

# UUSIS News & Views

**JUNE  
2011**



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY IN STAMFORD

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## Worship Services

*Sundays at 10:00AM*

**June 5:**

### **The Mystic's Journey: An Inclusive Adventure—the Rev. Dianne Disston**

Who are the mystics? What is this journey? From ancient times to this very moment and from every faith tradition, men and women in the East and the West, young and old have discovered the mystic's path. How can we apply our understanding of this adventure to enhance our lives and our world.

Rev. Dianne Disston, LP, is a Spiritual Mentor and Licensed Psychoanalyst in Brewster, New York. Dianne provides worship services for many local UU congregations and is a member of the UU Fellowship of Northern Westchester in Mt. Kisco, NY.

**June 12:**

### **Blue Boat Home—the Rev. Dawn Sangrey**

We humans evolved from the first creatures who came up out of the sea; we begin our lives swimming in amniotic fluid; our bodies and our planet Earth are mostly water. We're in the swim, and we can live our lives clinging to the rocks in fear, or we can let go and let the river carry us. On the day of the congregation's annual meeting, an end-of-the-year reflection on the human condition and the state of the congregation.

**June 19:**

### **Flower Ceremony: An Intergenerational Service—Rev. Sangrey**

Often called "flower communion," this ceremony is the most widely celebrated ritual in Unitarian Universalist congregations. Created by the Rev. Norbert Capek, a Czech Unitarian minister, the ceremony expresses the beauty of our diversity and affirms our bonds to one another. Each person brings a flower—a rose from your garden, Queen Anne's lace picked from the roadside, any flower—and all the flowers are placed in a common vase. At the end of the service, each person takes a different flower to keep as a remembrance of the congregation over the summer. We will all be together in one community for this final service.

**June 26:**

### **"Gay Pride"—Janis Stahlhut**

This is the start of summer services when a more laid back style of lay worship takes over as we learn a lot more of the hopes, dreams and struggles of our UUSIS family.

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## Dawn's Message

### Holding Up the Mirror

Usually you use a mirror to look at yourself, but mirrors can also be used to send signals. At the hiking camp where my husband Paul and I go for a week in the White Mountains every year, the tallest mountain ridge in sight is called Baldface Mountain. It rises on the nearest horizon a little over 3,600 feet. The trailhead is a short walk from camp. Every year a hardy band of campers climb the Baldfaces, leaving camp first thing in the morning and returning for supper. At noon, their goal is to be halfway, on the top. Someone who has stayed in camp takes a mirror and flashes it into the sun to signal the climbers. If they are on the top, they flash back. Rejoicing and celebration ensue!

Last September when I unpacked my suitcase at our first Sunday service, one item inside was a mirror, which I said I would be holding up during our interim ministry so you could see yourself. Your leaders and I have been holding up the mirror all year, offering you many opportunities to see your situation and your prospects, helping you wrestle with two essential questions: Who are we? Where do we want to go?

Here at the midpoint of your journey, I am sending you a signal, a flash of light. Congratulations! You've scrambled your way to the top. Look around and take in the view. You can see some of the big and knotty issues the congregation faces: Growth, Religious Education, Balancing the Budget, Deciding What to Do With the Building.

You are making headway toward new clarity and insights. Many of you have participated in the Our Story workshop sponsored by the Transition Team, the Survey and Cottage Meetings offered by the Search Committee, and recent meetings about the budget with members of the Board of Trustees. Lots of questions and issues have emerged in these gatherings.

Midway can be an uneasy place. You're not sure where your journey will end. You still have a lot of walking to do. The outcome of your journey is by no means certain. But we all have a better idea of what the obstacles are, what rocks and roots we will have to traverse to make it back home.

Your participation is essential every step of the way. Make every effort to attend your Annual Meeting, coming up on June 12. You will be choosing new leaders and making decisions about the budget that will influence your progress next year. Take heart, but don't take the outcome for granted. As we head down the trail, we will stick together and help each other find the way.

Blessings.



The Rev. Dawn Sangrey, Interim Minister

## President's Thoughts

Wow. I can't believe I am writing my last column as Board President. At times these past two years seemed like they would never end, and at others they flew by too quickly. So much has happened here at UUSIS during this time period. We have made it through some tough financial times. We are once again bringing in new members to our society. And we have embarked on a transition period in our ministry with the end goal of calling a new minister who will guide us through the next phase of our congregational life.

I am proud to have been a part of this time period at UUSIS. I have had the privilege of working with a number of talented people who give of their time selflessly and who truly have the best interests of our congregation at heart. I thank all of you who have given of your time to this Society, whether it be as a Board officer or trustee, Committee Chair or member, volunteer at a First Friday or other event, RE teacher, or a member of our staff. I thank all of you who have given financially to the Society as a member, friend or visitor contributing to the collection plate. I also thank those of you on our Ministerial Search Committee for your time and commitment to guiding our congregation toward self examination and self determination as we figure out who we are, where we are, and where we want to be as a Society in the coming years. I thank Rev. Dawn for her time and commitment to helping us through this challenging time and supporting our lay leadership as we balanced transition tasks with day to day issues that kept us busy. Finally, and most importantly to me, I especially thank my family, my wife Tara and my beautiful children Ethan and Norah. You have put up with many meetings, phone calls and "church chat", and I thank you for your love and patience. I look forward to returning to "civilian" life and spending more time with them and being a husband and father!

UUSIS is truly a family in every sense. There is conflict and cooperation, sorrow and joy, and especially love and support. I hope and pray that we will continue to work together and support each other in our final year of transition and beyond as we work with our new minister to revitalize our congregation and move forward on our mission of social justice and equality for all in Stamford and the world. I thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President. I hope I have done everything I could to act in the congregation's best interests and continue to make this a welcoming place to worship and be with each other.

*Bright Blessings,  
Joe Gonzalez, Jr.*

## Ministerial Search Committee

Daniel Beltran submitted his annual report to the board. He is the chair of the six member Ministerial Search Committee. The latter has received training by the Reverend Craig of UUA. She has advised the committee through the survey process and currently on the cottage meetings. The next step is to develop a document which will be extended to ministers who are seeking ministerial posts. In October the committee will sponsor a special meeting entitled "Beyond Categorical Thinking". Congregational attendance is of utmost importance. This meeting will serve as the kick-off for the final phase of the hiring process. The input of all members of our congregation continues to be vital to the success of our mission.

If you have any questions, anytime during the process, please feel free to contact us! Our committee is composed of: Julie Punishill ([jpunishill@mac.com](mailto:jpunishill@mac.com)), Daniel A. Beltran ([dalex4291@gmail.com](mailto:dalex4291@gmail.com)), Norris Wakefield ([nwake65@optonline.net](mailto:nwake65@optonline.net)), Robert Nixon ([rbrtnixon@yahoo.com](mailto:rbrtnixon@yahoo.com)), Tara Fleck ([tarafleck@hotmail.com](mailto:tarafleck@hotmail.com)), Nancy Furnas ([Wetherwaxn@aol.com](mailto:Wetherwaxn@aol.com)) and Maisie Kohnstamm ([Maisie96@aol.com](mailto:Maisie96@aol.com)). We are committed to finding the best Minister for our congregation!

*Maisie Kohnstamm*

## 2011-2012 Nominating Slate

The slate presented to the congregation at the Annual Meeting on June 12, 2011 will be:

\*NOTE: You only voting for those positions/candidates with a \* next to their name/committee.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Officers:** \*President – Bonnie Currie 2011 – 2013  
Vice President – Linda King 2010 – 2012  
\*Treasurer – Bob Sanders 2011 – 2013  
Clerk – Diane Montgomery 2010 – 2012

**Trustees:** Neil Danilowicz 2010 – 2012  
Henry Brenner 2010 – 2012  
\*Bob Hawley 2011 – 2012  
\*Dot Sonn 2011 – 2013  
\*Gaby Pareja 2011 – 2013

**STANDING COMMITTEES:** **Building and Grounds:** Neil Danilowicz 2010 – 2012  
**Committee on Ministry:** Committee is suspended until a new Minister is found.  
**Finance:** Don Ehleben 2010 – 2012  
**\*Membership:** Jay Fountain 2011 – 2013  
**\*Religious Education:** *Co-Chair Open Position* 2011 – 2013  
and Lynne Lane (2010-2012)

**ELECTED COMMITTEES:** **\*Nominating:** Ann Preston, Alfa Drent, Meilen Wong, Helene Devin, Open Position  
**Ministerial Search Committee:** Daniel Beltran, Tara Fleck, Nancy Furnas,  
Maisie Kohnstamm, Bob Nixon, Julie Punishill, Norris Wakefield

**OTHER COMMITTEES:** **Denominational Affairs:** *Open Position*  
**Fellowship:** Shelly Chase and *Co-Chair Open Position*  
**Food Collection:** Tara Fleck  
**Kitchen Sub-committee:** Neil Danilowicz  
**Ladies Who Lunch:** Bonnie Currie  
**Pastoral Care Lay Ministry Team:** *Open Position*  
**PoemAlley:** Bonnie Currie  
**Publicity:** Jeff King  
**Religious Services:** Co-Chairs Rolf Maurer and Bob Nixon 2010 – 2012  
**Sacred Circle Pagan Group:** Dee Rapposelli  
**Security Committee:** Neil Danilowicz  
**Social Action:** *Open Position*  
**Sunday Used Book Sale:** Rolf Maurer and Bonnie Currie  
**Transition Team:** Tony Allam  
**UUW:** Shaw Stuart and Virginia Streitfeld  
**Worship Associates Sub-Committee:** Rolf Maurer and Bob Nixon 2010 – 2012

**BOARD APPOINTED POSITIONS:** **Historian:** Dorothy Sonn  
**Librarian:** Karen Versanti  
**Photographer:** *Open Position*  
**Rental Coordinator:** *Open Position*

## Unitarian Universalist Women

**Please join us for the Annual UUW  
Potluck Picnic!!!**

The annual UUW potluck picnic will be held Monday, June 20, at 6:00pm at the home of Nancy Furnas (234 Skyview Drive, Stamford). Please call me at 203-637-5396 to RSVP and let me know your contribution. All women are welcome.

*Shaw Stuart*

## Second Sunday's Mother's Day Hike

Bob Hawley led us through the newly prepared trails of Selleck Woods in Darien where the sun sparkled on the lake, and our own hiking group members were the lone humans in the woodland sanctuary. Debbie, Ann Preston, Leslie, John Nolan, Bob Sanders, and Karen debated the direction of the train passing by, looked at all of the look-alike birds, and stepped on the stump paths. If you are shopping at Trader's Joe's, you can incorporate this park into your trip.

**Next hike:** Cranbury Park, Norwalk, on the Third Sunday, June 19

*Karen Davis*

## Care Team

We are a community committed to helping each other. The Care Team is made up of interested members and friends trained in the basics of pastoral care like hospital visitation, issues surrounding grief and loss, all while maintaining confidentiality. Julie Punishill is the chair of the Care Team. If you know of someone who might need our services, please contact Julie or the Care Team member on call for that month.

### June - Maisie Kohnstamm, (203) 972-5811

Rev. Dawn Sangrey is available for pastoral care at any time. She is in the office until June 19:

Sunday, 12 – 2 PM      Tuesday, 10 AM – 5 PM      Wednesday, 1 PM – 7 PM

and can be reached at her office number at 203-348-0758. Otherwise, please call her at home at 914-666-6398.

Rev. Dawn will be attending the General Assembly: June 20 – June 26, working at home: June 28 and 29, in the office: June 30, on vacation: July 1 – August 12, and August Summer Hours: TBD.

During the interim minister's vacation, another UU minister will be on call for pastoral emergencies. Contact the President or a member of the Caring Committee if you need ministerial help.

Also, feel free to contact Julie on her cell-617-851-9773 or at [jpunishill@mac.com](mailto:jpunishill@mac.com).

## Membership

With the assistance of our very able administrator, we will have Directories available on Sundays after the service and upon request to the administrator – via email or snail mail. See Bonnie Currie in the Social Room. If you have any corrections to make, please let Bonnie or Tara know. We will be printing in limited editions for the first week or so.

Thanks to our regular Greeters, Jay Fountain, Alfa Drent, Ann Preston, Ann Rustici and Joanne Brenner, for their welcoming presence at the front door and in the Social Room.

*Bonnie Currie*

## Meditation

The survey results revealed a lot of our members either already meditate regularly or are interested in starting. I will be leading a meditation circle on Sundays prior to services. If you're interested in meditating in tune with the sacred energy of our sanctuary and with the power of others, please join us. Our first gathering will be Sunday, June 19th from 9:00 am until 9:30 am in the sanctuary. Please try to be on time as we only have a limited amount of time before the sanctuary needs to be set up for services. For more information, please contact me, Julie Punishill at [jpunishill@mac.com](mailto:jpunishill@mac.com) or 617-851-9773.

*Julie Punishill*

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## Summer Services 2011: Time to Step Up

Summer is almost here. The warm weather and lazy weekends are within sight. At UUSIS, we turn over summer to our members and friends to provide us inspiration and new insights about our hectic lives. Many members of our faith community has stepped forward to lead lay summer services, which are more relaxed and give us time to try out new ideas. The Religious Services Committee still has some openings on the summer calendar. Maureen Ferrara-Higle, our talented music consultant has come up with a great service idea. Someone could put together monologues or soliloquies around a certain theme, i.e. faith traditions; responsive readings from our own hymnal (2 people reading chosen pieces), odysseys (stories about how people came to Unitarianism) -- several people can tell their stories in one Sunday. All that is needed to for somebody to organize a summer service around a series of readings. Please talk with Bob Nixon or Rolf Maurer if you have a summer service idea.

*Bob Nixon*

**The Religious Services Committee still has some openings on the summer calendar!!!**

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## First Sunday Food Collection

**For May, UUSIS donated 63 lbs. of food to The Food Bank!**

Food collections are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month. We keep a basket in the kitchen for those who bring food on other days. Any questions, please see Tara Fleck.

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 Stews Canned Vegetables (Corn, Cut Green Beans) • Applesauce • Crackers Dried Beans (Pinto Beans, Black Eyed Peas, Lentil, Kidney) • Macaroni & Cheese

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

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## Social Action

On Monday, June 21, 2011, organizations and individuals around the country will celebrate National ASK (Asking Saves Kids) Day. Held annually on the first day of summer, a season when children spend more time in other homes, ASK Day reminds parents about the importance of asking if there are guns in the homes where their children play. Another resource for parents is the "Arm Yourself with Knowledge" Facebook Page, which offers simple, empowering solutions to prevent youth violence by making your home, family and community safer. For more information or to participate in ASK day, email [ask@paxusa.org](mailto:ask@paxusa.org), or visit [askingsaveskids.org](http://askingsaveskids.org).

*Leslie Weinberg*

**A Final Thought...**

“If you can dream it, you can do it.”  
- Walt Disney

**UUSIS Information**

**PERSONNEL:**

Interim Minister – The Rev. Dawn Sangrey  
Minister Emeritus – The Rev. Stan Aronson  
Music Consultant – Maureen Ferrara Higle  
Office Administrator/Newsletter Editor – Tara Fleck  
Cleaning Crew – Juliet Ess

**UUSIS BOARD OFFICERS and TRUSTEES:**

President – Joseph Gonzalez  
Vice President – Linda King  
Treasurer – Robert Sanders  
Clerk – Diane Montgomery  
Ellie de Ridder, Amy Good, Neil Danilowicz, and  
Henry Brenner

**UUSIS COMMITTEE CHAIRS:**

Buildings and Grounds – Neil Danilowicz  
Pastoral Care Lay Ministry Team – Julie Punishill  
Fellowship – Michelle Chase  
Finance – Don Ehleben  
Membership – Bonnie Currie  
Religious Education – Lynne Lane  
Religious Services – Robert Nixon & Rolf Maurer  
Social Action – Robin Gans  
Publicity – Jeff King

Denominational Affairs – Open Position  
Historian – Dorothy Sonn  
Ministerial Search Committee – Daniel Beltran  
Photographer – Open Position  
Rental Coordinator – Open Position  
Transition Team – Tony Allam

**INTERIM MINISTER'S SUMMER**

**SCHEDULE:**

Regular Hours: June 1 – June 19  
In the office: June 1, 7, 8, 14, 15  
Sunday, 12 – 2pm, Tuesday, 10am – 5pm, and  
Wednesday, 1 – 7pm

You are welcome to drop in during these times.  
Occasionally a meeting will require Dawn to be out of the  
office, so it's always best to call first. To reach her in the  
office, please call 203-348-0758.

Attending the General Assembly: June 20 – June 26

Working at Home: June 28 and 29

In the office: June 30.

On vacation: July 1 – August 12

August Summer Hours: TBD

Homecoming Sunday: September 11, 2011

When she is not in the office, you can reach Rev. Sangrey  
at home at 914-666-6398. Except in emergencies, please  
call between 9 AM and 9 PM. Thursday is her day off.

Except in emergencies, calls made and e-mails  
([dawnsangrey@gmail.com](mailto:dawnsangrey@gmail.com)) sent on Thursday will be  
answered on Friday.

During the interim minister's vacation, another UU minister  
will be on call for pastoral emergencies. Contact the  
President or a member of the Caring Committee if you  
need ministerial help.

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Tue., Thurs., & Fri.: 9:30am–2:30pm

E-mail: [admin@uuisis.org](mailto:admin@uuisis.org)

**LOST AND FOUND:**

Contact the office if you are missing anything.

**SUBMISSION INFORMATION:**

If you would like to submit an article to News & Views,  
please call 203-348-0708 or e-mail [admin@uuisis.org](mailto:admin@uuisis.org).

**UUSIS NEWS & VIEWS**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 Publicity and Membership Meeting, King's House, 7:30pm	2 Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary, 7:30-9:00pm	3	4
5 Budget Review Session, Social Room, 9:00AM •Worship, 10am •First Sunday Food Collection, Sanctuary or Kitchen •Care Team Meeting, Sanctuary, After Service •Religious Services Meeting, Sanctuary, 11:30am	6	7 Board Meeting, Social Room, 7:30pm	8	9 Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary, 7:30-9:00pm	10	11
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>NOTE:</b> This calendar has all events as listed by the time of publication. Please check with the Administrator at 203-348-0708 or <a href="mailto:admin@uuisis.org">admin@uuisis.org</a> if you wish to schedule an event.</p> </div>						
12 Worship, 10am •Annual Meeting, Sanctuary, After Service	13	14 Sacred Circle Pagans, Social Room, 7:00pm	15	16	17	18 Rental, Sanctuary and Social Room, 2:00-6:00pm
19 Meditation, Sanctuary, 9:00am •Worship, 10am •Ministerial Search Committee Meeting, Conference Room, After Service •Second Sunday Hikers, Cranbury Park, After Service	20 UUSIS Office Closed for the Summer; the Office will reopen August 16 •Uuw Picnic, Nancy Furnas's House, 6:00pm	21	22	23	24	25
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Recurring:</b>  <b>Mon. - Fri.:</b> Alcoholics Anonymous, Social Room, 7:30-8:30AM  <b>Thurs.:</b> AIAnon (Spanish speaking), Conference Room, 7:30PM  <b>Sat.:</b> Alcoholics Anonymous, Social Room, 9:00-10:00AM  <b>Sat.:</b> Igreja Do Evangelho Quadrangular, Sanctuary &amp; Social Room, 6:00PM-∞</p> </div>						
26 Summer Service, 10am	27	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Rev. Sangrey to General Assembly June 20-27</p> </div>		29	30	