

UUSIS NEWS & VIEWS

The Unitarian Universalist Society in Stamford

JANUARY 2010

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*January's Pastoral Care
on call person is*

**Karen Versanti
at
203-219-0020**



*For emergencies, please contact the
Community Minister,
The Rev. ReBecca Ames Sala at
203-219-4341 or
ramessala@yahoo.com.*

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sundays at 10:00AM, except as otherwise noted.

1/3: To Stretch Our Hearts—The Rev. Ron Sala
The great Unitarian minister A. Powell Davies wrote, "What can we do to stretch our hearts enough to lose their littleness? ... How strange and foolish are these walls of separation that divide us!" On the first Sunday of the year, we'll consider how we can answer his question with our lives.

**1/10: Forrest Church: Love and Death
—The Rev. Ron Sala**
Forrest Church, the late, beloved minister of New York's Unitarian Church of All Souls, inspired countless people through his life and teachings, even as he was dying of cancer. What can we learn from him? We'll also welcome new members. If you'd like to join, please talk with Rev. Ron. (Please bring a check made out to "UUSIS" for UUSC's Guest at Your Table program.)

**1/17: UU Authors for Long Winter Nights
—The Rev. Ron Sala**
Some of the most compelling authors of yesterday and today just happen to be UU. Have a favorite UU author you'd like to share about? Contact Rev. Ron. (We'll also have a child dedication for Karen Versanti's daughters).

1/24: Gandhi v. Hitler—The Rev. Ron Sala
Two of the 20th centuries most towering figures, Adolph Hitler and Mahatma Gandhi, were contemporaries with radically differing views on life and society, whose respective legacies continue to be felt in our own time. On the Sunday preceding the anniversary of Gandhi's assassination, we'll look at the moral lessons of their contrasting visions.

1/31: What It's Like to Run for Mayor—Rolf Maurer

JANUARY 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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NOTE: This calendar has all events as listed by the time of publication. Please check with the Administrator at 203-348-0708 or admin@uusis.org if you wish to schedule an event.

1 Wedding Rental, Sanctuary, 11:30am
2

<p>3 Religious Services Meeting, Sanctuary, After Service •Adult RE, Rev. Ron's Office, 12:00-1:30pm</p>	<p>4 Social Action Meeting, Conference Room, 7:30pm</p>	<p>5 UUSIS Office Reopens, 9:00am •Green Team Meeting, Conference Room, 7:00pm</p>	<p>6 Masonic Lodge Rental, Sanctuary and Social Room, 4:00pm</p>	<p>7 Cancer Support Group, Maureen's House, 11:00am •By-laws Committee Meeting, Conference Room, 7:00pm</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>
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<p>10 Care Team, Sanctuary, After Service •Adult RE, Rev. Ron's Office, 12:00-1:30pm •2nd Sunday Hikers, Greenwich Point Park, After Coffee Hour</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 Membership Meeting, Conference Room, 5:45pm •Board Meeting, Conference Room, 7:30pm</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15 Welcome Dinner, Social Room, 4:00pm set-up/6:30pm Dinner</p>	<p>16</p>
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<p>17 Adult RE, Rev. Ron's Office, 12:00-1:30pm</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19 Sacred Circle Pagan Group, Sanctuary, 7:30pm</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21 By-laws Committee Meeting, Conference Room, 7:00pm</p>	<p>22 UUSIS Movie Night, Social Room, 7:00pm</p>	<p>23</p>
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<p>24 Publicity Meeting, Sanctuary, After Service •Adult RE, Rev. Ron's Office, 12:00-1:30pm</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
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January Birthdays

1 Roseanne George, Ann Yarmal
6 Nancy Furnas
14 Zoe Harrer
19 Marion Vrusho
20 Terra McAndrew
23 Billy Neschis
26 Paul Daddona, Catherine Ednie
27 Edward Lane
29 Karen Versanti
31 Douglas Montgomery

Recurring:
Mon. - Fri.: Alcoholics Anonymous, Social Room, 7:30-8:30AM
Sat.: Alcoholics Anonymous, Social Room, 9:00-10:00AM
Sat.: Igreja Do Evangelho Quadrangular, Sanctuary & Social Room, 6:00PM-∞

Ron's Report

This year, our building, constructed in 1870, turns 140. Considering a generation 20 years, it's now been seven generations—or the time the Iroquois say we should plan for those who will come after us.

I'm proud of our sanctuary and the history of religious freedom it has represents. It's the oldest religious structure downtown, yet it's been adapted to meet changing times. Pews (all but three) were removed in the 1970s in favor of chairs, allowing us to set up for the occasion. (A minister friend said the space made him "feel like dancing," which we sometimes do.)

Since the 1980s, six banners in honor of world religions wordlessly communicate our openness to the wisdom of all faiths. I hope we will soon have a seventh banner in honor of earth-centered religions, which our General Assembly voted to name an official Source of Unitarian Universalism 15 years ago this June.

Many thanks to those of seven generations ago whose generosity constructed our sacred space from the local limestone. Thanks also to everyone whose pledges, contributions to our Building Fund, and bequests continue to maintain it. Seven generations hence, may it's shelter still provide a place of comfort, inspiration, and enlightenment!

Rev. Ron

President's Message

As I sit here trying to summarize the year for my holiday message, I find myself at quite a loss for words. This has been a rollercoaster of a year for many of us. Joys and sorrows came and went at an astounding pace. I know this year didn't end up anything like what Tara and I had planned on. But through all the tragedies, the one thing that brought many of us comfort was UUSIS. We came together as a community to support each other more times than I can remember this year. I know Tara and I would not be where we are now without your love and support. It gave us strength when we needed it the most.

So let us remember and be thankful for that this holiday season. We are more than just a community here at UUSIS. We are a family. And like a family, we will have our squabbles, our disagreements, and our arguments. But when it comes down to it, we are there for each other first and foremost. And that is truly something to celebrate.

I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season, and Bright Blessings for the New Year! As always, please contact me at trustees@uuisis.org should you need anything.

Joseph Gonzalez, Jr.



MISSION STATEMENT APPROVAL

“We exist to build a community that deepens individual faith, celebrates unity among diversity, and promotes a just and humane world.”

At the December 8 Board/Committee Chairs joint meeting, the results of the November Mission Statement Workshop were discussed at length. From the four proposed mission statements, we were able to bring them together into the statement above. This is the Mission Statement that we would like to present to the Board of Trustees at their January 12 meeting for approval. We feel this statement encompasses all of the common themes that we wanted to communicate: building a community, ministering to ourselves and to others, finding our common values while celebrating our differences, and exploring and deepening personal faith and growing spiritually. We feel this is a useful, meaningful statement that this and future Boards of Trustees can use to guide this congregation and its events and social action work for the next five to seven years.

Please take some time and consider the proposed Mission Statement and whether you feel it is fitting and meaningful for UUSIS. If you have questions, feedback or suggestions, please let the Board know via its contact email, trustees@uuisis.org, or speak directly to Joe Gonzalez or any board member no later than Sunday, January 10. Your input is important to us, and all feedback received will be considered by the Board at its next meeting. Once a Mission Statement is approved, a committee will be formed to begin creating our Strategic Plan using it as our guide.

Thank you in advance for your time and involvement in the Mission Statement approval process. We look forward to hearing from as many of you as possible!

UPCOMING NO LIMIT TEXAS HOLD'EM POKER TOURNAMENT!

Okay all you Poker Fans out there, we are planning to hold a Gen-U-Wine No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament on Saturday January 16! Just when you are starting to go stir-crazy stuck in the house, plan on joining us for a fun-filled event, with trophies for the top winners and lots of fun. This will be a non-cash tournament, \$20 entry fee to raise funds for UUSIS.

Stay tuned, more info to come...polish up your bluffing skills!

SACRED CIRCLE PAGAN GROUP: MUSIC NIGHT

On January 19, the Sacred Circle Pagan Group will host its first Music Night. Our own talented Music Consultant and friend, Maureen Ferrara-Higle, will lead us in song and hymn. We will be meeting in the Sanctuary at 7:30pm. Please call 203-348-0708 or email admin@uuisis.org if you plan to attend this fun filled night!

Tara E. Fleck



UUSIS MOVIE NIGHT

Are you looking for a way to relax after the holidays? Searching for an affordable movie night out? Then join us on **Friday, January 22 at 7PM in the Social Room** for a screening of “**Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs**”! This fun family movie follows the story of young inventor Flint Lockwood who dreams of creating something that will improve everyone's life. He invents a machine that will turn rain into food, but things go terribly wrong when the machine suddenly malfunctions!



Admission is \$10 per person, children under 4 are free. Price includes unlimited popcorn, snacks and beverages! Bring your family and friends! Anything we make in excess of the license fee goes directly to UUSIS. Please RSVP to admin@uusis.org or trustees@uusis.org no later than Wednesday, January 20, so we know how much food and drink to supply! Hope to see you there!

REGISTER NOW!: ADULT RELIGIOUS ED—ARTICULATING YOUR UU FAITH

With the Rev. Ron Sala, each Sunday in January, noon-1:30 pm (with bring-your-own or order-in lunch), Minister's Office

The focus of this course is on articulation—*practicing* how and what to say in various settings in which you might be called upon to declare yourself religiously or illuminate some angle on this liberal religious movement that has touched and changed so many lives for the better. Such moments are precious opportunities to deepen your own path and perhaps grow a happy awareness in someone else about this rich “living tradition.” Yet many of us struggle to describe our religion adequately to others. This course provides hopeful inspiration and resources, plus the opportunity for meaningful connection to fellow UUs. Email Rev. Ron at ron.sala@uusis.org with questions or to register. Please request childcare if you would like it.

FIRST SUNDAY UUSIS FOOD COLLECTION

For December, UUSIS donated 252 lbs. of food to The Food Bank! A special thanks goes to the generosity of Maria Galbier-Briger for several large boxes filled to the brim with food. Thank you.

Most Needed Food Items: Mashed Potatoes • Fruit Cocktail • Canned Tuna / Canned Chicken • Soups
Carnation Instant Breakfast • Breakfast Cereal • Peanut Butter / Grape Jelly • Juices
White or Brown Rice (2 Lb Bags) • Powdered or Parmalat Milk • Pasta • Jarred Spaghetti Sauce
Canned Vegetables (Corn, Cut Green Beans) • Applesauce • Crackers
Dried Beans (Pinto Beans, Black Eyed Peas, Lentil, Kidney) • Macaroni & Cheese

PLEASE NO BABY FOOD! Those items are provided for through the WIC program. The Food Bank can not accept baby food items any longer.

Food collections will be held on the 1st Sunday of each month. We will continue to keep a basket in the kitchen for those who bring food on other days. Any questions, please see Janet Cory or Tara Fleck.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

MEMBERSHIP

On Dec. 6, we expected 300 people to come in from the cold during Heights and Lights. Instead 625 people came in to our sanctuary, most were families and at least five had in-depth conversations. Several asked about our Christmas Eve service. We had a bake sale for the Food Bank which raised \$217.45. One dollar equals one pound of food.

Our favorite moments include Diana Martinez commenting in the kitchen “I feel like I’m on the TV show Top Chef! How would the judges rate our hot chocolate?” A little boy looked at what Kristin Sampiere was wearing and gasped, “Santa let you wear his hat!”

This year was our biggest turnout for volunteers, and we couldn't have done it without you—Teresa Hare, Robin Gans, Bonnie Currie, Tim Rinaldi, Leslie Weinberg, Don Currie, Diana Martinez, Emily McLarney, George Mandler, Dick Porter, Meilen Wong, Lucy Danilowicz, Jeff & Linda King, David Rasekh, Jo-Ann & Henry Brenner, Eleanor Dennis, Janet Cory, Ray Mosher, the Revs. Ron & ReBecca Sala, Kristin Sampiere, Cathy Steele, Tony Allam, Dee Rapposelli, Carole Ehleben, Liliya Guttsewok.

We will have a Welcome Dinner on Jan. 15 at 6:30pm in the Social Room. If you are new to UUSIS, this is an event for you! Come and make some new friends over a simple supper. Please RSVP at coffee hour or by evite e-mail.

There will be a New Member Sunday on Jan. 10. Please let Caitlin know if you would like to become an owner of our spiritual home.

Caitlin McConoughey

ADVOCACY

Our Unitarian Universalist Service Committee Guest at Your Table Boxes will be collected Jan. 10. There will be a table with flyers, boxes, and other information in the Social Room. Any questions? Contact Leslie Weinberg, UUSC Representative, at 203-517-8496 or lesweinberg@optonline.net.

Please put your information, such as name, address, membership level, telephone number or email address on the box. We are recognized by the UUSC by what percentage of UUSIS members also belong to the Service Committee. They will send a membership card or letter for tax purposes.

I urge you to count your donation and make out your check to UUSIS with GAYT in the memo line. Please round up to the next dollar. I will make a donation list with your information, and the treasurer's check will be from the UUSIS.

\$10 Youth membership

\$20 Senior membership

\$40 Standard membership

\$75 Dual membership

\$100 or more will be matched dollar for dollar by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock, Manhasset, NY.

Leslie Weinberg



SECOND SUNDAY HIKERS

The 2nd Sunday December Hike had four umbrella holding hikers that took to the Norwalk Heritage Trail. We slipped on black ice, but enjoyed the raw weather and the trail passing under I-95 twice and skirting the Norwalk River and appreciated the sculptures, the labyrinth, and the sea-themed playground. The rugged hikers were leader Bob H., Debbie, Orestes, and Karen.

Next Hike: January 10, 2010, at Greenwich Point.

*Love,
Karen Davis*

CHALICE LIGHTER CAMPAIGN

On behalf of the UU Legislative Ministry of NJ, I want to express our heartfelt gratitude to the members of the UU Society in Stamford for their generous contributions of \$661 to our Chalice Lighter Campaign. We are moved by the outpouring of support from all the congregations in the NY Metro District who have responded to our call.

Chalice Lighter funds will be dedicated to employing a part time director to facilitate communication among congregations and strengthen social justice programs, serve as an informational resource, and guide our volunteer Congregational teams in advocating our UU positions.

We are pleased to announce that Julia Hamilton was hired and began this summer as our first Director. Julia earned her M.Div. from Harvard in 2008, completed an internship with the Unitarian Church in Summit, NJ, is now working for them part-time, and is in Candidate status with the UUMA. Already we are seeing that Julia's skills and experience, combined with her passion for social justice, make her a great fit for the position.

The purpose of the network is to provide a comprehensive structure, network and resources to empower the moral voice and actions of our Unitarian Universalist principles and values in the public arena. Also we believe that such UU public policy networks as the UULMNJ, Interfaith Impact of New York State, UU Pennsylvania Legislative Advocacy Network and others raise awareness of Unitarian Universalism, promote UU membership -- one of the criteria of the Chalice Lighter grant, and strengthen local congregational social justice programs.

Again, thank you for your support!

Sincerely,
Elaine Nigam
Chalice Lighter Campaign Coordinator for UULMNJ

A FINAL THOUGHT...

**"Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery.
That is why today is a gift—it is the present."
— Unknown**

ABOVE & BEYOND

Dot Sonn and **Jacque Carlsen** went far and away above and beyond to provide a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner for two dozen members, friends and families. They did a fantastic job of decorating - real tablecloths and napkins, appropriate decorations (some were courtesy of **Lee Sullivan**) and organizing the food. Many thanks from all who enjoyed this feast.

At a recent evening PoemAlley meeting, our Recycling Angel appeared out of the blue to collect a huge bag of stuff to be recycled from the conference room in the RE building. After working all day and with no fanfare, **Karen Davis** collects our recyclables for us, following in the footsteps of Al Rader. Thank you, Karen!

Special thanks to those who helped set up our holiday decorations before the service on 12/6: **Joe Gonzalez, Tara Fleck, Robin Gans, Bob Hawley,** and **Nancy Furnas**. Also **Rama Kumanduri** and **Cristina Romero** and family for their help with the poinsettias.

If you want to recognize someone or a group who went "Above & Beyond", please write a brief paragraph and submit to Tara Fleck, Office Administrator, for inclusion in the next newsletter.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

If you would like to submit an article to UUSIS News & Views, please e-mail admin@uuisis.org or call (203)348-0708. Articles are due by the 15th of each month and should be fewer than 200 words. We look forward to hearing about all of your activities, information about your committees, and member/friend updates!

LOST AND FOUND

MISSING ANYTHING?

WE HAVE MANY LOST THINGS IN THE BIN. CONTACT THE OFFICE IF YOU ARE MISSING ANYTHING.

Parish Minister – The Rev. Ron Sala
Community Minister – The Rev. ReBecca Ames Sala
Minister Emeritus – The Rev. Stan Aronson
Music Consultant – Maureen Ferrara Hagle
Office Administrator/Newsletter Editor – Tara Fleck
Cleaning Crew – Goodwill Industries

President – Joseph Gonzalez
Vice president – Neil Danilowicz
Treasurer – Tom Burke
Clerk – Bonnie Currie
Buildings and Grounds – Neil Danilowicz
Pastoral Care Lay Ministry Team – Nancy Furnas
Committee on Ministry – Bob Nixon
Fellowship – *Open Position*
Finance – Rama Kumanduri
Membership – Caitlin McConoughey
Religious Education – Jacqueline Carlsen
Religious Services: Robert Hawley & Leslie Weinberg
Social Action – Robin Gans
Publicity – Jeff King
Green Team – Linda King & Mike Berlinski
Denominational Affairs – Diane Montgomery
Historian – Dorothy Sonn
Photographer – Ray Mosher
Rental Coordinator – Diana Martinez
Director of Personnel – Eleanor Dennis

The Unitarian Universalist Society in Stamford

20 Forest Street, Stamford, CT 06901

Phone: (203) 348-0708 Fax: (203) 358-0029

Email: admin@uuisis.org

Web: www.uuisis.org

NEW MINISTER'S OFFICE HOURS:

Tues. and Thurs.: 1:00 – 7:00PM

Weds.: Day off. Emergency calls only.

Fri.: Sermon prep day at home, emergency calls only.

Other times available by appointment.

You may call the Rev. Ron Sala on his mobile phone at 203-559-9620 between 9:00AM – 9:00PM on remaining days of week. **Emergency calls any time.**

E-mail: ron.sala@uuisis.org

Direct Office Phone: 203-348-0758 to leave a private message.

OFFICE HOURS:

Tue., Thurs., and Fri.: 9:00AM – 3:00PM

E-mail: admin@uuisis.org

The UUSIS Office will be closed starting Thursday, December 24, 2009, and will reopen at 9:00am on Tuesday, January 5, 2010.

