



Uni-Verse

April 2008

"Providing a safe and inviting space for religious freedom"
UUFBF Vision Statement

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Big Flats
Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association
607-562-3017 www.uuonline.net

Sunday Services:

10:30 a.m. at the Fellowship just off Hibbard Road, located on the north side of Interstate 86 between exits 49 and 50.

All are welcome for coffee and conversation following the service.

Children's Religious Education Classes:

10:45a.m. Sunday mornings, September through June.

Sunday Service Schedule

Sunday, April 6 - Rev. Janet Ernisse; Humanism and Mysticism: Shall the Twain Ever Meet?

Many Unitarian Universalists consider Humanism and Mysticism to be mutually exclusive. We'll consider whether or not they're right! Janet is a former member and consulting minister for UUFBF.

Sunday, April 13 - Carl Parmelee - Worker / Nose Tissue; Is there a Connection?

Sunday, April 20 - Our annual Passover Seder service and meal combines a UU Haggadah -- based on the story of the exodus from Egypt and interlaced with the eating of traditional foods, readings and songs from this ancient Hebrew ceremony reflecting the importance of personal and religious freedom. Please bring a dish to pass - meat, veggie, salad or dessert. A sign-up sheet for reservations, dish to pass and set-up volunteers will be at the Fellowship.

Sunday, April 27 - Earth Day Celebration with Liz Martin and Matthew Glenn

President's Ponderings

Dear Fellowship

I apologize for the following and certainly do not intend it to express the views of the fellowship, but I have to get it out. It has been five years after all.

Good citizens, could we please put a couple of things into perspective? The deceased leader of Iraq and the leader of the United States have some striking similarities. Both approved of torture, both ruled their countries with fear. One was brought to justice, the other not. Why? What is the difference? The true perpetrator of the horrific acts of 9/11 still walks the Earth freely. If 90,000 troops had been committed to the Afghanistan invasion (not war, there is not one) instead of using those forces to attack the sovereign country of Iraq, perhaps Osama bin Laden would be held responsible for his actions. Instead, the effort was focused on the control of oil.

Saddam Hussein's International crime was he did not want to be dictated to by the Oil Cartel on what to charge for his oil. Who is paying now? Who is profiting now? Do a little thinking here. It is pretty obvious. Moving forward with the price of the war and gas,

Tamara

FellowShip News

Building Our Dreams – Report from March 2nd Service

At the congregational feedback and discussion program, surveys were taken and ideas were generated. Make sure to visit the dream boards in the Fellowship hallway and add your ideas and comments to the growing visioning exercise there. Jackie Wilson invited her brother, an architect, to a Fellowship board meeting to give us some feedback about our expansion ideas. He reaffirmed the board's desire to expand the physical space, using our current building as a starting point. He also gave us ideas on aesthetic improvements we could consider. He said "Make a place and encourage everyone to bring pictures of what they'd like to see included in the new space." A dream board is what we've created - to get ideas communicated through pictures - so bring in tear sheets from magazines of what you'd like to see included - go for it! If you dream it - we can design it! Drawings of the current architectural footprint are also available for everyone to sketch out their ideas on how we can expand our physical space. Work teams are also forming for spring cleaning and greening-up the building and grounds. A chair covering pot-luck party will be coming soon, so fill up your staple-gun! Let's each spend some time dreaming and working together and make our "sacred space" a place that reflects loving kindness and gratitude for our gathering place for religious freedom.

New Directory is Available

Thanks to Tamara's efforts - we have a new directory! Pick up your copy at the Fellowship. If you need a copy mailed to you, please contact her at 607-737-8082 or dodsmill@earthlink.net. If you find information that is incorrect or in need of updating, please forward that to Tamara. A list of addendum will be distributed at the annual meeting, June 1st.

Annual Meeting Announcement

On Sunday, June 1, 2008, immediately following the Flower Communion Service, the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Big Flats will be held. Election of the Fellowship Board and Officers; and approval of the budget for FY 2008-09 will be on the agenda. Reports from committees will be received. If you have interest in serving on the Fellowship board, please contact one of the members of the nominating committee: Kevin Deery, Terri Divens-Bruffey or Jenny Monroe before May 1, 2008

Treasurer's Report to the members and friends of UUFBF

At the March 9 service board members presented some food for thought in terms of where our small but growing fellowship is heading. One observation I heard more than once is that a quarterly (at least) report from the treasurer (Leslie Potter, at present) would be welcomed. The following is an informal presentation of just where we stand financially.

As of the end of February, our cash assets and investments amounted to roughly \$32,500. We started the year with approximately \$3,000 less, so income has exceeded expenses. So far so good. However, what appears to be an enviable financial position comes not from an increase in member contributions but instead from holding the line on expenditures. As of the end of February, with four months left in the pledge year, we had received \$3,931 in pledge fulfillment toward the \$11,466 budgeted. Add non-pledge donations of \$1,476, and we still have a shortfall of \$6,059. If the Church of God were to stop using our facilities, we would be looking at a deficit.

We have held the line on spending money on important items such as building and equipment upgrades, property and landscape improvements, publicity, and materials for RE. Moreover, expenses such as energy promise to veer ever higher. Our monthly "budget" payment of \$286.29 will probably increase to over \$300 as NYSEG recalculates its next charge cycle. I think you'll agree that we don't want to tap into our reserves just to pay the bills and that we should treat rental income as a bonus, not a reliable source of support.

If you would like updated information on where you stand on your pledge, please let me know. Only the treasurer has access to this information. As our personal financial standings can change at the drop of the hat (or Dow Jones average), not everyone will be able to afford what he or she originally expected to provide. Let me know that, too, with my assurance that whatever you tell me will remain confidential.

Respectfully, Leslie Potter

Small Group Meetings

The Elmira Small Group meets the 3rd Monday of the month (April 21st) and Corning Small Group meets the 4th Monday of the month (April 28th)

Religious Education News

TGIIF is on for April 18. Let's welcome new members and get to know each other a little better at this month's intergenerational event. We will plan on having a bonfire and potluck dinner to begin at 6:00pm. If it rains we can still meet for dinner and games. All ages welcome. Please RSVP to Colleen McCall, mccallco@stny.rr.com or 846-2574. Include a secret piece of information from your past that few of us may know about you. Yes, there will be a quiz of sorts!

The children's religious education program welcomed spring last month by dying and hiding 3 dozen eggs. This month we look forward to planting seeds for our fellowship garden as all groups continue to work with the Tapestry of Faith curricula. In our household the children have begun to bring these lessons home. Just this week I caught Abel laying cardboard in front of our door. Olive told me he is recreating a threshold like the one they use on Sunday in their classroom. We also "pray" more often before dinner as Olive recites the chalice lighting. Incidentally, there are more candlelit dinners too. I personally have learned a lot about Unitarian Universalism and faith in general via my work with these lesson plans. I am beginning to think us grown-ups should look into the Tapestry of Faiths adult religious education program. All lessons are available online at the uua.org website. Let me know if you are curious as well. In the meantime mark your calendars for RE Sunday, May 18 when the children share a thing or two with you about our faith.

SLD Calendar Events <i>St. Lawrence District</i>	Information flyers and brochures are available on the District's website at www.sld.uua.org or by contacting the District Office at smtabone@localnet.com
April 5, 2008 Syracuse May Memorial 9AM-8PM	Art At The Heart: Celebrating the Arts in our UU Communities Learn about the importance of storytelling and practice the techniques. Integrate rhythm into your church community with drumming. Experience dance with your body, mind and spirit. Share ideas with fellow musicians and learn some new songs for our musical life in our congregations.
April 25-26, 2008 Owego, NY	St. Lawrence District Assembly: Sustainable Earth - A Call to Action Environment & Spirituality are both themes of District Assembly
April 26, 2008 Binghamton/Owego	SLD Assembly- Social Justice Council Workshop on Democracy as a Religious Principle UU Values in the 2008 Election-what churches can & cannot do in the campaign.
May 10, 2008 Rochester Unitarian 10AM-4PM	Beyond Fundraising Workshop Discover a New Approach to Fundraising Experience a slice of General Assembly presented in our own District. Join Wayne Clark, Director of UUA Congregational Stewardship Services, for this workshop that promises to transform your congregation's fundraising effectiveness. Registration Deadline is April 6 th .
June 20-22, 2008 First UU Society of Albany	OWL Leader Training for Jr. High & Senior High This is an intensive weekend training designed to prepare your leaders to teach the <i>Our Whole Lives</i> program.
Community Events	
April 12 - Bus trip Rochester	Bus trip to the Rochester Islamic Center and Memorial Art Gallery - Deadline for reservations was March 25, but contact Jenny Monroe if you wish to go. (607-524-8439 or jmonroe@stny.rr.com)
April 27 - 2 p.m. Southeast Steuben County Library	Memorial Society of the Greater Corning Area Funeral Consumers Alliance Annual Spring Program. Ten Common Myths about Medicare and Medicaid with Patrick Roth, Attorney and CPA Specialist in Estate Planning, Elder Law, and Estate Administration. Patty Baroody from The Office for the Aging will also present a brief report. All are Welcome! Refreshments Served! Please Come!

FELLOWSHIP HOSTING SCHEDULE - Hosting is a service that we provide each other. If you are unable to host on a day that you are assigned, please make arrangements for someone else to take your place.

DATE	HOST
April 6	Allen, Dodson/Miller
April 13	Halm/Maloney, Divens-Bruffey
April 20	Wosinski, Potter
April 27	Spicer, Deery, Scopelliti
May 4	Monroe, McCall
May 11	Stevenson, Wilson, Swartout
May 18	Martin/Glen, Muffley
May 25	Allen, Dodson/Miller



Writer's Palette

by Sara Katherine Hurley

Yellow dandelions popping up
 through rich green fields
 while crystal clear waters
 flow silently out to sea
 as ocean blue skies shimmer
 like venetian glass
 punctuating the lemon lime
 colored trees
 standing strategically
 where blue and gray uniforms
 once made history

In House Leadership Training

Two volunteers are needed to go to the In-House Leadership Training on May 9th and 10th. Contact Tamara for details.

Thank you, guys and gals!

A big thanks goes out this month to Jean Wosinski for her nurturing of the plants in the fellowship, to Jeni Paquette for taking over responsibility for the newsletter, to Frank Potter for fixing and providing seed for the bird feeder outside the window, and to Alta Stevenson for babysitting the McCall kids so that Colleen and Corey can attend board meetings. This sort of in-kind help demonstrates the caring for which our denomination is noted—plus it stretches dollars and improves our environment!

Elmirans - Election Alert!

Colleen McCall is running for school board! If you haven't signed the petition to get her name on the ballot, please do so. Colleen may be reached at the phone number listed at the end of this newsletter. You go, girl!

Celebrate Arbor Day on April 25, 2008!

Arbor Day is a nationally-celebrated observance that encourages tree planting and care. Founded by J. Sterling Morton in Nebraska in 1872, National Arbor Day is celebrated each year on the last Friday in April.

"They are beautiful in their *peace*, and wise in their *silence*. They will stand until after we are dust. They *teach* us, and we *tend* them."

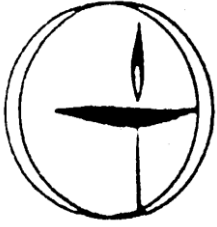
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Board of Trustees:

President:	Tamara Miller	737-8082
Vice-President:	Jenny Monroe	524-8439
Secretary:	Jackie Wilson	734-0856
Treasurer:	Leslie Potter	739-9624
Trustees:	Colleen and Corey McCall	846-2574
Editor	Jeni Paquette	937-9809
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Address correction requested



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