



The

Belfry

December 18th, 2013

Harvard Unitarian Universalist Church

Love is the spirit of our church, where ...

...we gather to worship...

...we create a welcoming, nurturing religious community for all...

December 22nd, 2013

10:00 a.m.

Solstice Service & Mummers Play

With Cary Browse as Host

Our annual celebration of the winter solstice with dancing, singing, a Mummers Play, Chimers and more.

Tuesday December 24th, 2013

CHRISTMAS EVE

Two Services

4:00 p.m. – A special Christmas Eve service for families with young children.

This 30-minute service will include familiar Christmas songs and a simple, age-appropriate retelling of the Christmas story.

5:30 p.m. – Pre-Service Concert

6:00 p.m. – Traditional Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols

December 29th, 2013

10:00 a.m.

Love the Hell Out of This World

Rev. Robin Bartlett

We come to church because it is a training ground for the repair of the world--a place where we risk transformation so that we might fill the world up with more love. We are called to recognize hells on earth wherever we encounter them, and to love wastefully until they are summarily destroyed.

January 5th 2014

10:00 a.m.

Sermon in Song

David Roth

January 12th 2014

10:00 a.m.

The Faith for the Future: Now

Aaron Stockwell

As society begins to change, so does the place of religion. In this sermon, your Sabbatical Minister Aaron will explore what an open source faith might look like in the Inventive Age, and why faith will matter.

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Deadline for copy is 9:00 a.m. the day before.

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“From the Hearth”

Dear Friends

We've almost made it! We are almost past Christmas, past the Winter Solstice, and now into the New Year. Now the light begins to return. Naturally, we wonder what this next year may bring.

While I am normally someone that loves to set goals, and write lists, I find that I am rarely able to keep New Year's Resolutions. I know that at some point, I'll slip up and perhaps find myself in a cycle of shaming myself for not following up with those goals. Our inner critics can be some of the harshest critics that we have especially as we strive to keep New Year's resolutions. So I wonder if goal setting isn't exactly the best method towards self-improvement.

For several years, my colleague, Elea Kemler at the First Parish Church of Groton, has taken a cue from Garrison Keillor. The suggestion is this - perhaps instead of holding ourselves to a New Year's resolution we pick the word or phrase that we will focus on, that will serve as a touchstone, a keel, or a rudder for the rest of the year.

This past year I chose the phrase: “notice your relationships.” I chose this because last year because last year I got married. I knew that with this familial change, my relationship to others would also change. I knew that I wanted to pay attention to the food I was eating, and how it was prepared. Last year also brought transitions with graduating seminary and finishing up to ministerial internships at the First Parish in Lincoln and the Church of the Larger fellowship.

What word or phrase might you choose to serve as your touchstone for this coming year?

See you in church!

Aaron Stockwell, M.Div.
Sabbatical Minister
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[978.302.5220](tel:978.302.5220) (cell)

As always do feel free to get in touch if you want to chat! I'm more than willing to meet you someplace for a cup of tea or coffee to talk about what is on your heart or mind. I know this time of the year, especially if it does end up being a bleak winter, can be challenging. I'm normally available from 2-5:30 on Wednesdays at church, but if those times don't work let me know, and we'll work something out.



Report from the Board

Realizing Our Vision—Special Congregational Meeting January 5

Over the last fifty years, this church has been through multiple visioning and long range planning processes. The two most recent ones date from February, 1997 when the Congregation voted to adopt a Mission and Covenant Statement and May, 2011 when a Congregation-wide process resulted in a Vision Statement. One of our goals this year has been to build on these efforts and draft a workable action plan with concrete steps that begin to fulfill our strategic vision. We wanted to find answers to the questions: What would it look like if we were living out our vision? What would we be doing as a Congregation if we were “practicing UU’s?”

With the help of our consultant Alan Hurwitz, and the work of Wendy and 11 members of the congregation, the drafting of an action plan is now complete. The plan focusses on four areas, setting specific objectives in the areas of Collective Social Action, Religious Education and Youth Development, and Spiritual Growth and includes one all encompassing work item with respect to volunteer coordination. The draft work plan will be presented to the Congregation for review, revision as required and final approval at a special Congregational meeting after church on January 5, 2014. Please plan to attend and participate in this exciting process.

Many thanks to the volunteers who helped draft and review this plan: Wendy Bell, Paige O’Brien, David Kendall, Betsy Williams, Darrell Wickman, Cheryl Coonahan, Jeff Levering, Julie Anne Medjanis, Dave Andrew, Tom Daniells, Stacie Cassat Green, and Rebecca Wright.

A special thanks as well to Alan Hurwitz, our coach and consultant, who volunteered his time and expertise.

For further information or questions, please contact me or any member of the Board.
Rick High, President, (rhigh@charter.net)

SHARING OUR PLATE:

December 22 – Our Father’s House

Each month 50% of the cash contributions in the collection plate go to a designated charity (the balance of the cash and checks made out to the church go to the church). Please make checks made out to Our Father’s House

Our Father’s House is a private, non-sectarian agency providing shelter and related services to homeless men and women, with facilities in Fitchburg and Devens. Its programs encourage and assist each guest to become self-sufficient. Professionally trained staff offer client advocacy, assistance in searching for housing and employment, crisis counseling, and referral to community resources.

December 24 – both services – Loaves and Fishes

January 5, 12, 19, 26 - Partakers

January's Sunday Sharing Our Plate collection will be donated to Partakers, whose mission is to reduce prisoner recidivism through education and civic engagement. A number of members of our congregation volunteer in Partakers' "College Behind Bars" program, which provides opportunities and support for inmates to obtain four-year college degrees in prison. Volunteers act as mentors, supporting prisoners in reaching their academic and personal goals, while working toward completing their college degrees. Checks made out to "Partakers", as well as 50% of the cash contributions in the collection plate, will be sent to them (the balance of the cash and checks made out to the church go to the church).

The members of the Social Action Committee are Georgia Sassen, Dave Andrew, Chris Ready, Pat Westwater-Jong, Ibbly Chiquoine. We meet once a month and welcome new members. Please contact any one of us for more information

Children and Youth Programming

Epiphanies

At the junction of the New Year and Epiphany (January 6), I turn to the story of the Magi. They have what is essentially a walk-on role in Matthew's version of the story of the birth of Jesus. They are neither named nor numbered in Matthew's text, the only thing known about them is that they come from "the East." They meet with King Herod, rejoice at the sighting of a star, find the stable, pay homage to the baby Jesus, and go home by a different way. Not much to go on in terms of getting to know them.

From the storyteller's perspective, the vagueness surrounding the Magi is rich with opportunity to fill in the blanks. Did one of them oversleep each morning, tell corny jokes, and talk with his mouth full? Perhaps one of them, in unobserved moments, laid her head against her camel's dusty neck, breathing the scent of the stable at home. Maybe one of them kept a precise log of the journey and made up new constellations, dreaming of fame gained through publishing a new-&-improved star chart.



Crab Nebula, Hubble Telescope, NASA

We began this year in the children's programming by looking skyward: the creation of the universe, the birth of stars, and the astonishing revelation that we are all made of star stuff. The Reverend Rod Richards writes, "Unitarian Universalists, it strikes me, are *epiphanizers* of a sort. We have a focus on this world and seek to increase our awareness and appreciation of its wonders. We believe that meaning is made in the midst of our experience, not handed to us from outside."

This idea of meaning coming from experience describes the philosophy behind this year's programming model. Rather than covering material (delivered by adults), stations of open-ended activities offer the children opportunities to uncover material, and discover connections (done by the children) – to engage in *epiphanizing*, so to speak.



3D map of the Internet, opte.org

The third block of the children's Wow! programming builds on the first two blocks, inviting participants to *epiphanize* through creating and inventing, and through the stories of some famous UU *epiphanizers* whose inventions and creations helped others. Perhaps the next generation's Tim Berners-Lee (the Unitarian Universalist who connected existing components that resulted in the advent of the World Wide Web) is among us!*

As the Magi discovered, a life of faith requires curiosity, tenacity, reverence, and adaptability. May we find these qualities in abundance in the coming year.

I wish you a year filled with discoveries and wonder.

Peace,
Melinda Green

*Read Tim Berners-Lee's article, "The World Wide Web and the Web of Life," exploring parallels between Unitarian Universalism and the World Wide Web here: <http://www.w3.org/People/Berners-Lee/UU.html>

Guest At Your Table Returns! Launch date: December 22!

The children of the Rock Garden (ages 7-11) invite you to participate in this year's Guest At Your Table campaign! The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's program provides material support to people who have empowered others to realize their human rights. On Sunday, December 22, we will distribute materials; additional materials will be available in the sanctuary on the following Sunday as well.

Envisioning a world free from oppression and injustice, where all can realize their full human rights, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) advances human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures, and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies.

You can be a part of this transformative work! Select a clean container from your recycling bin, apply the sticker in the UUSC folio the children hand out, place the container on your table to serve as a reminder. Ideally, add a donation every meal, or every day. On Saturday, January 18, count your collection, write a check for the amount to the UUSC, and bring it to church on Sunday the 19th.

We will collect your checks during the Intergenerational worship service on Sunday, January 19.

To learn more about the UUSC and the Guest At Your Table program:

Guest At Your Table Program: <http://www.uusc.org/guest>

UUSC Programs: http://www.uusc.org/files/UUSC_Programs_2012.pdf

Stories of Hope Booklet: http://www.uusc.org/files/2013-2014_Stories-of-Hope-Booklet.pdf

Make your donation online: https://secure2.convio.net/uusc/site/Donation2?df_id=2260&2260.donation=form1

Thank you for your participation and support!

-- Melinda W. Green
Interim Director of Religious Education
Harvard Unitarian Universalist Church

January 5th is Loaves and Fishes Sunday

Make it your New Year's resolution to help Loaves and Fishes! While many people remember to donate food during the holiday season, sometimes it is easy to forget that the need is great after the holidays as well. Every month, 20 new families walk through the doors of Loaves and that number is likely to increase since the federal food stamp program was cut in November. If you are able, please bring in **boxes of pasta, jars of pasta sauce and canned pasta** (some of their most-needed items) and leave them in the Loaves and Fishes donation area in the church's foyer. Questions? Contact Risa Goldman at risa-jan@aol.com or anyone from the Social Action Committee.

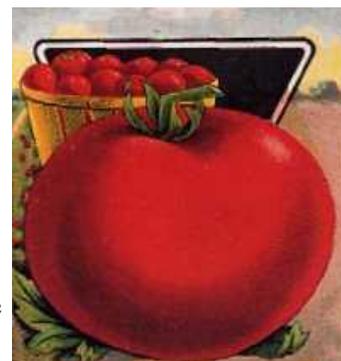
Bargains in the Belfry

Amazing new things, clothes mostly, are still coming in. There are also books, household items, packages of greeting cards, Christmas ornaments. We will be open Tuesdays in January from 10am until 4 pm, and also on the 1st and 3rd Sundays after church, 11:30 - 12:30. Of course, these opening days and times depend on the WEATHER, which can be uncooperative. There are good sales going on. Any item marked with a green dot is reduced by 20%; all items marked with a red dot are 10% off. Bargains is upstairs at the church. Come on up and check it out.

If you spend hours dreaming about what's going in to your garden, then you need to look at FEDCO SEEDS catalog. When you get an order together, e-mail it to me and I will combine with dozens of others and you will get a discount if the orders are greater than \$100.00!!!! Call me if you have questions. B Henderson 456-8980.

<http://fedcoseeds.com/seeds.htm>
order deadline January 17th(Friday).

-Barbara Henderson



Paper Belfry has the month of Jan.
building use cal. here.

E-Version: see additional pdf.

January Birthday Wishes to:

Paul Chapman
Tim Coonahan
Diane Cordner
Janis Dyer
Michele Girard
Carl Hein
Emma Keaney
Shea Oldham
Robby Perkins-High
Weezie Potter
Patty Ruze
Sarah Sobalvarro
Slava Weast



If you missed the opportunity to give us your birthday month and would like to have it posted in our Belfry publications, please contact the church office: 978-456-8752, admin@uuharvard.org

Our Thanks Go To ...

David Kendall, Glen Frederick, Bill Cordner and Darrell Wickman for continued Buildings & Grounds assistance.

Jeff Levering for beyond-duty-Sat.-night-call.

Donnalisa Johnson, Barbara Kemp, Jan Goodell for thoughtfulness.

Caring Network for the Poinsettias.

Alliance, for the decorated Boxwood.

Still looking for Ushers and Greeters for the two Christmas Eve worship services.

If you can help for either the 4pm Family Service or the 6pm Traditional Service, please contact Cary Browse, cbrowse@earthlink.net.

Alliance Program Tue. January 7th, 6:30 p.m.
“Caring for Ourselves and Our Loved Ones As We Age”

-Joyce Gallagher & Anne Marie Rowse

Sunday Morning Ushers, Greeters , Hospitality

The schedule of Sunday morning tasks is now available on SignUp Genius. You can easily access this from the home page of the church website: www.uuharvard.org . If the dates assigned to you are inconvenient, please arrange to swap with someone else for a Sunday that fits your schedule. You can make the swap yourselves on the SignUp Genius list, or you can let me know what the changes are and I will update the system. Thanks to all for your help. Cary Browse, cbrowse@earthlink.net

Dec. 22

Welcome: Kate Stamm
Host: Cary Browse
Hospitality: Dick Case, Nancy Meyer, Betsy & Glenn Williams
Ushers: Nick Browse
Greeters: Kate Stamm
Chancel:

Dec. 24 Host: Melinda Green

4:00 Ushers:
Greeters: Helen Hill
6:00 Ushers: Pat White & Mary Ellen Miller
Greeters:

Dec. 29

Welcome: Kate Stamm
Host: Cary Browse
Hospitality: Stacie & Jon Green, Lynne Wood
Ushers: Kristine Tomlinson
Greeters: Rebecca & Weber Hsiao
Chancel:

Jan. 5

Welcome: George Babich
Host: Chuck McCormack
Hospitality: Ann Whitney, Cheryl Coonahan
Ushers: Darrell & Willie Wickman
Greeters: Frank & Emilie Coolidge
Chancel:

Jan. 12

Welcome: Susie Macrae
Host: Charles Redinger
Potluck: Lisa Oldham
Ushers: George & Karen Davis, Brint Ferguson
Greeters:
Chancel:

Bios of Upcoming Sabbatical Sunday Leaders

Dec. 29th Rev. Robin Bartlett is a recently ordained UU minister, and the Interim Director of Religious Education at the Unitarian Universalist Area Church in Sherborn, MA.

Jan. 5th David Roth

Jan. 12th Aaron Stockwell

Aaron Stockwell is the Sabbatical Minister at the Harvard Unitarian Universalist Church. He was educated at the Parker Charter School, Lesley College, and Andover Newton Theological School. Aaron and his spouse live in Maynard, MA.

Jan. 19 Melinda Green

What's Coming Up, Church Events

The Messiah! December 22 at 5 p.m.
Don't miss our annual Sing along directed by our Music Director, Ted Johnson, with professional soloists, and our fabulous orchestra, including strings, oboes, trumpet, bassoon, organ, harpsichord, tympani and you! Filling our sanctuary with the music of Handel- singers from surrounding communities, and instruments, is always a spiritual high!!!



December 2013

22	Solstice Service
24	Christmas Eve services led by Aaron Stockwell and Melinda Green
29	Robin Bartlett

January 2014

5	David Roth – Musician (“...where song, spirit and speaking meet...”) Children start in FB.
12	Aaron Stockwell, sabbatical minister
19	Intergenerational Service – Melinda Green leads our annual commemoration of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
26	Worship Committee - tbd

What's Coming Up, Church Events

Sun. Dec. 22

10:00 a.m. Worship Service
Solstice Service & Mummers Play
With Cary Browse as Host
5:00 p.m. Messiah Sing

Tue. Dec. 24

4:00 p.m. – A special Christmas Eve service for families with young children
5:30 p.m. – Pre-Service Concert
6:00 p.m. – Traditional Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols

Office Closed Dec. 25 & 26

Sun. Dec. 29

10:00 a.m. Worship Service
Love the Hell Out of This World
Rev. Robin Bartlett

Office Closed Dec. 31 & Jan. 1

Sun. Jan. 5

10:00 a.m. Worship Service
“Sermon in Song”
David Roth
11:30 a.m. Congregational Meeting

Wed. Jan. 8

7:30 p.m. Board mtg.

Fri. Jan. 10

PUUB Theology Event

Sun. Jan. 12

10:00 a.m. Worship Service
“The Faith for the Future: Now.”
Aaron Stockwell
All Church Pot Luck

Belfry Deadlines all Tuesdays

Jan. 21

Feb. 18

Mar. 18

Apr. 15

May 20

June 17

And, if you want an updated Church Directory, please send me an email and I will send you the pdf file, or I can print a paper copy for you. admin@uuharvard.org

MUSIC NOTES



Musicians:

December 22- Sr. and Jr. Choir,
Chimers, Jeff Levering
December 24th -Christmas Eve singers
December 29- Eleanor Toth and Choir Friends
January 5- Choir
January 12- David Roth- Folksinger

Jr. Choir:

I hope you have been listening to our Solstice Song. We will meet in the Belfry this Sunday, Dec. 22 at 9 a.m. to review our song. We rehearse with Ted on stage at 9:20-9:30. Then we'll need to find robes to fit. Then-Happy holidays!

I do plan on rehearsals as usual on January 5 and 12 to prepare for Martin Luther King Sunday on January 19.

Chimers:

Thank you for your patience and perseverance during this time of weather insecurity.

I will be in touch with you as to whether or not we will rehearse this Saturday at 5:45.

We will definitely chime on Sunday, Dec. 22, wearing Christmas colors on top and dark bottoms. After that....Happy Holidays!

Sr. Choir:

This Thursday, Dec. 19, we meet at Ted and Donnalisa's for our holiday rehearsal. Bring some munchies please. (352 Taylor Rd. Stow). That is preparation for Solstice Sunday (and beyond).

I'm sure Ted has been/will be working with Christmas Eve singers.

We do sing on January 5th.

Seasons greetings!

Don't forget to come to the Messiah Sing at 5 pm. On Sunday, Dec. 22!!!

-Eleanor Toth

Sabbatical Minister's Office Hours

I am in the office most Wednesdays from 1-5:30. You may call (office: 978.456.9021, cell: 978.302.5220) or e-mail (minister@uuharvard.org) to schedule an appointment during Wednesdays, or to find another time that might work.

Aaron Stockwell

Admin Office Hours

Mon. 9:00 a.m.-Noon
Tue. 10:00-3:00
Wed. Noon-3:00
Thu. 10:00-3:00
Fri. 9:00 a.m.-Noon
Please call first: 978-456-8752.

-Elinor Stapleton
admin@uuharvard.org

Aaron Stockwell
Melinda Green
Elinor Stapleton
Ted Johnson
Louise Potter

Sabbatical Minister
Interim Religious Education Director
Parish Administrator
Organist and Choir Director
Bookkeeper

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