



Uni-Verse

March 2009



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

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Big Flats
P.O. Box 103
Big Flats, NY 14814
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:
 10:45 a.m. Sunday mornings, September through June.

Sunday Service Schedule

March 1	The Covert Power of Women: A Case for Philogyny (fondness for women) with Dr. Joe Vikin. What a way to start off Women's History Month!
March 8	Prophetic Sisterhood with Rev. Darcey Laine In honor of Women's History Month we meet a group of inspiring women ministers who served the western frontier (which extended no further than Iowa in those days) and stretched the boundaries of liberal ministry at the end of the 19th century.
March 15	Gathering of the Green. Join us for the official beginning of the UUFBF Annual Budget Drive, lots of singing for the green, live entertainment with our very own Irish Dancers, Lydia and Reeder Divens-Bruffey, and a catered luncheon to follow. This fun-filled celebration will lightly touch upon the subjects of generosity and stewardship. Sign up to attend a neighborhood cottage meeting.
March 22	To be announced
March 29	Justice Sunday. Come celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and help move the world closer to justice! Kevin Deery will present ideas from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and connect them to local issues and activities that we might engage with. Want peace? Work for Justice, because advancing human rights is the work of many joining hands.

President's Ponderings

I woke up this morning out of a bad dream and into a state of anxiety. Too many things that I've promised others are not yet done. My message and other information for the Uni-Verse are 3 days late! I tried to go back to sleep, but alas my brain was awake and panic was knocking on the back door. I used to be plagued by these states much more often than I am now - thank goodness. And after going through this apex of overwhelm so many times before, I should remember that if I feel this bad, the worst is over. After a few deep breaths, starting the coffee and filling the wood stove, I can now sit down with my journal. Two columns on the page to make lists: powerless over / courage to change. Whew! I'm going to make it. How much more manageable it looks now. And the wisdom to know the difference flows in. My other tool at times like this is a piece of ruled notebook paper which I fill with a list of upcoming days. The paper holds about 60 days. On each line I make a notation if something has to be done that day. Then, after those things are captured, I can look at all the empty space on the paper, and I can see how all the things that are clamoring for my attention all at the same time right now - are actually things that are spaced out over a period of many days. Now that I have regained my balance, I can set the lists aside and meditate in my favorite place - gratitude, affirmation, and grace. I think about all the people, places and things I have in abundance in my life, I think about the fellowship and how I cherish knowing so many of you as deeply as I do. I reread the credo I wrote during the *Building Your Own Theology* class in 2007.

I am smiling. I am now so much smarter than I was 20 minutes ago! I know what I must do and by when, I can feel on whose shoulders I stand, I can put worry and fear in their place and have so much more time and space for grace. I can appreciate this moment. Thanks for listening (and for being there.)

Love,

Jenny Monroe

Fellowship News

Board Shorts

At the February 1st Meeting, the Board recognized Colleen McCall for her taking on the leadership of the Spring Stewardship activities; Mike Mann and Leslie Potter for facilitating the two small group ministries. Noted that the first meeting for the Planning for Growth consultancy will be March 20/21 in Auburn, NY. Team members include Colleen and Corey McCall, Diane and Dave Muffley, Carolyn Scopelliti and Jenny Monroe. A summer institute for lay leaders is available July 26 to August 1 in PA, we'd like to send two members. UUA General Assembly is in Salt Lake City, June 24-26, Jenny is hoping to go. Colleen reviewed the stewardship plan of activities. Adult RE continues with a book for February and another for March. Nominating process for next year's board will begin in March for board approval at April's meeting and congregational voting at annual meeting, May 3. Jenny has certified our membership numbers for UUA at 30 (up from last year's 28). World magazine roster will also be updated. Membership directory was proofed. Next meeting: Sunday, March 1st at 9:15 a.m.

RE News

Thanks to Lori Dodson, Anna Deery and Michael Deery for working with the younger children in February. Besides making valentines for the congregation they also decorated paper pinwheels for Greenpeace to promote clean power. March lessons in Wonderful Welcome include the Gifts of Helping, Families, Stewardship, Protection and Mutual Caring. The older children continue to work on Holidays and Holy Days with Carolyn Scopelliti and Jen Spicer. The McCall Family is hosting a game night for RE Families at their home on Saturday, March 7 starting at 6:30 PM. Bring a game or a snack.

Stewardship Conversations

The Stewardship Committee invites members and friends of UUFBF to attend one of the following cottage meetings to discuss the fellowship's strengths and weaknesses and to describe a talent or interest of your own. Light refreshments will be served. A signup sheet will be posted at the fellowship Sunday, March 15th or RSVP to Colleen McCall, 846-2574. Thanks in advance for your time and effort!

Monday, March 16, 7pm at Alta Stevenson's home

Wednesday, March 18, 7pm at Jenny Monroe's home

Sunday, March 22, 12 pm at the Fellowship, hosted by Colleen McCall

Thursday, March 26, 7pm at the Fellowship, hosted by Dave and Diane Muffley

Sunday, March 29, 2pm at Tamara Miller and Lori Dodson's home

Adult RE

The Adult RE Program will be discussing ***American Gospel: God, the Founding Fathers and the Making of a Nation*** by John Meacham beginning March 8 at 9:30 AM. This book examines the relationship between American society, politics, and religion from the founders through Reagan in a very accessible and even-handed manner. Upcoming attractions include ***The Invention of Air: A Story of Science, Faith, and the Birth of America*** by Steven Johnson. Hope to see everyone there. If you have questions, please contact Corey McCall at mccallcor@gmail.com.

Community Events	
Saturday, February 28 12:45 – 5:00 PM Hamilton Hall Elmira College campus	Elmira College will be hosting a symposium honoring the life and work of Charles Darwin . Panelists will highlight the scientific and cultural impact of Darwin's work. This event is free and open to the public. Contact Corey McCall at cmccall@elmira.edu if you have any questions.
Tuesday, March 3 7 PM First United Methodist Church Corning	Religion and Science Forum Monthly discussion group continues with Rev. Gary McCaslin and <i>Thank God for Evolution</i> by Michael Dowd
Wednesday March 4 6:30 PM Potluck dinner 7:00 PM Presentation Empire Room Dormann Library 101 West Morris St, Bath, NY	Bath Peace and Justice Dr. Ismail Mehr will present a slideshow and describe his recent humanitarian trip to Gaza in the aftermath of the Israeli attacks on that territory. This is a rare opportunity to hear a firsthand account of the recent war's impact on the population of Gaza by a member of our local community. For more information about Dr. Mehr's trip, visit the American Medical Mission to Gaza blog at www.ammgaza.com Free and open to the public.
Tuesday, March 24, 7:15 PM And Thursday, March 26, 12:45 PM	Rabbi Mimi Biatch of Congregation B'Nai Isael in Elmira will speak twice on Sabbath: Gift of the Jews to Sustain Us in Our Time . The program will be presented on Tuesday in Hamilton Hall at Elmira College and on Thursday in the Triangle Lounge at Corning Community College. There is no charge for the events. Refreshments will be served
Sunday, March 29 11:30 AM - 3 PM Congregation B'nai Israel 900 W. Water St. Elmira.	The First Annual Jewish Food Festival Traditional foods of all kinds, Klezmer music, and more. See menu on poster at the Fellowship. Tickets available at Cappy's - \$9 advance; \$10 at the door, ticket includes \$3 of food tickets.
Friday, April 24- Sunday April 26 Albany	St. Lawrence District Annual Meeting, April 24-26 in Albany. Save the date!
Friday, February 27 – March 13 12:10 PM Steele Memorial Library Elmira	Books Sandwiched In Check their Winter newsletter for details. http://www.steele.lib.ny.us/friends.htm
Saturday, March 7 – March 29 1:30 PM Steele Memorial Library Elmira	Library Film Festival , featuring stylized Hollywood crime dramas of the 40s and 50s. See website link above for details.
Saturday-Sunday, March 28-29 2-4 PM Steele Memorial Library Elmira	Poetry Festival Weekend Festival workshop and poetry readings featuring Pulitzer Prize Winning Poet Dr. Carl Dennis. See website link above for details.

1959 – 2009 Fifty Years of Unitarian Universalism in the Chemung Valley

Part Three: 30 Years Ago (published March 2009 *Uni-Verse*)

Last month we learned.... The Chemung Valley Montessori School, tenant since 1974, left for larger quarters and was replaced by the Big Flats Day Nursery. When they moved in, August of 1985, the fellowship made improvements to the building to meet NYS Health Department codes. A Sunday school room was converted into a kitchen, complete with new cupboards, an electric stove and double stainless sink. Coffee hour and dish to pass events were much improved!

On December 1, 1984, the fellowship had a celebration with the burning of a replica of the mortgage document – signifying that it was paid off. The ashes were then spread over the property. Another milestone was reached in 1985 when a private telephone replaced the pay phone.

Other building changes included new roof on the north side of the building, the replacement of original carpet and tile, a drinking fountain between the bathroom doors, and a permanent wall replacing a folding partition between the two remaining north classrooms. A new wood barn, dedicated as the Albert Wickwire Memorial Barn replaced a dilapidated metal storage shed. In the worship room, walls were covered with wallboard and insulation to provide for draft-free meetings. Two walls were done in 1987 and the other two in 1988. Beneath the half-inch wallboard was placed two inches of Styrofoam insulation. A ceiling fan was added and another storage shed was purchased in 1990. In 1991, after many failed water tests from our well, the fellowship made the expensive decision to be hooked up to Big Flats municipal water, paying for construction of the pipeline all the way down fellowship lane to Hibbard Road.

Janet Ernisse, Ruth Helfinstine and Edythe Priset (Shepard) organized a summer gathering for women of the St. Lawrence District that began a district tradition in July of 1990 at Misty Hollow Girl Scout Camp near Corning. This Women of Spirit event, assisted by SLD staff Rev. Wendy Colby, ran many years after, hosted by different congregations.

Carl Parmelee (currently our most senior member) joined the Fellowship in November of 1959. He was active in most all aspects of the fellowship – program, building and grounds, service to the district – but a special gift was his Sunday morning short talks each week for nearly 15 years. They began in the early 1980s and originally intended for the children - relating stories from the Bible with what was currently accepted in science, humanities or archeology. They became very popular with the adults and gave the congregation a little feel for a “consistent voice” in the pulpit. Carl, in effect, created a ministerial presence, giving spiritual direction to the whole congregation. When he finally asked to be excused from these weekly talks, members recognized with sadness that even though Carl would continue to participate in fellowship activities in other ways, an important era in the life of the fellowship had ended.

As former member, Marsha Kardon, remembered... “When Carl stopped his weekly talks at Sunday Services, there was a void. I soon realized that he had been our unofficial religious leader, and that we needed to officially create and fill that position. Unfortunately, it became clear that our small group could not support a full-time minister. So, growth of the fellowship became even more important to me.”

In addition to Carl, we have a number of current active members who joined in the 60s, 70s, and 80s. They include: Jean Wosinski (1963); Marcia and Dick Cowles (1965); Joe Vikin (1967); Marcia Allen (1973); Sara Hurley (1979); Edythe Priset (Shepard) (1987); Corene and Dick Slocum (1988) and Jenny Monroe (1989).

The fellowship was changing, mirroring the greater UU movement from secular to spiritual aspects of worship. Guest ministers were invited to lead services. Rev. Max Coots of Canton, NY, was a favorite. The congregation began to sing hymns and purchased a set of twenty-five of the newly released UU hymnal, *Singing the Living Tradition*. Why, we even began to openly talk about money!

In the next installment...experiments with growth – and the seesaw ride in search of a new building and/or part-time ministry.

Updates added to *The Unfinished Story of the Chemung Valley Unitarian Fellowship* compiled by James W. Farrell, 1987 and *The Search for Faith Fellowship and Forum* by Celeste Busby, edited by Sally Immerman, ca. 1997.

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
Mar 1	Allen, Dodson/Miller, Young
Mar 8	Halm-Maloney, Divens-Bruffey, Wilson
Mar 15	Wosinski, L&J Potter, Mann
Mar 22	Spicer, Deery, Scopelliti
Mar 29	Monroe, McCall, Edwards
Apr 5	Stevenson, Swarthout, Cowles
Apr 12	Martin/Glen, Muffley, Brenner
Apr 19	Allen, Dodson/Miller, Young

Board Members		
President	Jenny Monroe	607-524-8439
Vice-President	Corey McCall	607-846-2574
Secretary	Lori Dodson	607-737-8082
Treasurer	Leslie Potter	607-739-9624
Director	Dave Muffley	570-835-5133
Director	Gary Swarthout	607-377-2967
Uni-Verse Editor	Jeni Paquette jpaquette@stny.rr.com	607-937-9809

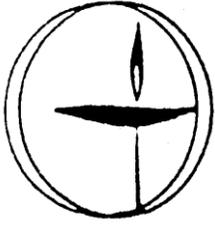
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I would rather have a mind opened by wonder than one closed by belief.

Gerry Spence, 'How to Argue and Win Every Time'



Address correction requested



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
PO Box 103
Big Flats, NY 14814

Please check here _____ and return if you no longer wish to receive this mailing. Thank You