

The First Universalist Society of Hartland Universalist

SEPTEMBER 2013

First Universalist Society
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Newsletter

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Sunday Services & Religious Education Classes 10 am in the Church

Sunday Services

September 1 Engaging the Spirit Paul S. Sawyer

An introduction to our new practice of monthly worship themes and some reflections on building a meaningful and engaged sense of spirit, whether within or outside the boundaries of a traditional religious organization or practice.

The collection will benefit Open Hands Mission of Claremont.

September 8 Paul S. Sawyer Welcome & Water Ingathering—Engage!

Join us as we come together in this intergenerational service of ingathering after a fine summer. Be sure to bring some water to share from any place that feeds your soul. It could be somewhere you visited, or it could be from your own back yard. Salt water, fresh water, and murky water are all welcome! And some fine Hartland Four Corners water will be available if you forget to bring your own. The water we collect will be filtered and boiled, and then used this year in child dedications and baptisms, and in any other services of blessing we decide to share.

The collection will benefit the Connecticut River Watershed Council.

September 15 Paul S. Sawyer Engaging Racism and other Oppressions

Fifty years ago, on Sunday September 15, 1963, a bomb exploded at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, killing four young girls and marking a painful and tragic moment in the movement for civil rights. On this anniversary, we'll honor the memory of the bombing, and we'll reflect on what it means to engage—to take on and to counter—racism today, particularly here in our region, which spans two of the whitest states in our country.

The collection will benefit the Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity.

OFFERING RECIPIENTS SEPTEMBER

We rely on the planned, committed financial pledges 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.

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

September 1— Open Hands Mission of Claremont

Open Hands Mission of Claremont is an effort by community volunteers and the churches of Claremont, providing warm meals on weekend evenings when other relief agencies in town are not operating. Operating out of the First Congregational Church, every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at 4:00 pm, Open Hands offers free, nutritious meals, as well as conversation and connection, to an average of 45-50 individuals. As the inheritors of the legacy of the First Universalist Church of Claremont, we're honored to be able to support this entirely volunteeroperated not-for-profit organization. Contact Dianne Rochford for more information.

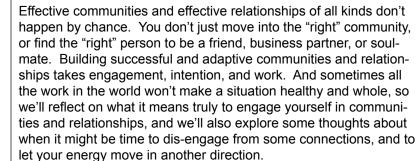
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Sunday Services continued from pg. 1

Sunday Services

September 22 Paul 9 Engaging in Community and Relationships Effective communities and effective relationships of all kir

Paul S. Sawyer



The Collection will benefit Zack's Place.

September 29

TBA

Engaging the Spirit

Welcome to the first edition of "Engaging the Spirit," our pilot project using monthly themes to deepen our collective sense of spirit, and to invite broader participation in our worship planning. Each month I'll reach out to you for your ideas and responses and resources related to the coming month's theme, and then I will report back in the newsletter some of what I've learned from you and from my own work engaging the theme. This is a new project, and we're still working out both the process and the format for presenting the theme in the newsletter, so I know that, with your help, in all aspects, this effort will all evolve over time to be ever more effective and engaging, for me and for you.

For this first month, September, our month of renewal and ingathering after a lazier summer, our theme is "Engaging." Spiritually, "Engaging" has two main meanings—"taking up," and "taking on."

Engaging as "taking up" is often a form of beginning. It may mean a true beginning, a fresh beginning, like engaging in a new spiritual practice, or engaging in a new friendship, or it may mean simply diving into or recommitting to something you've done or known for a long time, like finally engaging in that exercise plan you've been thinking about for a while. In either case, engaging means dedication and energy—active energy. To be engaged is to be committed, connected, alive. It's not passive. It's not happenstance. It means to be filled with dedication, and a sense of possibility, and stepping out on the path.

Engaging as "taking on" is engaging with a challenge, a problem. Engagement in this sense can mean giving your energy to a spiritual conundrum, like the idea of divinity, without need for resolution or finality. One definition of the Hebrew word "Israel" is, roughly, "wrestling with God" and expresses the Jewish tradition of just that kind of engagement.

Offering Recipients cont. from pg. 2

September 8—The Connecticut River Watershed Council

It's hard to imagine a more important resource and landmark in our communities than the great Connecticut River. Founded in 1952, the CRWC works to protect the river watershed "from source to sea." From their headquarters in Greenfield, MA, and through field offices in various regions of the river, including the Upper Valley, the CRWC both advocates for the protection of the river and its surrounding watershed and works directly to keep the river clean, safe, and available as a resource to all. Please join in this special collection for our annual Water Ingathering service. More information is available at www.ctriver.org

September 15— Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity

Founded in 1993, and based in Brattleboro, the Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity works to counter prejudice and oppression in Vermont and surrounding areas. They offer training and support programs for schools, police departments, and other organizations, support and encouragement for political candidates of color, and they also provide direct advocacy and resources for individual victims of discrimination. More information is available at www.vermontpartnership.org.

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Engaging the Spirit continued from pg. 2

"Taking on" can also mean dedicating your energy to countering an injustice in the world. In particular, it can mean letting go of indifference, turning to face reality, and deciding that you will not stand for the world as it is—that you will give your energy, your attention, your work, to making things right.

The opposite of engagement is indifference. And the opposite of engaging is letting go. And sometimes on the spiritual path, letting go, and not giving energy and attention to something, is also the wisest choice. And often, discerning what to engage, and what to let go, is the great challenge of engaging the spirit.

The Unitarian Universalist Association is currently working to discern what to do in just such a decision point at the moment. Most Unitarian Universalists agree that many of the actions of large energy corporations at this time in history are short-sighted and destructive to our planet. Still, like most institutions with endowments of any size, our Association has investments in many of these companies in our portfolio. There has developed within our movement a lively conversation about how best to manage these investments in a fashion that will bring about change in the fossil fuel industry and the wider world.

One train of thought says that we should continue to hold these investments and to get more effective at using them to engage the problem, by engaging in shareholder activism, as we have been for a number of years. This approach involves partnering with other shareholders, making resolutions at annual corporate meetings, pushing companies to change from within (and benefitting from a share of the record profits these corporations are currently taking in).

Another train of thought says that at this particular moment in history it is time for us to dis-engage with such corporations and divest our holdings in the fossil fuel industry as a whole. Adherents of this position say that our shareholder activism is too small in the face of the overwhelming trajectory of destruction such companies rely on. We should simply step aside, express our solidarity with others who are making the same decision, and invest our resources in companies working to build a new, less destructive, and more hopeful energy future.

Both sides are seeking to make change. One looks to do so by direct and increased engagement, the other by dis-engaging from one path, so that our attention and our energy could be better spent in other directions. That decision point is an important one, not just in how best to engage in effective social justice work, but in the everyday life of the spirit and just regular old life and relationships as well. Where is your energy going? Is it working for you? Are there connections or activities or relationships that it would help you to engage? Are there connections or activities or relationships you would do well to let go, so that your energy could be used in a more healthy direction?

Taking up and taking on. Stepping aside and letting go. Engaging and dis-engaging. In every case, paying attention. Not just going along for the ride. Not just letting the winds of the world and the moods of the spirit bounce you around like a lost boat on the waves. Not just letting injustice continue because we're too afraid to look and really to see what's happening in the world. This is the work of engaging the spirit.

I'm looking forward to taking up and taking on the life of the spirit with you, this month and in the months to come.



Offering Recipients cont. from pg. 3

September 22—Zack's Place

Zack's Place in Woodstock is a free enrichment center whose mission is to empower specialneeds people of all ages to express themselves through art, music, dance, literacy, athletics, and fitness while developing bonds of friendship. Founded in 2006, Zack's Place works to be a resource to address the daunting issue of serving specialneeds individuals and their families during and after their school years have ended.

More information is available at

September 29-TBA

www.zacksplacevt.org.

Engaging the Spirit cont. from pg. 3

Some Engaging Words

Wendell Berry from "Marriage"

Some wishes cannot succeed; some victories cannot be won; some loneliness is incorrigible. But there is relief and freedom in knowing what is real; these givens come to us out of the perennial reality of the world, like the terrain we live on. One does not care for this ground to make it a different place, or to make it perfect, but to make it inhabitable and to make it better. To flee from its realities is only to arrive at them unprepared.

Governor Dean Davis (sent by his friend, Mary Fenn)

His response when asked at age 90 how he stayed so active: I read something every day, I write something every day, I nurture a friendship every day, and I keep moving. If I keep moving they can't bury me, it is against the law.

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re: RE

Welcome to a new RE year!

This year our overarching theme will be exploring the Seven Principles. We will also be incorporating the congregation's monthly theme into our Children's Chapel, which is scheduled for the fourth Sunday of the month through December. Please let me or Paul know if you have ideas relating to the monthly theme for these services!

We will continue to follow the RE schedule of Faith in Action, Guest Artist, and Spirit Play for the first three Sundays of each month. I also appreciate any suggestions for Guest Artist and Faith in Action!

During January and part of February we are busy with our Winterim program, working on a dramatic worship presentation.

In the spring, the schedule will be similar to the fall, with some adjustments depending on special events and holidays. This year, the fifth/sixth and seventh/eighth graders will have the opportunity to enroll in OWL (Our Whole Lives) sexuality courses. We will have a schedule for these classes at a later date.

On September 15, registration forms will be available for new families to complete, and returning families can update any information. The RE schedule will be posted and the congregation is invited to sign up to volunteer to teach or assist in classes through December.

Happy fall!

Sara DRE



September RE Calendar

1	10:00 am	Fundraiser Project: Collage Magnets
1		
8	9:30 am	Children's Choir Practice and Sing
	10:00	Intergenerational Service: Annual Water
		Ingathering
15	10:00 am	Welcome to RE! Introductions and
		Activities
22	10:00 am	Fundraiser Project: Miniature Paintings
29	9:30 am	Children's Choir Practice
	10:00	Children's Chapel: Engaging the Spirit

Engaging the Spirit cont. from pg. 4

Walt Whitman from "Song of the Open Road"

Aloof and lighthearted, take to the open road,

Healthy, free, the world before you, The long brown path before you, leading wherever you choose.

Say only to one another: "Camerado, I give you my hand!"

I give you my love more precious than money,

I give you myself before preaching or law:

Will you give me yourself? Will you travel with me?

Shall we stick together, by each other, as long as we live?

Teddy Roosevelt from "Citizenship in a Republic"

It is not the critic who counts: not the one who points out how the strong person stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the one who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends themself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if they fail, at least fails while daring greatly, so that their place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

Charles Mackay from "The Old and the New"

The smallest effort is not lost, Each wavelet on the ocean tost Aids in the ebb-tide or the flow; Each rain-drop makes some floweret blow; Each struggle lessens human woe.

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Youth - Be the Change

Our congregation offers activities for youth in grades 7-12 (or the homeschool 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 Hartland Congregational Church, 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. We also offer special events throughout the year including service opportunities, fundraising brunches at both churches, trips to Dartmouth sporting events, game nights and for senior youth our annual week-long mission trip to New Haven, CT in July.

Events for both youth groups will begin later this month, so see the calendar below for the currently scheduled dates, times, and places of our meetings.

For further information about our youth groups and youth events, please contact Paul or Lucia. To stay in touch with youth group happenings, make sure that Paul and Lucia have your e-mail address, follow the youth group Facebook page, keep an eye on the newsletters and weekly e-mail updates of both churches, or better yet, come to church and read the bulletin!

Youth Group Schedule Fall 2013

September 15 September 29	5:00-6:15 pm 6:30-8:00 pm After church	Jr. Youth Group at UU Church Sr. Youth Group at UU Church All youth trip to Six Flags New England! Contact Lucia to register. Cost \$34
October 6	5:00-6:15 pm 6:30-8:00 pm	Jr. Youth Group at UU Church Sr. Youth Group at UU Church
October 20	5:00-6:15 pm 6:30-8:00 pm	Jr. Youth Group at UCC Church Sr. Youth Group at UCC Church
October 27	9:00 am-1:00 pm	Mission Trip Fundraiser Brunch at UCC Church
November 3	5:00-6:00 pm 6:00 7:00-8:00	Jr. Youth at UCC Church Mission Trip slide-show, and information session for all 8th graders, senior youth, and anyone else who is interested! At UCC Church Sr. Youth at UCC Church
November 17	5:00-6:15 pm 6:30-8:00 pm	Jr. Youth Group at UCC Church Sr. Youth Group at UCC Church
November 24	9:00 am-1:00 pm	Mission Trip Fundraiser Brunch at UU Church (joint Thanksgiving service 10-11:15 am)
December 1 December 15		Youth Group Meetings Youth Group Meetings—Holiday parties with Yankee Swap!

Save the Dates: This year's trip will take place July 27–August 2, 2014 and we will lead worship for both churches in a joint service on August 3.

Engaging the Spirit cont. from pg. 5

Cast All Your Votes For Dancing by Hafiz; From "I Heard God Laughing: Renderings of Hafiz" by Daniel Ladinsky

I know the voice of depression Still calls to you.

I know those habits that can ruin your life Still send their invitations.

But you are with the Friend now And look so much stronger.

You can stay that way And even bloom!

Keep squeezing drops of the Sun From your prayers and work and music

And from your companions' beautiful laughter.

Keep squeezing drops of the Sun From the sacred hands and glance of your Beloved And, my dear, From the most insignificant move-

Of your own holy body.

Learn to recognize the counterfeit coins

That may buy you just a moment of pleasure,

But then drag you for days Like a broken man Behind a farting camel.

You are with the Friend now. Learn what actions of yours delight Him,

What actions of yours bring freedom And Love.

Whenever you say God's name, dear pilgrim,

My ears wish my head was missing So they could finally kiss each other And applaud all your nourishing wisdom!

O keep squeezing drops of the Sun From your prayers and work and music

And from your companions' beautiful laughter

And from the most insignificant movements
Of your own holy body.

Now, sweet one, Be wise. Cast all your votes for Dancing! continued on pg. 7

The Board's Broadcast

Over the summer, the Governing Board met on July 1 and August 5.

Doug Hart presented the Treasurer's reports, which were accepted. The issue of maintaining both an Excel and a Quicken ledger was discussed; Doug is encouraged to use Quicken only, to reduce the reconciliation effort. The Finance Circle will continue work on the accounting procedures and the use of Quicken. John will review the current Quicken account structure with an eye to streamlining and reporting. In August, Doug announced he will be leaving the treasurer's position in December, but will be available for transition assistance. The Board will begin the process of recruiting a new treasurer in September.

Paul is creating a Stewardship Circle to articulate the mission and vision of the church; he will be calling on church members to become members of this circle.

The Board discussed the current and possible future membership policy. Membership rules in the bylaws are incomplete and not well defined. The Board has not taken any actions on membership (e.g., transfer to inactive membership, removal of membership) in recent memory, but with the membership database now online, membership definition becomes an issue. John, Paul and Becky will review the membership and define categories for active, inactive, member, friend, visitor, and clarify how these will be designated in the membership database. The goal is to have clarity around membership by the December semi-annual meeting.

With Paul, Jill and Todd Lloyd, and Sue Buckholz recently returned from General Assembly, the Board discussed how FUSH will designate representatives to the GA in the future, and encourage members to attend. Becky will write up a document that explains the district and UUA meetings for those interested members and friends. It will include responsibilities of delegates and what to expect at the meetings. The Board will review the GA document as soon as it is available.

Sara Morin has been very busy working on the fundraising events, clarifying the existing events, coming up with new ideas for events, and other ways to raise funds. She presented a long list of potential fundraising ideas to the Board. Possible new events include: concerts, film series, community spelling bee, and a coffee house. We could increase fund raising by selling things such as t-shirts and hats at various events. The Board discussed the recent Jazz Festival food booth as a "learning experience." John recommended that the event teams get together to have post-event reviews.



Engaging the Spirit cont. from pg. 6

Robert Kennedy, speaking about his father, Joseph Kennedy

He has called on the best that was in us. There was no such thing as half-trying. Whether it was running a race or catching a football, competing in school—we were to try. And we were to try harder than anyone else. We might not be the best, and none of us were, but we were to make the effort to be the best. "After you have done the best you can," he used to say, "the hell with it."



The Board's Broadcast continued from pg. 6

In August the Board discussed the possibility of having church members hold hospitality houses as a fundraiser – essentially a temporary bed and breakfast in their home, with the rental going to the church general fund. John expressed concern about liability and insurance, and Doug Hart and Dan Poor volunteered to research this.

Also discussed was the development of a pamphlet describing the FUSH for visitors and event customers, to encourage attendance at our services, and bring in new membership.

Not enough people signed up ahead of the event for the Old Home Day booth. This was a concern right up to the day of the event, when Nada Pierce, Judy Howland and others stepped forward to keep the booth open into the evening. There was adequate coverage for the booth setup and take down. The Board discussed how sign ups might be improved.

John is continuing work on the "cookbooks" for events, starting with the Turkey Suppers "cookbook". The intent is that event leaders will have complete directions for running a successful event, and improvements can be incorporated and passed on to future event leaders.

Becky presented the idea of purchasing a new tent, easier to set up, for future outdoors events. John investigated various tents and prices and presented a brief report at the August meeting. A new tent would cost between \$150 and \$700, the Board will need to decide if the cost merits the advantages. There is concern that the tent must be strictly waterproof. John will continue research, particularly interviewing current owners of tents.

The Board discussed showing appreciation to members and others making contributions to the church, as we have in the past. A method of selecting recipients and showing appreciation was discussed, and the process was tried out at the August meeting.

The next meeting will be on September 9 (owing to the Labor Day holiday) at 7:00 pm. As always, members of the congregation are encouraged to attend.

Calling All Circles

Buildings & Grounds Committee

Unitarians sometimes talk of the interdependent web of all existence. So true from the perspective of the Building and Grounds Committee. Certainly people and weather must align.

Randy Shambo of Hartland has completely rebuilt our front steps. The concrete beneath the old ones had deteriorated quite a bit but we were able

Calling All Circles

Fundraising

Sunday, September 8 after church there will be a meeting for anyone interested in opening their home as a Bed and Breakfast. This will be an ongoing fundraising effort for our church, or supporting those who do. We'll share information about how this is done in other churches, how we're hoping to structure our program, as well as Q & A. We'd like to get this effort underway as soon as possible to capitalize on fall tourism. Anyone with questions or to express their interest in being involved who are unable to attend, contact Sara Morin at sara.d.morin@dartmouth.edu

Sunday, September 15 - Any and all ideas are welcome in this upbeat, 1 hour brainstorm about fundraising for our church after coffee hour. This session will be structured to be a positive intake of ideas, efforts seen work in other places, ideas you are passionate about trying, etc. We won't be discussing what won't work, what hasn't worked in the past, or having conversations about why not to do something – we'll save that for another time. We also won't be assigning jobs, tasks, etc. at this meeting – more on that later. Ideas gathered during this session will go into the overall fundraising planning and will help inform future efforts. No ideas but want to be involved? Come, come, we would love to have you. Child care will be available.

Save the date:

Friday, October 11 we will have a booth at Moondance in Windsor, VT. More information to come.

 $Buildings\ and\ Grounds\ continued\ from\ pg.\ 7$

to reuse all the bluestone. He matched our bricks with some from an old factory in Windsor and you will see the next time you walk up them that the bricks were made in VERMONT. Bob Bartlett, a Hartland friend of the church, then came by and put in a temporary fix to our old railing which will undoubtedly suffice while we work our way through the building code requirements for a replacement. The VT Fire Marshall has been involved with this project just as with the steeple.

The weathervane. What a community effort. Starting with Jim Dow's creative design, his sister's ability to capture it on paper, Rob Jaarsma's countless hours of putting his engineering background to work with the mechanics of assembly and materials, Nick Boutwell's transferring of the design to CAD, the Lloyds facilitating all the communications between parties and finally the creation of the piece by a member of the extended Lloyd family. It should be here soon and will hopefully go up in September. Meanwhile the professional painters (Leonard Spenser and crew from up north) are here to put the finishing coats on the steeple and to repaint the belfry.

While we're expecting to have the grading done around the church in September there is one volunteer task that needs a taker. In front of Skunk Hollow there are 2 drainage outlets that capture a good deal of the water coming from the south down the Brownsville Hartland Road and Town Farm Road. Too often these get covered over by dirt, leaves and other debris with the result that all that water flows into the front yard of the church instead. Any benefit we receive during the grading project will be quickly eroded if we don't alleviate this problem. Anyone willing to carry a shovel in their car and unclog these every once in a while? I am more than happy to point them out. I've met on site with the town manager and he says the town needs to be more vigilant in keeping these clear as well but every heavy rain causes them to be covered.

I believe I can get my hands on a power washer if someone wants to undertake using it on the front of the church.

Lastly, it appears the flooding in the Parsonage basement was NOT related to the absence of water in the sinks and showers. All is now well.

Jill Crowley



Bulletin Board

Adult Choir - Rehearsal on Sunday, September 8 and Sunday, September 15 at 9:00 am to sing in the service on the 15th.

Children's Choir - Rehearsal on Sunday, September 8 and Sunday, September 29 at 9:30 am to sing in the service on the 8th.

Looking for a person or persons to share a house and be available for house sitting. The house is in Windsor, VT and belongs to Gary Shapiro and Alberta Snow who are in the process of getting a divorce. If interested call Gary at 802-674-6116.

Calling All Circles

Connections Circle

Coffee Hour

Thank you to Jandra Oliver and Diane Rochford for hosting the coffee hour for the joint service. They did a great job and had so much help from Coral Lydon Ovitt and Jake Ross. Their hospitality and hard work meant that we could really welcome our neighbors at the Brick Church. We also appreciate those who have made coffee over the summer.

Our regular sign up for coffee hours will begin on September 8. We hope that everyone will sign up to host two coffee hours a year so that we can again 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.

The present members of the Connections Circle: Joan Fariel, Debra Hart, Judy Howland, Bineke Oort, Sue and Dave Taylor, and Nancy Walker.

Next meeting:

Friday, September 6 at 4:00 pm in the parsonage.

"End of Summer Fling"

Saturday, September 14

4:00-8:00 pm

at David and Sue Taylor's home 158 Freeman Road, Plainfield, NH

Everyone connected to FUSH is invited and it will be a chance to welcome back friends who have been away over the summer.

There will be activities for the children and a potluck supper. We hope everyone can come!

If you would like to help contact anyone on the Connections Circle.



Calendar - September 2013

	29 Sun.	27 Fri.	22 Sun.	20 Fri.	18 Weds.						15 Sun.	14 Sat.	13 Fri.	9 Mon.				8 Sun.		6 Fri.	1 Sun.
10 After serv.	9:30am	8-10am	10am	8-10am		6:30-8	5-6:15pm	After serv.	After serv.	10	9am	4-8pm	8-10am	7pm	After serv.	10	9:30	9am	4pm	8-10am	10am
Worship Service Youth Grp. trip to Six Flags	Children's Choir rehearsal	Food Shelf	Worship Service	Food Shelf	Newsletter deadline	Sr. Youth Grp, FUSH	Jr. Youth Grp, FUSH	Fundraising - Brainstorming	RE registration	Worship Service	Adult Choir rehearsal & sing	"End of Summer Fling" at Taylors	Food Shelf	Governing Board meeting	Fundraising - Bed & Breakfast	Worship Service	Children's Choir rehearsal & sing	Adult Choir rehearsal	Connections Circle	Food Shelf	Worship Service



SEPTEMBER



THE FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY Unitarian Universalist P.O. Box 75 Hartland Four Corners, VT 05049