 wishes for children facing life-threatening conditions. Whether it's a trip, or a chance to meet a favorite athlete, or the opportunity to take part in a long-hoped-for experience, Make-a-Wish helps kids with tough lives feel a sense of joy. In their own words, "Wishes are more than just a nice thing. And they are far more than gifts, or singular events in time. Wishes impact everyone involved—wish kids, volunteers, donors, sponsors, medical professionals and communities. The impact varies. For wish kids, just the act of making their wish come true can give them the courage to comply with their medical treatments. Parents might finally feel like they can be optimistic. And still others might realize all they have to offer the world through volunteer work or philanthropy. Whatever the odds, whatever the obstacles...wishes find a way to make the world better." This organization was nominated by the children in our RE program. You can learn more at <http://vermont.wish.org>

February 15—Vermont Interfaith Power and Light

Vermont Interfaith Power and Light (VTIPL) is a collection of faith communities and individuals working for a faith-based response to global warming. They offer collaboration, education, and inspiration for practical actions and deepening spiritual connections with earth and with the possibility of a resilient future.

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re: RE

Religious Educatterman's Top Ten List of Reasons to Volunteer in RE:

10. Learn the kids' names so you can tell them to stop taking all the crackers and cheese at coffee hour.
9. Keep up with the hip kid lingo. LOL
8. Scenic Yurt views.
7. Actually learn the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism.
6. Good for your resume and free on the job training.
5. Do your good deed for the year, one more chance to get "Heaven Credit."
4. You can duck out of a boring sermon.
3. If the kids know you, they'll hook you up with the good pie at the Turkey Suppers.
2. Community: One of the few times for multigenerational interaction.
1. And the number one reason to volunteer in RE:

The Kids



February RE Calendar

1	8:30 am	5/6 OWL Class
	10:00	Winterim: "If We Agree in Love" rehearsal
7	5:00 pm	Pizza dinner and Dress Rehearsal
8	8:30 am	5/6 OWL Class
	10:00	Intergenerational Service: "If We Agree in Love"
	11:15	Chocolate Auction
15	8:30 am	5/6 OWL Class
	10:00	Guest Artist
22	8:30 am	5/6 OWL Class
	10:00	Children's Chapel

Offering Recipients
continued from pg. 3

VTIPL offers a membership program for churches, which requires a commitment to action and responsibility and which we will consider as a future possibility for our congregation. In the meantime, our offering will support their work and help us establish an initial connection with this important organization. More information is available at www.vtipl.org.

February 22—WISE of the Upper Valley

WISE is a non-profit organization which has been serving the needs of the Upper Valley for over forty years. WISE provides advocacy, crisis services, and community education to those affected by domestic and sexual violence and stalking throughout the Upper Valley region of New Hampshire and Vermont. All WISE services are free and confidential. The mission of WISE is to empower victims of domestic and sexual violence and stalking to become safe and self-reliant through crisis intervention and support services. WISE advances social justice through community education, training and public policy. More information is available at www.wiseoftheuppervalley.org

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.

February 8— 5:00-6:15 pm, Jr. Youth Group at UCC Church
6:30-8:00 pm, Sr. Youth Group at UCC Church
Sr. Youth please bring your \$20 pizza donation

February 15—9:00 am-1:00 pm—Mission Trip Fundraiser Brunch at the UU Church
7:00-9:30 pm, Sr. Youth Game Night at UCC Church, sundaes and games (no pizza, so plan accordingly!)

February 22— 5:00-6:15 pm, Jr. Youth Group at UCC Church
6:30-8:00 pm, Sr. Youth Group 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.



“The best way to give advice to your children is to find out what they want and then advise them to do it.”

Harry S. Truman

The “Red Aprons”

Motto:
*Be a guest
at your own party.*

The Red Aprons are volunteers from the church who can take the work out of your party by organizing and managing food service, clean up and other things you may need done.

If you are having a wedding reception, birthday party, graduation party, or reunion think of us.



We are looking for more volunteers. If you would like to be put on the e-mail list, please contact Joan Fariel or Chuck Fenton.

Proceeds for these services will be donated to FUSH.

From Your Minister continued from pg. 2

There are only choices upon choices, decisions which may be good and brave, or cowardly; unintentional, accidental, thoughtless stupid choices; or choices which may be deliberately vile, vicious, ruthless, unforgiveable, horrific, and yes – evil.

Evil is not rare. It's never far away. We hold within us always the capacity to diminish life or enhance it, to do small or large amounts of good, or small or terrible amounts of damage, to do evil things, that capacity is ready and waiting in us all the time.

Evil, like good, is cumulative. It usually starts small. Small decisions, small choices accumulate. Systemic evil – a project like the Holocaust – required uncanny leadership to instill terror and make the unspeakable articulate, it required concentrated power, but it also required thousands, millions of tiny, daily discernments, tiny, invisible acquiescences and compromises by so many ordinary, decent people, so many small acts of what seemed in the moment like regular patriotism and basic citizenship, or seemed in the moment not so bad. W.H. Auden, the English poet, said “Evil is unspectacular and always human, / And shares our bed and eats at our own table.” This is what makes it so frightening and sad. And the poet does go on, “And we are introduced to Goodness every day. Even in drawing rooms among a crowd of faults.” Good, it turns out, is not so spectacular either, most of the time – just ordinary, drawing room decency. Because we're human, we bear within us always, in every moment, the capacity to curse or bless the world.

Some years ago I was asked by the UUA to write a definition of evil for Unitarian Universalists. This is part of what I said: Evil is the capacity, within us and among us, to break sacred bonds: with our own souls, with one another, and with the Holy. Further, it is the willingness to excuse or justify this damage, to deny it, or to call it virtue. The soil in which it flourishes is a rich compost of ignorance, arrogance, fear and delusion, mostly self-delusion, all mingled with the sparkling dust of our original, human being. We touch it all the time. Typically, it's not spectacular. It shares our bed and eats at our own table. It's not even an “it,” but a steady gathering of small habits and choices, some of them so thoughtless and so ordinary. Some of them are reversible. Some don't need to be repeated. All need to be named and owned and held up to the light of day, and if found unacceptable, discarded, repented and laid down.

Evil starts small, almost always. That's the problem. It's almost microscopic. The good news is that good starts that way, too. There are no saints or angels sitting on the franchise of goodness, only people, trying to be human. There's just us, all of us just trying as hard as we know to live up to our name, our beautiful name: humanity.

Calling All Circles

Fundraising

Date to Keep in Mind:

March 14 - Community Prom - Open to everyone...dress up or come as you are..



Chocolate Auction

*Sunday, February 8
11:15 am
in our Fellowship Hall*

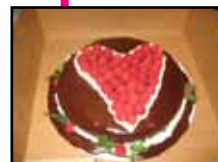
*This is our 7th Annual Chocolate Auction
This follows the worship service so you will want to make sure
to stay after to view the items, to taste the chocolate fondue
and to bid on the delicious chocolate desserts.*

*In the spirit of Valentine's Day
donations of chocolate desserts are needed.*

*If you are willing and able to make an item
please drop it off before the church service on Feb. 8.
Please include a card with the name of the item
and the ingredients.*

*Somthing new this year:
We are raffling off a gift certificate worth \$50
to Windsor Station Restaurant.
The tickets will be on sale up until the Chocolate Auction
when the winner will be picked. You don't have to be present to win.
Tickets are: \$3 for one or \$15 for 6.*

*For questions or
if you are able to help before and/or during the auction
contact Nancy Walker, 603-863-0066 or nancy.mr.walker@gmail.com*



Bulletin Board

Adult Choir - rehearsal at 9:00 am on Sunday, February 15 and Sunday, February 22, to sing in the service on the 22nd. These dates are one week later than the usual choir dates due to the children's Winterim program on the 8th.

Thank You - Katy Sawyer for coordinating the nursery care for the past few years. Any future questions or interest can be directed to Heather Findlay at hfindlay@ymail.com.

Ladies Aid Hall Purchase Update

Of the \$51,509 needed to purchase the building, we are short just under \$900 - \$1,900 if we can honor Gordon Richardson's request that we put seed money toward the building's future use.

Please, we need just a few more folks to step up to the plate.

— Doug Hart

Give the Gift of FUSH

In honor of Doug Hart's 84th birthday, Elaine Hart has given a donation to the Ladies Aid.

Thank you Elaine and Happy Birthday, Doug!

As a gift to honor a dear friend, Dianne Rochford has given a donation to FUSH.
Thank you, Dianne!

If you are interested in giving a gift to the church in honor of someone, please contact Ellen Sauer (ellenmsauer@gmail.com) for details.

Calling All Circles

Connections Circle



Circle Dinners

Do you wish there were more time at the coffee hours to get to know your fellow congregants? Are you willing to drive to someone's home for an enjoyable get together? Do you like to eat while having good conversation?

Circle Dinners are hosted by church members who are willing to open up their homes for a social gathering. There is no agenda except to enjoy each others' company and eat delicious food. Everyone is asked to bring a dish to share.

If you are interested, you can sign up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board downstairs next to the outside door in the church Fellowship Hall or call the host of the dinner. On the sign up sheet there will be space for your name, phone # and the dish you will be providing.

There are two planned in February:

Thursday, February 5 - (sorry, already filled)

Hosted by Don & Betty Munro at 5:15 pm in their home in Barnard, VT. They are able to accommodate a maximum of 6 people.
74 North Road, Barnard, 802-234-9703

Saturday, February 14

Hosted by Robert & Mariet Jaarsma at 5:30 am in their home in Cornish, NH. They are able to accommodate a maximum of 6 people.
362 Dingleton Hill Rd., Cornish, NH, 603-675-6622

Stay tuned for two more in March on the 7th and 21st.

Calendar - January 2015

1	Sun.	8:30am	5/6 OWL
		10	Worship Service & RE
5	Thurs.	5:15pm	Circle Dinner at Munro's
6	Fri.	8-10am	Food Shelf
7	Sat.	5pm	RE, pizza and Winterim dress rehearsal
8	Sun.	8:30am	5/6 OWL
		10	Worship Service & RE
		11:15.	Chocolate Auction
		5-6:15pm	Jr. Youth at UCC
		6:30-8	Sr. Youth at UCC
9	Mon.	7pm	Governing Board
13	Fri.	8-10am	Food Shelf
14	Sat.	5:30pm	Circle Dinner at Jaarsma's
15	Sun	8:30am	5/6 OWL
		9	Adult Choir rehearsal
		10	Worship Service & RE
		After serv.	Youth Fundraiser Brunch at FUSH
		7-9:30pm	Sr. Youth Game Night at UCC
18	Weds.		Deadline for February newsletter
20	Fri.	8-10am	Food Shelf
22	Sun.	8:30am	5/6 OWL
		9	Adult Choir rehearsal & sing
		10	Worship Service & RE
		5-6:15pm	Jr. Youth at UCC
		6:30-8	Sr. Youth at UCC
27	Fri.	8-10am	Food Shelf



THE FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY

Unitarian Universalist

P. O. Box 75

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FEBRUARY