

THE COMMUNITARIAN



COMMUNITY UNITARIAN CHURCH
AT WHITE PLAINS

Religious Education
10:00 am

Sunday Services
10:15 am

Accessible to Handicapped

~ Religious Authority ~

February's theme is "Religious Authority." Do Unitarian Universalists have any? UUs place a lot of emphasis on the authority of individual conscience. We have no authoritative creed, nor any ecclesiastical counsel that declares what a faithful UU must believe – for, after all, for us, one's religion isn't about what one believes. (It's about the ethics and values that guide one's life, the community to which one commits, and the experiences one has of transcendence.) We are not only creedless, but canonless. That is, we do not particularly privilege, for instance, the 66 books of the Protestant Bible among sources of spiritual insight and wisdom. In being creedless, UUs are joined by such other heirs of the Protestant Reformation as Baptists, Disciples of Christ, and Churches of Christ. In being canonless, however, UUs are distinct among the heirs of the Reformation -- and, indeed, among the heirs of Abraham.

While we have no closed canon of religiously authoritative texts, we do have an open, evolving and loosely-defined tradition of thought. Sources from ancient sages to Transcendentalist writers in the 19th century to contemporary ecospiritual writers inform our Unitarian Universalist tradition. You'll find their names in the index of authors in the back of our *Singing the Living Tradition* hymnal. These are "religious authorities" for our tradition – voices of wisdom that we UUs collectively celebrate. For now. The next edition of our hymnal will doubtless add some new names and remove some of the ones currently cited.

Our liberal religious tradition has insisted for centuries that no one turns over the authority of her own conscience to anyone else at the church door. Yet your, and my, individual conscience isn't always trustworthy. This isn't because any other single source is reliably more trustworthy. It's just that there is such a thing as path toward deeper wisdom, and there are such things as guides along that path – not guides that tell you what to think or do but that offer pointers a way for individual conscience work a little better – better for you, better for the world (if, indeed, there's a difference – a proposition which grows increasingly untenable along the path of deepening wisdom).

Synchronicously, our Community Unitarian Church decreed a religious authority for itself just in time for "religious authority" month. The authority that we decided to be guided by is our mission: to nurture spirituality, foster compassion, and engage in service to others.

At a recent UU forum, the question was raised, "Who owns the congregation?" Most of us immediately think of the members as the owners. In that forum, however, a beautiful point was made: the mission owns the congregation. The mission brings the members together; the mission is the reason the members joined; and the mission is what the members are there to serve. In the liberal religious tradition, we make our own authority, which is quite different from having none. Having made, or found, our authority, we must now heed it.

Yours Faithfully,

Meredith

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FEBRUARY SERVICES 10:00 AM

February 2: 7th Sunday of winter. Ground Hog Day.

Rev. Meredith Garmon

Who's In Charge Here?

Examining our sources of religious authority -- and of ministry. It's a subject addressed by the latest report from UUA's Commission on Appraisal.

Leitmotif: 7th Principle: respect for the interdependent web of existence

February 9: 8th Sunday of winter

Rev. Meredith Garmon

The Meaning of Membership

Authority comes from the people -- and the people's authority comes from commitment. To what do we expect CUC members to commit?

Leitmotif: 1st Source: Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.

February 16: 9th Sunday of winter.

Joann Prinzivalli

Leitmotif: 2nd Source: Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.

February 23: 10th Sunday of winter

Rev. Meredith Garmon

A Natural and Religious History of Compassion

The good news is that we're getting better at compassion. Yes, it's very slow, but maybe we can have compassion for our own slowness.

Leitmotif: 3rd Source: Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life.

Caring & Sharing...

If anyone knows of another among us who is in need of a caregiver from our Caring & Sharing Circle, throughout

February contact Robert Youngman at 948-2973 or robeau44@optonline.net or Ingrid Hartmann at 946-2026 or ih63053@gmail.com.

Thank You....

The Caring and Sharing Committee has continued its tradition of preparing Holiday bags and Baskets of seasonal goodies for those Seniors and "Shut-ins," who cannot participate in CUC's holiday activities due to "health issues." As the recipient of a very beautifully felt decorated bag of goodies, I wish to publically thank the committee. The joy I experienced was similar to a youngster opening a Holiday surprise gift.

Anne Gooding

online directory!

**Need a member's phone number
but can't find your directory?**

**Can't place that name with a
face?**

**Your Member Directory is now
online!**

You can now go online to CUC's website for all that and more. Since our online member directory is private, for member/friend use only, you must first obtain a password to use the system. Please e-mail Karen Schmitt at schmitt8@verizon.net for your personal login information. After you have received this, go to CUC's website, and on the right hand side of the homepage, under "News and Events," you will see a link to the "Online Member Directory." Click on that link, and you are ready to go.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Heating the building and other updates...

Why is it cold in the Sanctuary on Sunday morning? The answer is because we only have a limited heat supply to the building due to a gas leak on January 9, 2014. Con Ed responded with their emergency team, identified a leak and put in an emergency gas service that day. This emergency service only allows us to partially heat the building, and on Sundays we have chosen to heat the RE classroom wing, but this does not leave us capacity to also heat the Sanctuary. So, for the foreseeable future, dress warmly for church.

I want to extend kudos to Tim Lynch, our chair of Buildings and Grounds, for the yeoman job he is doing in helping us resolve this, as well as to members of the Buildings and Grounds Committee. We are greatly in their debt for their help with this and the other issues we face, described in more detail below.

You might ask, what about Lara's ordination and the RE youth conference scheduled for later this month? We will be able to use the Sanctuary for Lara's ordination as we will not be heating the RE wing. For the CON, we will use some space heaters and rotate the heat through the building as different spaces are needed. Tim and others familiar with the system will be in the building that week-end to keep tabs on the systems and trouble shoot as needed.

When will the heat be fixed?

Unfortunately, not soon. We are in the process of getting estimates as quickly as we can – this is big job because we have to run a new gas pipe from the road to the building, and that involves digging a trench and laying a pipe. The work has to be coordinated with Con Ed, and their schedule for review once we do the work is, of course, entirely out of our hands. We hope to have the estimates within the next 10 days and the Board of Trustees will be meeting in emergency session, with Tim and others, to choose the contractor and authorize the expense – which may be large, depending on the amount of coverage our insurance policy affords.

This, alas, is not the only problem with the building. On January 8, the day before the gas leak, a sprinkler pipe froze and broke in the kitchen, causing water damage to Liliana's office, the kitchen, Meredith's office and a little bit in the lobby and hallway. This repair is underway, but the ceilings in the office and kitchen will not be repaired until

The leaks in the roof are found and repaired;/ and or a new roof installed. Some of you may have noticed the leaks in the ceilings in various parts of the building even before the sprinkler pipe broke. The BoT has authorized the Building and Grounds Committee to obtain 3 estimates for the roof – we probably are going to have to replace the flat section of the roof over the kitchen, offices and lobby. We are awaiting estimates from roofers as this goes to press. This, too, may take a while to fix.

Despite these woes, our community life is full and going forward. We were pleased to have the Memorial Service in honor of Sam Usher on January 11 – a full house attended to pay their respects. We then passed our new mission statement on January 12, 2014 (now printed every week in the order of service).

In their bi-annual retreat, also on January 11, the Board of Trustees identified goals for the rest of the year; these will be discussed in more detail in the months to come. One important note, to support the part of our mission that states “**Nurture each other in our spiritual journeys**”, the Board will be organizing a forum in late February/early March to explore the purpose of small group ministry in more depth. We plan to have members from congregations which have implemented small group ministry teams (which we will be calling “journey groups”) to discuss their experiences. Keep tuned for more specifics.

One final note - the Aesthetics Committee is launched! David Bowen will be the chair and the plan is to create an approach to revisioning, first, the focal area in the church; As part of the process, input will be sought from the congregation, so watch for that opportunity if you are interested in sharing your ideas. The next meeting in Sunday Feb 9 at 11:30 and open to all.

***Yours in community,
Ginny Strand, Chair
Board of Trustees***

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

R.E. SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT by Liz Suvanto and Chris Breault (RE Council)

We have kicked off January with a new social action project: helping animals that have been rescued by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) of Westchester.

On Sunday, January 12th, the children decided to create a drive to help the animals at the SPCA. They made flyers and hung up large signs in the hallway and RE lobby.

To make this drive a success, we are requesting donations of:

- Towels/Blankets (new or used, any size)
- Dog/Cat Toys

Donations can be dropped off until Feb. 9 in the RE Lobby, into bins labeled "SPCA Drive."

The SPCA is a no-kill shelter. It is the only humane society in Westchester County empowered to enforce laws relating to animal cruelty. It is an independent organization and does not receive any federal, state or county funds. The SPCA offers: shelter services, cruelty investigation and intervention, veterinary care, pet therapy, educational outreach, and pet safety through a foster program with My Sister's Place.

The children are passionate about their social action projects, and especially invested in this one - helping animals in need. Thank you for your support!

YOUTH GROUP POETRY SLAM by Daniel Tillman

The night was dark and the space was warm, well not really warm as the furnace was turned off. The event, however, was warm with intentions, and the fireplace was a beautiful back drop.

Thus began CUC's first Poetry Slam, sponsored by the Youth Group, on the evening of January 10th. Twenty-seven would be poets showed up to perform their original work as well as poems and stories from favorite poets and authors. It was surprising, enlightening and a ton of fun. We heard poems from Trent and Tabitha Munch as well as original works from Richard Eldridge, Mary Cobb and John Schwam.

For me, however, the highlight of the night was a tremendous performance of a spoken word piece by Caleb Schwartz. It was a piece written by Lin-Manuel Miranda and first performed at the White House Poetry Jam. Caleb brought a friend to accompany him on the piano, but unfortunately the piano was out of commission for the event. Maybe it will be available next time. I am hopeful we can schedule another one and maybe make this a regular occurrence, as it appears we have plenty of poets in the congregation.

CUC Money Matters: Halfway through the Church Year

This article summarizes where we were financially as of half way through the church's fiscal year, or December 31, 2013. After a slow start, this year is ahead of plan. Here are the numbers, along with actuals as of 12/31/12 for comparison:

	Actual @ 12/31/13	Budget @ 12/31/13	Actual @ 12/31/12
Expenses	248,679	257,688	215,582
Total Revenue	367,193	309,755	346,468
Pledges Collected	237,923	210,000	247,964

So the above chart shows the following:

Pledge collections exceed the projected amount for the time of year. This is partially due to the number of people who pay by year end to secure a maximum tax deduction. Note that pledges are down from actual collected in 2012. Bottom line, if you are in a position to pay your pledge soon, it would be great for CUC, and in all events THANK YOU for your pledge and your payments so far.

We have spent 3.5% less than our budget but more than we had at this time last year.

Contributions for use of space are up over budget, though again less than last year at this time. The surplus is largely due to a new user, Westchester Center for Study of Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy, and to a movie rental.

So far, we have not had to take money from the Endowment to supplement expenses this year, but unfortunately the repairs needed to the gas line, church roof, the Minister's office, the administrative offices and the kitchen are likely to require a withdrawal. [See Ginny Strand's Note from the Board Chair]

Endowment Fund

The Endowment Fund was up \$83,000 or 8.5% for the first half of this fiscal year or between July 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013. This is due primarily to the climbing stock market.

Giving Campaign

As you can see, this year has been a good one financially so far. Our continued financial health depends on your generosity in pledging. So thank you for your support this year and please participate in the upcoming giving campaign supporting our Church life next year.

Want to know more? Ask Nicky Klemens at nsklemens@optonline.net or Chris Kortlandt, kortlandtbunch@verizon.net.

Submitted by Catherine Kortlandt

EVENTS



Adult RE: Our Story, Our Faith
Led by Rev. Meredith Garmon
Saturday, Jan 25 and Sat Feb 1
Noon - 2:30pm
The Parsonage

This five-hour workshop/class (two sessions of 2.5 hours each) explores the nature of Unitarian Universalism -- where we've been, where we are, and how to articulate your UU faith. Truly a class for long-timers and newbies alike. Please plan to be there to take advantage of this chance to understand UUs -- including yourself -- better.

Come have some Chili

Sunday, February 9th
After Services

Super Bowl snacks all gone?
So stay at CUC for some wonderful
Chili and other food.

Sponsored by the 7th & 8th grade
for their social action projects:

Cost: \$5 per Adult, \$3 per child, \$20 per family



Bird/Nature Walk at CUC

Sunday, February 9th
8:30 am

The first CUC bird walk on January 5th was a big success with 16 observers and over 14 bird species reported. Our walk was followed by refreshments, warmth, poetry, and shared stories at the Parsonage.

For a full report of our outing go to: <http://cucmatters.blogspot.com>.

The bird species and numbers collected during walks will be compiled for a running bird list for the year, and were also entered on ebird (www.ebird.org - a great place for citizen scientists to contribute to understanding and conserving birds).

Please join us for our next walk, **Sun Feb 9 at 8:30am** at the back of the parsonage. Dress according to what the ground hog sees the week before.

Led by Rev. LoraKim Joyner, DVM. If you have any questions, you may contact her at amolo-ros@gmail.com.



Sunday, February 23, 2014 at 3 pm

Concert Series, Friends of CUC

CUC Music Director pianist **Adam Kent** teams up with clarinetist **Enid Blount Press**, cellist **Adrian Daurov**, and violinist **Elena Peres** in chamber music classics by Grieg, Brahms and others.

Unitarian Universalist Choir Festival – Sing With Us!

**The Fellowship Choir of Northern Westchester of Mt. Kisco
The Fellowship Choir of UUFBCO of Croton On Hudson
The FUSW Coffee Hour Choir of Hastings On Hudson
The Community Unitarian Church at White Plains Choir**

Now that the New Year is in full swing and it's time to begin some new activities, consider singing with the CUC Choir this season. Whether you wish to sing in the two Sunday worship services or just sing with us for the coming concert, please feel free to sit in or observe a rehearsal any Tuesday evening from 7:30-9:15pm. For the next few months, the Choir will be rehearsing in Fellowship Hall so please look for us there. Reading music is not required, just the desire and enthusiasm to sing.

For the first time in my recollection, three UU church choirs will be joining with the CUC Choir to perform a great variety of music in what promises to be an exciting and memorable event on **Saturday, March 29** at 7pm in the Sanctuary at CUC. More than 60 voices will gather together to perform such pieces as Rutter's *For the Beauty of the Earth*, spirituals such as *Ride the Chariot* and *Nothin's Gonna Stumble My Feet*, and anthems such as Thomas' arrangement of *I Dream A World*, among others.

Proceeds will be donated to local food pantries.

The UU church choirs that are participating along with CUC are:

The Fellowship Choir of Northern Westchester of Mt. Kisco, the Fellowship Choir of UUFBCO of Croton On Hudson, and the FUSW Coffee Hour Choir of Hastings On Hudson.

My fellow choir directors and I have enjoyed working together to make this event happen and look forward to this great opportunity of fellowship among all of our choir members.

The CUC Choir will be rehearsing the music for this performance from 7:30-8:45pm each Tuesday evening, so please come and sing with us if you wish to participate in this special event. For more information about this and other Choir activities, please feel free to contact me at choir@cucwp.org, or by phone at 347-278-3187.

If you cannot sing with us, I hope that you will attend the concert and enjoy the music.

Lisa Meyer, CUC Choir Director

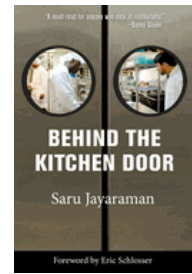
ADULT RE
Sunday, February 23, 11:30

"BEHIND THE KITCHEN DOOR"

Reverend Meredith along with some members of the congregation will lead a discussion on this year's UUA Common book read Behind the Kitchen Door. Fellowship Hall.

"UU ROOTS"

Led by Jane Dixon, an introduction to Unitarian Universalism geared towards newcomers. In room 12.



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION(UUA)
~ DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

As your denominations chair, my job is to bring you news from the greater UU world. But there is so much happening I can usually only inform you of upcoming opportunities to talk, work and play with other UU's near and far. But there is so much more out there. Blogs, press releases, sermons, and stories that can help you learn more about UU and help you on your spiritual path. So here are a few sites (there are so many more) that you should visit weekly or monthly:

- <http://www.uua.org/news/>
- <http://www.uua.org/communications/blogs/>
- <http://uumetrony.org/metronymminute>
- <http://standingonthesideoflove.org/>
- <http://www.uusc.org/>

Upcoming scheduled webinars from the Central East Regional Group (CERG) <http://www.cerguua.org>

February 6: Congregational Meetings: Touching Hearts and Lives Compassionately

February 12 and February 13: Meaningful Multigenerational Worship

February 25: Happiness as a Spiritual Practice

Save the date:

Young Adult Winter Retreat

February 14-17, 2014, [Frost Valley YMCA](#), Claryville, NY, For more information: http://uumetrony.org/events/Frost_Valley_2014.pdf

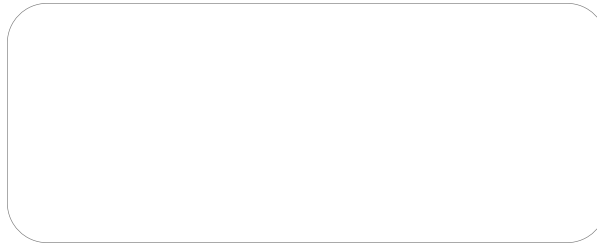
The UU United Nations Office Intergenerational Spring Seminar for Adults and Youth is scheduled for **April 3-5, 2014**. The theme is Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with keynote speakers the Rev. Peter Morales, UUA President, and Vyda Ng, Interim Executive Director of the Canadian Unitarian Council. Registration will be open in January 2014. <http://www.uua.org/international/events/seminar/>

The 2014 District Annual Meeting will be held May 2-3, 2014, at the Hyatt Morristown in Morristown NJ. Contact Denice Tomlinson for more info denice.tomlinson@yahoo.com

The 2014 General Assembly will be June 25-29 in Providence, RI. Theme for 2014 GA: "Love Reaches Out". We need to start planning now so we can bring a large contingent of adults and youth from White Plains. **It's so close!**

~ February 2014 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Metro NY Dist Youth Con (All) 12p-2:30p Our Story Our Faith (Parsonage)
2 Super Bowl / Groundhog Day 9a-9:50a COA Mentors (R11) 9a-11:30a Nursery Care (32) 10a-11:30a RE Classes (FH & classrooms) 10a-11:15a Worship/Coffee (SANC) 11:45a-1:15p In the Spirit of Truth (FH)	3 6:30p-7:30p Tai Chi (FH)	4 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal (SANC)	5 7:30p-9:30p Program Council (R41)	6	7	8
9 8:45a-10a Choir Rehearsal (Sanc) 9a-10a Chili Brunch (FH, KTC) 9a-11:30a Nursery Care (32) 10a-11:30a RE Classes (FH & classrooms) 10a-11:15a Worship/Coffee (SANC) 11:30 Aesthetics Committee	10 6:30p-7:30p Tai Chi (FH)	11 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal (SANC) 7:30p-10p RE Council (R41)	12 7:30p-9:30p Board of Trustees (41)	13 11:30a-1p Science and Spirituality (R24)	14 Valentine's Day	15
16 Communitarian Deadline 9a-11:30a Nursery Care (32) 10a-11:30a RE Special Sunday 10a-11:15a Worship/Coffee (SANC) 11:30a-12:30p Inside the Music (Sanc)	17 Presidents' Day 9a-10a OFFICE CLOSED 6:30p-7:30p Tai Chi (FH) 8p-9:30p Finance Committee (41)	18 7p-8:30p Worship Associates (R41) 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal (SANC)	19	20 10a-11a COMMUNITARIAN mailing (FA)	21	22
23 8:45a-10a Choir Rehearsal (Sanc) 9a-11:30a Nursery Care (32) 10a-11:30a RE Classes (FH & classrooms) 10a-11:15a Worship/Coffee (SANC) 11:30a-12p UU Roots (R 12) 11:30a-2p UUA-Congregational Read (FH) 3p-6p CUC Concert (3p) (SANC)	24 6:30p-7:30p Tai Chi (FH)	25 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal (SANC)	26	27 11:30a-1p Science and Spirituality (41)	28	

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468 Rosedale Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605



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Sunday, February 16

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