Creating & Re-creating Acts of Radical Love

April Worship Services
(Sundays at 10 AM)

April 1—Giving Life to Life (Easter)—Of the many ways we can ignite our inherent loving kindness, none is more rewarding than meeting our everyday lives with wholehearted awareness and compassion. This "awakened heart" informs the true spirit of compassion that is the core of Judaism, Christianity, and the heart of Buddhism. Easter and the awakening of Spring is a time for us to renew ourselves, and to envision how to transform our own suffering and the ill-will of others, letting compassion nourish our commitment to healing ourselves and the world. Led by Joshin Byrnes, Vice Abbot of Upaya Zen Center located in Santa Fe New Mexico.

Rev. Barnaby returns from sabbatical!

April 8—El Tiempo -- Spanish uses the same word for "weather" and "time." Rev. Barnaby, in his first Sunday back from sabbatical, reflects on how this got him thinking in Nicaragua about the close relationship between confusion and inspiration. Join us for Mud Communion and celebration cake for Rev. Barnaby’s return.

April 15—Did I Miss Anything? -- Rev. Barnaby certainly hopes so, and reflects on how radical love might help him catch up with what's gone on with the congregation while he was on sabbatical.

April 22—Make Earth Great Again (Earth Day) -- Rev. Barnaby addresses Earth Day through the lens of radical love, and asks why UU's seem so uncertain about what we are called as congregations to do as environmentalists.

April 29– UU Youth: Reflections on Service—Youth group led service. Please join us and hear how the youth desire to serve went into action this year. They seek donations of paper goods and cleaning supplies for the John Graham Shelter—paper towels, saran wrap, baggies, foil, toilet paper, kitchen and bathroom cleaners—and our “5th Sunday” financial help.

SAVE THE DATE! MORE INSIDE!

Blue Jeans Sunday, April 29
Rhubarb Festival, Sat. June 2
Words from Rev. Barnaby:  
Sabbatical Report, Part 1

Winter sun, day's keel  
Above silent whiteness laid  
Deep and wide last night on playing fields.

Released from her leash  
Lyra plow-bounds hard away  
To the woods, expecting squirrels at least.

I head for the path  
More remembered than present,  
And sing out through the trees, “Where's Lyra?”

Rested snow slips down  
Now life-filtered, a slow jazz  
Of flurry and pauses, and so resounds

A forest praise-song  
For intervening branches:  
I hear soft thuds, rolls, and grace notes throng.

“Everywhere we rise,”  
The trees say. “We make countless  
Ways to dawdle, fall, be otherwise.”

They point out Lyra;  
She’s sensing something alive,  
burrowed into the understory.

No need to hurry  
Today, she and they agree.

Openings for Deeper Connections

“The highest priority is that people of all ages are opened to deeper connections with themselves, others, and the spirit of life.”  
(CVUUS Purpose Statement)

CVUUS Council of Ministries  
The Council of Ministries is composed of some CVUUS committee chairs and others. Its focus is on communications and connections within the congregation and between the congregation and minister, and it serves as a supportive and creative sounding board. It’s important that a myriad of voices are heard. Some of you are active in a variety of activities and care deeply about CVUUS, but are not part of a particular group right now. We invite you to join. We leave each meeting filled with gratitude for this beloved community. We meet on the 2nd Sunday of each month from 3:30-5:30 at the Fenn House. Contact Steve Maier.

Flower Co-op  
Glorious Spring! The Flower Co-op shares flowers and seasonal pieces each Sunday as a spiritual practice and to support your worship experience. We love to do this, and we could use your help. There are several possibilities. You could create the entire bouquet. Or you could let someone visit your garden for discrete flower and shrub branch cutting. Contact our group co-chairs: Marnie Wood & Dinah Smith.

Hospitality  
The after service coffee hour needs helping hands! Some of the jobs are: preparing coffee and tea water urns, setting out sweeteners, napkins, cups, silverware, and composting bin, filling dishes with coffee cakes and other offerings people bring in, circulating with the sign-up clipboard to find bakers for future weeks, and cleaning up afterwards. If you’d like to lend your helping hands just show up twenty minutes early to church or stick around afterwards to help clean up. You will get thanked by the smiles of those who appreciates this wonderful service, which is everyone!

Photographers  
Take and email photos of worship, and other CVUUS activities you happen to be at for Laura to use in blasts, newsletters and the annual meeting slideshow. Send them to office@cvuus.org.

Ushers  
Ushers are essential to making CVUUS an inviting and welcoming place. They distribute hymnals and orders of service, collect the offering, and do an attendance count. They arrive at 9:30. You may volunteer to usher a little or a lot, whatever best suits your schedule. Contact Jack Shubert jlush68@gmail.com or 458-8931.
Radical Love in Action
Canvass Kick–off
Thanks!

...to Canvass Team co-chairs Neil and Julie Chippendale who coordinated a family friendly pot luck dinner and fun fest on Sat., March 10 and to all of our canvassers who have provided each supporting member and friend a pledge card to complete and return to the canvasser or Pledge Box in our sanctuary. Thank you for your generosity!

...to Mary Hadley and our Youth Group for setting up, serving and cleaning up our tasty pot luck supper.

...to Connie Leach, Chris Prickitt and Ted Scheu for coordinating our wonderful all-ages performers.

...to all who shared their love stories.

See more at cvuus.org/ connection/canvass-fundraising-campaign/

Radical Love in Action Campaign—Have you noticed those Radical Love in Action stickers that have been appearing on people's name-tags? That means they have made their pledge. You too can have one if you get your pledge in!
RE THOUGHTS

I recently attended a workshop on creating sensory-rich worship. The leader said this: the purpose of worship is to build us up to do our work in the world. I would broaden that to say that the purpose of ALL we do at CVUUS - Religious Exploration programs for children, Youth Group, OWL, Small Group Ministry, choir, how we talk to each other - is to build us up to do our work in the world. Because our work can be hard.

What is our “work in the world”? There’s our internal work: to be our true best self, to be healthy, to be in right relationship with others, to be in balance, to try to feel connected to something bigger than ourselves – love, people, the Spirit, the Goddess, God... There’s our external work: to make the world a better place, to protect others, to play with the kids, to speak out, to do the dishes...

And what does it feel like to be built up? For me, it is feeling joy, connection, acceptance, support, being encouraged to try again and push myself a bit more. It’s not feeling alone. Being part of something.

So...does coming to worship build you up? Does being part of our congregation? If so, yay! But if not, I wonder why not? There might be things/groups to be part of at CVUUS that will build you up but you haven’t tried them yet. Or maybe there are some things we could do in worship and other places that would build you up more? As Director of Religious Exploration and part of the Worship Team, I would LOVE to hear ideas about things that you think will build you/us up. Or events we could do. Music, dancing, readings, groups, visuals...what builds you up?

~ Poppy, your Director of Religious Exploration

APRIL for Children and Youth

APR 1: EASTER start in worship, then to all-ages Easter/Spring activities with Poppy

APR 8: SPIRIT PLAY, HARRY & UU start in worship, then to groups
NEIGHBORING FAITHS Fenn Chapel at 10 for ISLA
OWL 10-12:30 Last session!
Next door at Mary Johnson Children’s Center – followed by
OWL CELEBRATION LUNCH 12:30 Fenn Chapel
YOUTH GROUP 4-6

? FRIDAY, APRIL 9: NEIGHBORING FAITHS possible Islam trip to mosque – details coming

APR 15: SPIRIT PLAY, HARRY & UU start in worship, then to groups
NEIGHBORING FAITHS TBA

APR 22: KIDS FOR KIDS 10-11:15 Fenn Chapel All-ages kids social justice group that works to help other kids. This month: TBD.
YOUTH GROUP 4-6 ** at Heidi’s house **

APR 29: YOUTH GROUP WORSHIP SERVICE organized and led by the high school Youth Group
RE FUN DAY start in worship, then to all-ages activities as part of Blue Jean Sunday
BLUE JEAN SUNDAY after service – kids encouraged to come, lunch provided.
RE Council meeting 11:45-1:45

For more information, contact Poppy Rees, Director of Religious Exploration re@cvuus.org
How Would You Like to Stand for Radical Love?

**Wednesday, April 4, Dolores, 4 and 7 pm**, Marquis Theater. Middlebury Showing Up for Racial Justice hosts this film about Dolores Huerta, one of the most important, yet least known, activists in American history. An equal partner in co-founding the first farm workers unions with Cesar Chavez, her enormous contributions have gone largely unrecognized. Dolores tirelessly led the fight for racial and labor justice alongside Chavez, becoming one of the most defiant feminists of the twentieth century—and she continues the fight to this day, at 87. With intimate and unprecedented access to this intensely private mother to eleven, the film reveals the raw, personal stakes involved in committing one’s life to social change. Suggested donation $10. Proceeds benefit Migrant Justice and SURJ. Speak with Addison Allies volunteers about local work they are doing (formerly Migrant Ally Group).

**Saturday, April 7, Standing for the Earth Vigil, 10:30am**, Middlebury Triangle Park. Hosted by Addison County Interfaith Climate Action every first Saturday of the month. The vigil occurs every Saturday morning but seeks extra attendance on first Saturdays and also this month on **Earth Day weekend April 21**.

**Thursday, April 12, Let Me Ask You This: A Decade Of Interviewing Interesting Vermonters: Jane Lindholm, 7 pm**, Sanctuary. Co-hosted by Hawthorne Club and Henry Sheldon Museum. Gatekeepers: Marnie Wood and Karl Lindholm


**Hunger Council of Addison County** needs a CVUUS representative. Contact office@cvuus.org if interested. Meets Tues. May 8, 3:30 pm, CSAC (Catamount Park).

**Meals on Wheels** needs volunteer drivers. Speak with experienced CVUUS drivers Mary Conlon, Barbara Merz and others. For more, see [www.agewellvt.org](http://www.agewellvt.org) and contact Erica marks emarks@agewellvt.org.

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**Congregational Conversation on Green Sanctuary (Following worship service in the Sanctuary April 15, 11:30-12:30)**

Created in 1989, the Green Sanctuary (GS) program historically provided a path for congregational study, reflection, and action in response to environmental challenges, worshiping and acting - grounded in justice and Unitarian Universalist values. Each congregation performs a self-assessment, writes a plan, and completes projects in these areas:

- Environmental Justice / Climate Justice (Gleaning)
- Worship and Celebration,
- Religious Education, and
- Sustainable Living.

Our congregation has completed all of the projects in its plan and is now seeking accreditation. Join us for a Congregational Conversation to explore what we have accomplished so far and what our future direction will be. For more information, contact Elizabeth Golden-Pidgeon. For more and to prepare, visit [http://www.cvuus.org/about-us/a-green-sanctuary/](http://www.cvuus.org/about-us/a-green-sanctuary/).

Join us after worship service each third Sunday of the month Sept through May for a conversation about a topic of interest to congregants. Contact Alan Moore with your ideas for future conversations. See more about their format as well as previous topics at [http://www.cvuus.org/blog/congregational-conversations/](http://www.cvuus.org/blog/congregational-conversations/).
Social Action Updates

April “Share the Plate” Donees

*Common Good Vermont* is the only statewide organization in Vermont dedicated to uniting and strengthening all of the mission-driven organizations that serve the Green Mountain State. *Common Good Vermont* serves as the “go to” resource for our peers to share resources, gain skills, and build partnerships. This work is made possible through meaningful collaboration with many local, regional and state leaders, pointed toward a thriving nonprofit sector able to contribute to the well-being of Vermont. *Common Good Vermont* focuses on increasing the leadership, accountability, sustainability and advocacy capacity of our fellow nonprofits and allies.

**CVUUS YOUTH GROUP in Action on Homelessness**

*John Graham Shelter* will be our “5th Sunday” donee in honor of our Youth Group and Kids for Kids service projects there. Youth Group seeks donations of paper goods and cleaning supplies for the shelter - paper towels, saran wrap, baggies, foil, toilet paper, kitchen/bathroom cleaners. Drop off by or on April 29.

Please speak with anyone on Donation Ministry to suggest an organization you would like CVUUS to support: Jason Duquette-Hoffman (chair), Parker (Monty) Montgomery, Ashleigh Hickey, Barbara Karle, or Rev. Barnaby. March’s collection raised $604.72 for Vermont Digger.

**Kids for Kids**

Kids for Kids will meet Sun., April 22 for Earth Day related activities.

Visit cvuus.org/justice for the many ways that CVUUS advances justice through action and monthly donations and cvuus.org/news for latest news and more about events listed previous page.

**CVUUS YOUTH GROUP in Action on Gun Violence**

State legislators Peter Conlon and Robin Scheu meet with youth asking for gun control measures. Wren Colwell gives testimony. Youth rally at #nationalschoolwalkout and March for Our Lives.
FROM THE BOARD  Jean Terwilliger

Why Sabbaticals?

While Barnaby is on sabbatical, and with a recent board supported request from Poppy to add a sabbatical to her benefits, the board thought it would be useful to consider the value of this time away to both Barnaby, other staff and the congregation as a whole. Why is this a benefit the UUA recommends for ministers, RE directors, and music directors? What is its value to the rest of us?

Sabbaticals, "periods of paid (or unpaid) leave from work for study or travel lasting from weeks to months", are familiar to many in this area as one of the benefits of being a Middlebury College professor. But many of us do not have this opportunity as only 17% of private sector employees are offered sabbaticals.

We expect our leaders to bring love, energy, and fresh ideas to their positions day in and day out. We also weigh our leaders down with a long list of day-to-day responsibilities that leave limited time and space for thinking. People who have taken sabbatical leaves report "space in the body and head for ideas to come", the ability to do "catalytic generative thinking again", or time to "reprioritize mind-wandering" and be "rigorously unproductive".

Organizations that grant sabbaticals to their leaders report that "Time away allowed staff the space to generate new ideas for innovating in the organization and helped them gain greater confidence in themselves as leaders. Returning leaders also reported a better ability to collaborate with their board of directors, most likely because the planning and execution of the sabbatical provided a learning experience for everyone involved". (Harvard Business Review, 2017)

The CVUUS board has noticed this space to grow since the beginning of the year. We have missed Barnaby's solid council and recognize his extensive pastoral care of many in the congregation. We have used our meetings without Barnaby to review the questions we ask to understand how Barnaby and the congregation live into our ends statement and long range goals, and to consider ways to close gaps in how we communicate and serve the needs of everyone who walks through our doors.

A sabbatical is designed to "strengthen a minister’s (or other leader’s) ability to serve her/his congregation" (UUA). As an organization that values shared leadership, we should also appreciate the opportunities a sabbatical provides for all of CVUUS' volunteer leaders to strengthen their own skills and stretch their wings.

Why Not Me?

The CVUUS Board is looking for one new member to join us as Jean Terwilliger's term ends in June. The congregation will officially vote on the nominations for this new member at our Annual Meeting. If you would like to be considered for this position please let us know. We have one candidate on the slate, but we are always willing to discuss what being a board member entails as well as answer any questions. We are continuously looking for people who want to serve, so even if not this year, perhaps next year might be your time!

Mike and Laurie

March Board Meeting Highlights

1) We had a focused discussion on what we would expect to be included in the Ministers’ monitoring reports regarding two sections of the Policy Governance Manual: Treatment of Congregants (Sec. 2.1) and Treatment of Staff (Sec. 2.2). Much of the discussion focused on ways of improving communication between the minister, the congregants, the Right Relations Committee, and the staff. Mentioning the Communication Covenant somewhere in the Policy Governance sections was considered to be a good idea.

2) After additional discussion, the Board voted to approve the request of the DRE to take a short-term sabbatical.

3) We developed Board priorities for the remainder of the fiscal year. We agreed to work on: 1) becoming fully prepared for the Annual Church Meeting in June, 2) compiling all of our work on improving the monitoring reports, 3) creating a Personnel Committee.
Kansas City, MO… jazz, barbecue food, the Negro League Baseball Museum and the 2018 UUA General Assembly, June 21-25!

“… I attended a UU gathering in Massachusetts with over 3,000 attendees. Imagine singing "This Little Light of Mine" with that many like-minded, love-hearted people! It was absolutely mesmerizing, enchanting, inspirational. It changed my life by deepening my commitment to this liberal religious tradition. It allowed me to actually feel in my bones that I will never be alone in my faith.” Board member Laurie Borden

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through our democratic process. Anyone may attend but you have the opportunity to represent CVUUS at General Assembly as one of our voting delegates. We are allowed to send 4 “official” delegates in addition to our minister.

Each year our delegates engage in two primary actions – Congregational Study/Action Issues (CSAI) and Actions of Immediate Witness (AIW). CSAIs are often initiated by a congregation and undergo a three year study period. CSAIs are embraced by our UUA denomination for study, reflection and action. This year the CSAIs are Escalating Economic Inequality and The Corruption of Our Democracy. We discussed these at our March Congregational Conversation and shared these links:
https://www.uua.org/economic/escalatinginequality
https://www.uua.org/action/process/csais/corruption-of-our-democracy

AIWs on the other hand come directly from GA participants. AIWs move through their entire creation and adoption process all in one GA. The AIW process allows Unitarian Universalists to respond quickly to social issues deemed urgent. Adopted AIWs are then used by congregations to study and/or act upon. Based on congregations experiences with the AIW they can make recommendations to the UUA staff. Last year at GA the AIW was proposed by-law changes. In previous years it has dealt with issues of diversity. This and over 150 workshops, film screenings and worship services to choose from. For more information go to www.UUA.org/ga

GA is a unique opportunity to worship, participate in the governance of our national denomination, and learn among and socialize with thousands of UU’s from all over the world. Don’t miss out! Ask Rev. Barnaby, Margy Levine and Jordan Young, Robin and Ted Scheu, Anne Christie and/or Elizabeth Golden-Pidgeon about their recent participation at previous GAs. You might also qualify to be an “off-site” delegate if you are unable to attend the actual event but want to participate as one of our official delegates.

Facilities Team Invites You
Blue Jeans Sunday
April 29, noon

Join us after service! Bring your tools or borrow ours. Lunch provided. Rain date the following Sunday May 6.

Facilities Team and Gerry Loney will coordinate following tasks:

⇒ Paint blue board as needed.
⇒ Weed gravel, grounds as needed.
⇒ Wash windows in Sanctuary and Fenn House. Clean siding with soap and water.
⇒ Paint railings on outside steps. Metal prep and priming done ahead of time.
⇒ Deep clean/scour plastic table and assure CVUUS is written on table.
⇒ Organize Fenn basement storage areas. (declutter, rebox south room)
⇒ Lower shed ramp so door opens more easily.

The Mol Family announces that Andre Mol successfully met with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee in Boston and has been welcomed into preliminary ministerial fellowship. They are grateful for all the support.
Rhubarb Festival 2018  Sat., June 2, 10 am to 2 pm

CVUUS will open its doors to the community for Rhubarb Festival 2018. The festival planners count on the many contributions of our members and friends to create this event.

**Pies:** These are always the hallmark of the Festival, and will be front and center again this year. We need a lead to recruit pie makers and bakers and organize “pie bees” over two evenings at Fenn House. Rhubarb pies will be priced at $18 and strawberry rhubarb at $20.

**Lunch:** Julie and Neil Chippendale, along Youth Group and others, will run a Café featuring sandwich and salad, drink, and dessert for $10 per person. The café opens at 10:30 AM.

**Books:** Last year we focused collection on children’s books. This year, we will be selling select children’s and adult used books. We are particularly seeking donations of books on spirituality, nature, the environment, justice issues, natural health, history, gardening, biography, mystery, poetry, recent notable novels, art, and illustrated children’s books. Please place your donations in the “Book Sale” box in the foyer. Due to the limited space available in the sanctuary, we will not be accepting any reference books, computer guides, psychology, self help, business, magazines, romance novels, Reader’s Digest, Disney, music books, DVDs, nor any books in poor condition. Hardcover and oversized books will be priced at $2 and paperbacks at $1 each. We are seeking a couple of people to help sort the books on the prior three Sunday afternoons. To volunteer to sort or if you have a question about suitable books, please contact Elizabeth at 802-598-2388 or elizabethgolden@shoreham.net. Thank you!

**Bling:** The "Bling Sisters" (Pat Schmitter, Mary Ann Deverell, and Linda Shubert) will again be collecting and selling jewelry, scarves and ties.

**Sweets and savories, plants** for your garden, and live music and activities for children have been features of past festivals and will likely happen again.

**No entry fee.** Profits support a local charity. Rhubarb Festival 2016 raised about $3000 for HOPE. RF 2017 raised $600 for our Youth Group and $1500 for HOPE.

Please consider helping to prepare for our next Rhubarb Festival. Contact Mary Hadley (hadleyme@juno.com or (802)377-2270). We need people to organize the 1) pie leader, 2) sweets and savor- ies sales table, 3) sort books for the used book sale, 4) organize a handmade item raffle, such as a quilt, 5) collect rhubarb donations, and 6) lead a newly created activity (your choice!). You need attend only 2-3 meetings over the year.

Enjoy the people, the food, the fun, and help raise funds for a local social service group and for CVUUS. It’s a great way to celebrate our community and the season of Spring!

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**Come to NNED-UUA Spring Assembly!**

Dismantling White Supremacy and Building Liberation as Unitarian Universalists

April 13 (7:30 pm) - April 14 (all day) UU Church of Nashua (58 Lowell St, Nashua, NH)

We will spend a majority of our time together engaging in a program on dismantling white supremacy and building liberation as UUs. The program will be designed and facilitated by Lena Gardner and Liz Loeb, a nationally recognized multi-racial and mixed identity team offering over 30 years of shared experience in liberation and justice work. **REGISTRATION FEE:** Adult (over 18) $85. Youth (14-18) $25. Child (2-13) $15 via email NNEDAdmin@comcast.net. CVUUS gets 4 delegates covered, plus Rev. Barnaby. **REGISTRATION CLOSES:** extended to Wed, April 4, 2018. Let Mike Greenwood know if interested.
CHOIR NOTES

In our year-long Journey to Radical Love, April brings us to Creating and Re-creating as Acts of Radical Love.

April 1 is Easter in the Christian calendar. Our service, led by Buddhist Joshin Byrnes, will explore some of the ways folks from all religious traditions can come together during this time of spring and renewal. The choir will offer the great choral Spiritual masterpiece Hark I Hear the Harps Eternal, arranged by Alice Parker, who worked with acclaimed choral conductor Robert Shaw of the Atlantic Symphony. With the full contingent of the choir, this will be choral music at its most divine expression!

April 8 the choir members will join the congregation.

April 15 the choir sings the tune called There’s a Land That Is Fairer By Day by Joseph Webster, written in 1868. Better known as In The Sweet By and By, our UU version has text by Rev. Dr. Tony Larsen, longtime UU Minister from Olympia Brown Unitarian Universalist Church in Racine Wisconsin. His text starts: “there’s a vision that lives in my heart. of a day when the fighting will cease. and the walls that have kept us apart will be torn down to make room for peace. in the sweet bye and bye we shall meet on that beautiful shore.”

April 22 brings us to Come Drink Deep by the UU composer Carolyn McDade. It is an emotional piece that will bring tears to your eyes. “Come drink deep of living waters. without cup, bend close to the ground. Wade with bare feet into troubled waters where love of life abounds. Come drink deep.”

The last week of April, although it is not a “Choir Sunday,” some members of the adult choir will be participating with the youth of the congregation in a reprise of the wonderful Sara Bareilles piece, Brave! You don’t want to miss that!

And that’s April for the choir news! I look forward to seeing you every Sunday at the CVUUS Sanctuary! BLESSINGS! Lucy

FILLED WITH THE SOUND OF MUSIC!

Thanks to all who agreed to help with these upcoming events in our sanctuary. Gatekeepers are in italics.

Anna & Elizabeth, Sat. Apr 21, 7 pm. VT Folklife Center event. Smithsonian Folkways songs accompanied by Moira Smiley, (John Barstow welcomes help, esp with parking)

“The American Songbag, Plus” Ladies Night Out Concert, Sat. May 5, 7 pm. Folk music, popular music from the 1940s and 50s, and some other special “plusses” like Jolene by Dolly Parton and Silvy by Huddy Ledbetter (known as Lead Belly,) arr. with body percussion by Moira Smiley. Accompanied by Lisa Knickerbocker Sears on piano, Glendon Ingalls on Bass Viol, and Mary Barron on Fiddle, the group of 18 women can make a real statement with choral music. Many individuals in the group are stepping up to take solo parts in several of the songs. Gwyneth Walker’s music is represented, as is true every spring, with How Can I Keep From Singing? and this year, Careless Love in an unforgettable arrangement. There will be a trio of women singing Andrews Sisters style music, and a special entr’acte with Jonathan Pendragon, Magician Extraordinaire! (Lucy thanks Carol Harden, Elizabeth Golden-Pidgeon)
CVUUS Sangha & Meditation

We meet every Sunday evening at the CVUUS Fenn House at 7 PM. We sit silently for 20 minutes, walk in silence for 15 minutes, sit in silence for 15 minutes more, and then have a brief conversation about our meditation practices or discuss questions for the final 10 minutes.

All are welcome, regardless of level of experience (or lack of experience) with meditation and regardless of faith tradition. If you have any questions, call Colleen at 989-9974 or Van at 388-2142. The CVUUS webpage has good information also.

Night Sky Wonders for April

Mars and Saturn put on a show this April in the pre-dawn sky. On April 2nd Mars and Saturn are only a degree apart, just above the “Teapot” of Sagittarius. Around an hour before sunrise look low in the South-Southeast. On April 7th the Moon will join the mix while Mars can be seen drifting East, away from Saturn.

Meanwhile Venus has become an evening attraction. Look West about 45-minutes after sunset. On the 17th Venus can be seen to the upper-right of a thin crescent moon with the Pleiades above it. By the 27th Venus has moved upward and is found between the Pleiades and the bright star Aldebaran. Look low in the West-Northwest about 45-minutes after sunset.

This month Jupiter, the gas-giant, comes up about 3 hours after sunset. Look east-southeast. A small telescope will reveal two dark cloud bands on the planet’s cloud-surface. I say “cloud-surface” since Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune are all gas planets with no solid surface to stand on. Only the inner planets have hard surfaces, and only Earth and Mars are suitable for human habitation.

Here’s wishing you (and me) clear skies. If you have astronomy questions, or would like to visit the observatory, drop me, Al Boudreau, an e-mail at astromanvt@gmavt.net

April Thoughts from Your Membership Ministry

Our team of greeters has the privilege of welcoming visitors, friends, newcomers, and members, new and old. We also hope to foster connections among all these folks, especially those who have just begun to join our worship. When we all wear name tags, it’s easier for everyone. Thanks for remembering to wear them.

This is the month for New UU classes, and exploration of potential membership. We invite you to become part of a caring spiritual community, where together we can accomplish far more than we can by ourselves. Showing up and being present is important in itself; we come to appreciate that we all need each other, whatever paths we are pursuing.

We will gather with anyone interested in possible membership after worship on April 8. Nursery care, and snacks, will be available. Please note any further information in the Weekly Blast or Order of Service. And call the office, Rev. Barnaby, or Marjorie Carsen with any questions or concerns. Whether your connection to UU is lifelong, a new discovery, or anything in between, you are welcome to attend this meeting (or, contact us, if unable to come on April 8th).

Blessings and gratitude, Marjorie Carsen

Writers’ Group

CVUUS Writers’ Group meets third Monday of the month. Next one is April 16, 3 PM, in the Fenn House chapel. All welcome. Bring something to read (with a few copies): fiction, nonfiction, poems. Questions? Contact Nancy Wright (nancymeanswright@gmail.com).
Welcome to the April installment of the 2017-2018 newsletter column on aspects of Compassionate Communication, or Nonviolent Communication (NVC). Marshall Rosenberg developed NVC to resolve interpersonal conflicts and also to enhance a deeper connection with others and with ourselves, by focusing on feelings and universal human needs rather than on blaming. This column is one response to our congregation’s “mission”, or need, to “open to deeper connections” and be “in right relationship with another and the wider community”.

The topic for this month’s column is Listening. How do we give others, including those who hold different views, our understanding and empathy when we have our own identities, with views (and their opinions, biases, blaming, judgment, interpretations)? On a recent walk talk I had with a friend, she shared her story of trying to relate to family members who were of a different political party. At first she asked them questions to learn, but the relating fell apart when her stomach turned somersaults with the information she learned. It may be useful in learning of our hidden biases if we go to Paul Stone’s shared Harvard Implicit Bias Test website: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html

With NVC empathy, Marshall presents the effectiveness of taking a curious mindset about what’s behind the story. Its not about us, but is about the other and taking guesses of what they’re Feeling and Needing by asking them questions. With my NVC Empathy with my friend, I heard her feelings of frustration over her failed attempt and need to communicate with family members. I might have said something like, “That looks frustrating to have your family go silent when you talk about politics with them because you are wanting to connect?” In his chapter on Empathy in his foundational book, Nonviolent Communication, A Language of Life, Marshall also talks of the importance of being understood yourself before giving empathy to others. I could also have offered my friend something like this. “What is it about your political party that you value? Do you value immigrants because you value their role with our farms and restaurants? My friend may have been better able to tune into her own values, thus be more able to find the common qualities she shares with her family, or give them empathy with their positions.

Another example of NVC empathy was in my practice group this month. The group was discussing their concern about the previous meeting’s strong emotions that had arisen amongst two of the three couples, wondering if the NVC practice group was the appropriate avenue. NVC is not a therapy. I saw how they were feeling their own reactions and offered one of them my guess. “Are you feeling vulnerable and uncomfortable because you are needing your wife to communicate directly and honestly with you?” The group ended feeling more comfortable with our NVC practice group handling emotions arising within couples, with the reminder to use NVC Empathy.

For more information on NVC: Peggy Smith’s Life is Relationships workshop in WRJ this May 4th and 5th (http://www.lifeisrelationships.org/). New England NVC info@newenglandnvc.org

Anne Christie- Right Relations Team member, Speech Language Pathologist

Clean out your closets and raise funds for CVUUS! Bring your used clothing to Neat Repeats and give them the CVUUS account number (108) or Buy Again Alley and give them account number (504). It’s easy way to raise funds for the CVUUS budget and Youth Group while also helping people who are in need of reasonably priced, good clothing. Donations are tax-deductible.

Donate items to HOPE and WomenSafe! Look for HOPE shopping cart to donate food. Prefer smaller sizes to jumbo ones. See Mary Ann Deverell with questions. Also look for the WomenSafe heart-wrapped box in our sanctuary lobby near the welcome table. Always in need of self-care items but currently their biggest need is for both men's and women's deodorant, toothbrushes and toothpaste! See Dottie Nelson with questions.
CVUUS Seasons of Life Fund

Our Seasons of Life Fund is a way to share your joy or concern with the CVUUS community. Members and friends can commemorate personal milestones and passages through financial gifts to CVUUS that provide extra money for us to fulfill our mission statement. The names of the donors and the occasions of the gifts are noted in our monthly newsletter. There is no minimum amount and the size of your donation will not be made public. Please consider the Seasons of Life Fund the next time you—or someone you know—want to honor a birthday, marriage, retirement, anniversary, death, or achievement of any sort.

Planned Giving: For help remembering us in your will or trust, contact John Berninghausen at 349-7080 or berningh@middlebury.edu.

Pastoral Care

CVUUS is blessed with many wise and well-trained individuals beyond Rev. Barnaby capable of providing temporary counseling support to members and friends in various kinds of distress. Sue Grigg, Laurie Borden and Marjorie Carsen lead our team. Their contact info is in the Directory.

Our Caring Network provides support, such as calls, visits, meals, and rides, to those in need. Please contact Linda Shubert (458-8931 or jlshu68@gmail.com) or Ginny Moser (989-7586 or tvmoser117@gmail.com) for assistance.

We thank all the faithful folk who have participated in our efforts to support our members - providing lots of meals and myriad rides to doctor's offices, doing errands and paying visits. We encourage members of the congregation to call on us. We have an extensive network of willing helpers standing by that we can call or email on your behalf. You can also let us know if you would like to join this network.

Visit www.uua.org to learn about the wider work of UUA and our affiliates. Visit www.cvuus.org to explore our happenings and most current calendar.
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