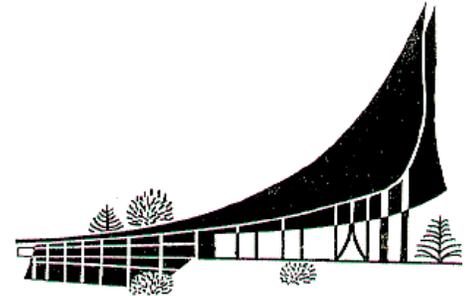


SOUNDINGS

The Unitarian Church in Westport
 10 Lyons Plains Road
 Westport, Connecticut 06880
 203 227-7205
 uuchurch@uuwestport.org
 www.uuwestport.org



THE NEXT SOUNDINGS DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, FEB. 14

Jan. 26 - Feb. 22, 2014

A Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Jan. 26 Worship Service: 9 am COA Worship Service: 11:00 am COA Potluck, E.W. ... 12:00 noon Environmental Action, Library 12:30 pm COA Ceremony, Sanctuary ... 1:00 pm	27 Drum Circle, Chapel, ... 7:00 pm	28 Men's Choir, ... 8:00 pm	29 Chant & Meditation, M.H., ... 7:00 pm	30 Youth Choir - 5 pm Teen Choir - 6 pm Bell Choir - 6:45 pm Women's Choir - 7:45 pm	31 Shawl Ministry, M.H. ... 12:30 pm UU Movie Discussion, M.H., ... 7:30 pm	Feb. 1 Newcomer Orientation, Fellow. Rm., - 9:00 am Sight-Singing, Sanctuary... 9:30 am Interim Minister's Forum, M.H., ... 10:30 pm REEL Justice, Sanctuary ... 7:30 pm
2 Worship Services, 9 & 11 am K-6 starts in Sanctuary Parent's Group 8th OWL, E.W., ...12:30 pm Voices Cafe Mtg., Library... 12:30 pm Environmental Action, Sanctuary 12:30 pm	3 O&AF Rehearsal, ... 7:45 pm	4 RE Whole Council Mtg., Fellowship Rm., 7:00 pm "Gun Guys", Book Discussion, E.W. ... 7:00 pm Men's Choir, ... 8:00 pm	5 Chant & Meditation, M.H., ... 7:00 pm Chamber Choir, ... 7:45 pm	6 Youth Choir - 5 pm Teen Choir - 6 pm Bell Choir - 6:45 pm Women's Choir - 7:45 pm	7 RE Valentine Appreciation Day, M.H., ... 7:00 pm	8 Sight-Singing, Sanctuary, ... 9:30 am Neighborhood Circles, E.W. ... 10:00 am
9 Worship Service: 9 & 11 am <i>Share the Plate Sunday</i> Parent Orientation grade 5 OWL, M.H., ... 9:00 am Rainbow Task Force, Chapel ... 12:30 pm Circle 10 Dinner, M.H., ... 6:00 pm	10 Gun Safety Committee, E.W., ... 7:30 pm Board of Trustees, Fellowship . Rm., ... 7:30 pm	11 Senior Luncheon, Meeting Hse., ... 11:00 am	12 Chant & Meditation, M.H., ... 7:00 pm Men's Choir, ... 8:00 pm	13 Youth Choir - 5 pm Teen Choir - 6 pm Bell Choir - 6:45 pm Women's Choir - 7:45 pm	14 Youth Service Trip to NYC SOUNDINGS Deadline, 12 noon Shawl Ministry, M.H., - 12:30 pm	15 Sight-Singing, Sanct. ... 9:30 am Small Group Facilitators, Y.R., ... 10:00 am Voices Cafe, Meeting Hse., (doors open at 7:30 pm)
16 Worship Services: 9 & 11 am No RE Nursery available UN Committee, Chapel, ... 12:30 pm	17 O&AF Rehearsal, ... 7:45 pm	18 Men's Choir, ... 8:00 pm	19 SOUNDINGS Mailing - 1 pm Chant & Meditation, M.H., ... 7:00 pm Chamber Choir, ... 7:45 pm	20 Youth Choir - 5 pm Finance Committee, Fellowship Rm., ... 5:30 pm Teen Choir - 6 pm Bell Choir - 6:45 pm Women's Choir - 7:45 pm	21	22 Visiting Steward Training Session, Sanctuary, ... 12:30 pm "Love Letters" Sanctuary, ... 8:00 pm

Sermon information on following page.

SERMONS for FEBRUARY

JANUARY 26 ... 9 & 11 am "Coming of Age Here and Now"

Our 9th grade Coming of Age (CoA) group will present the service today. A highlight of the service will be the sharing of their Credo statements (not just what they believe but what they hold as their deepest values). This is our opportunity to listen, hear, acknowledge, encourage, celebrate and welcome them in community in a formal way. They are no longer the children they were. This is who they are now on this milestone day. **Music:** Teen Choir Sings at both services.

Note: Coming of Age Family luncheon will follow the 11:00 am service in the East Wing, and a Gratitude Ceremony for the CoA youth and their Families will begin at 1:00 pm in the Sanctuary.

FEBRUARY 2 ... 9 & 11 am "To Be a True Partner" Rev. Roberta Finklestein & Members of the Partner Church Committee

This service will explore the historical and contemporary connections between UUism as we know it here in Westport CT and the Unitarianism practiced at our partner church in Transylvania. The first class of Pastoral Care Associates will be commissioned this morning. **Music:** 9:00 am, Women's Choir. 11:00 am, Men's Choir.

FEBRUARY 9 ... 9 & 11 am "Putting On the Full Armor of Faith" Rev. Roberta Finklestein

Ephesians talks about putting on the full armor of God. What do we Unitarian Universalists have to put on when we go out into the world to right wrongs and advocate for our liberal principles?
Music: Chamber Choir sings at both services.

FEBRUARY 16 ... 9 & 11 am "Forgive Us Our Trespases As We Forgive Those Who Trespass Against Us" Rev. Debra Haffner

The story of my -- and your -- journey on the path to forgiveness.
Music: Once and Again Folksingers at both services.

FEBRUARY 23 ... 9 & 11 am "Learning How to Pray" Rev. Roberta Finklestein

Rev. Roberta will share some of her personal spiritual odyssey and will talk about what prayer can mean to people who don't necessarily pray 'to' anybody. **Music:** 9:00 am, Men's Choir. 11:00 am, Women's Choir.

Denominational Affairs / Beyond Our Walls

We Need Delegates!

Are you coming to the UU Metro NY District Meeting in Morristown, NJ May 2-3? Will you join congregants from 51 other congregations in the tri-state area as we discuss issues vital to us all? It was moved from Stamford unfortunately but hey, it's still around the corner!

Are you going to stand with your fellow UUs at General Assembly in Providence, RI this June 25-29? Will you join Sister Simone Campbell for this year's Ware Lecture at GA? If you don't know who she is, she was instrumental in passing the Affordable Care Act and pushing for economic justice, immigration reform and other causes with her "Nuns on the Bus" tour.

And will you represent TUCW at these gatherings of UUs as a delegate? Delegates are responsible for voting on behalf of TUCW as we make decisions at the District and UUA levels. We need about ten TUCW members to perform this vital democratic duty. The more broadly we draw these delegates from within our congregation, the better served we will be, so current and future leaders of TUCW raise your hands! And for those that have need we plan to offer some financial assistance to offset registration fees.

Interested? Email me at ted@uuwestport.org.
Learn more about GA here <http://www.uua.org/ga/>
See you there!
Ted Yang, *Vice-Chair and Denominational Affairs Liason*

Greetings from the NLDC

The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee (NLDC) is getting geared up for the Nominating part of our job, but in the meantime, we're working on the Leadership Development part. So we'd like to spread the word about an excellent leadership development opportunity that's happening in Mt Kisco, NY on Saturday, February 1st from 9am to 4pm. The UU Fellowship of Northern Westchester is sponsoring a workshop entitled "No More Lone Rangers: Developing Teams of UU Leaders".

Here's some information from the promotional flyer for the workshop:

"We don't just need one hero to help us—we need teams of leaders who have the nuanced skills, sensibilities, vision and relationships to lead in today's faith community. This workshop-retreat will help strengthen your leaders as a team, and help them plan for a sustainable future."

This workshop should be informative for experienced and aspiring leaders alike. If you're interested in attending or getting more information, or know someone who might be interested, please email the NLDC members at NLDC@uuwestport.org, or call Carrie McEvoy, NLDC Chairperson, at 360-333-7499.

In The Interim

I have been thinking lately about the Sondheim play *Into the Woods*. In this play familiar characters from fairy tales go off into the woods seeking fulfillment of a cherished wish. At the end of Act I they each get their wish, and ‘they all live happily ever after.’ Until Act II, when they discover the shadow side of their wishes. As they realize the costs of their desires they also realize that the only way out of the woods is to let go of those individual wishes and work together to defeat the evil that is afoot. They come together and discover hidden strengths as the haunting song “No One Is Alone” sounds throughout the woods. At the end evil is defeated – the dragon is always slain in fairy tales – but the costs are huge. One character, the baker’s wife, pleads with her husband as she lays dying. “Tell the children the story of the woods: actions have consequences even for future generations.”

That is why the Transition Team and I are inviting you into a study of your congregation’s history. We know that in order to live happily ever after, in order to thrive as a community of faith, you need to know what happened in the woods (or wherever your particular mythic stories have taken place). You have to know together who you were because that determines, at least in part, who you are. And who you are determines who you will be in the future.

Historian Conrad Wright names four reasons for a liberal religious people to know their history. The first is that having a shared story creates social cohesion. The second is that history bestows particular symbols of communication that are essential to a group’s identity. What is this chalice that we light at the start of every service? Why is this building such an odd shape? What in the world is an RE?

The third reason is that history is rich with role models. UU minister Tim Jensen writes, “... when we allow our spiritual forebears to speak to us authentically in their own voices, we will discover in their experience potential mentors for our own religious pilgrimage. This is the miracle of a living tradition – the ability to ... reveal in the lives of those who have come before us the insights that can guide us as we encounter our own future.”

The final reason is that to know where you came from enhances your self-understanding. The process of searching for a settled minister is not just about looking for the best person to fill the slot. It is about clarifying your identity as a people. Who were you? Who are you? Who do you wish to become? Part of this clarification emerges out of an encounter with your past.

The History Wall is more than just a time line of dates and names and events. It will become a profusion of stories. You may find that different people remember the same incident differently. I urge you to hear all of the versions of the story as truths. You will learn so much from each other if you approach this exercise with open minds and hearts. Eventually what emerges out of these stories is the true narrative arc of this congregation. You will see for yourselves the themes that recur. The high and low points. The turning points. You will see for yourselves the truth of Sondheim’s assertion that actions have consequences, even for future generations.

Coming to terms with history is a shared project; we will all work on it together. As you write and read, as you learn from each other, you will experience the truth of Sondheim’s musical assertion: no one is alone. We are all in this together. Together in fellowship, together in faith.

In the interim,
Rev. Roberta

If you are going through a challenging time or know somebody in the congregation who needs support from our Pastoral Care Associates call the office (203-227-7205) or send an email to PCA@uwestport.org.

News to Report from the Jan. Curriculum Circle meeting by Carol Seiple

The following possible changes in group configurations are under consideration for 2014/2015 Religious Ed.:

- The children would be grouped: K-3rd grade (offered at both the 9am and 11am services) vs. K-4th gr.
4th & 5th grade (11 am service and possibly 9am) vs. 5&6th gr.
6th & 7th grade (only 11am service) vs. 7th gr. only
- K-3rd curriculum will rotate over 4 years. The children will spend the majority of classroom time learning about Unitarian Universalism. Judeo/Christianity, Hindu, Buddhism, Islam and Earth based faiths lessons will be done also each year.
- 4th & 5th grades will rotate between two curricula that the circle is evaluating several from the UUA "Tapestry of Faith" curricula for this age group.
- 6th & 7th grade will rotate between Neighboring Faiths and another curriculum the committee is considering based on empowering youth in the area of Social Justice, called Heeding the Call.
- Social justice lessons and projects will have greater emphasis in the curriculum. We began this focus this current year with monthly social justice lessons for K-6th grades.

Come to the Religious Education "RE" Council Feb. 4th 7 pm – to hear about the Program & the new RE Council Structure

The next meeting for 2014-15 Curriculum Circle is planned for March 4th we would welcome your input and participation and feedback to make our programming relevant to the spiritual lives of our families and children. Please speak with Carol Seiple or Mary Collins regarding any questions or concerns.



Last Sundays
RE class on
Buddhist Chants
given by Janet
Luongo in the
Chapel

5th grade - Our Whole Lives (OWL) -

"... In our society, children are often exposed to images of sexuality that are tainted with sexism, racism, homophobia, and irresponsibility..."

OWL is a positive, comprehensive, age-appropriate educational program that promotes sexual health. The Elementary curriculum helps to create a meaningful partnership with parents to provide positive and responsible sexuality education.

Our 5th grade program will run five Sunday evenings in March from 5 -7:30 PM with a break for dinner in the middle.

Feb. 9th - 9 AM - Parent's Only Information Session, in the Meeting House Main Floor, to learn more about the class and to meet our trained teachers. We want to answer all of your question to help you decide if this program is right for your child.

Feb. 23rd - 9 AM. For the families that choose to participate in OWL we will have a Parent and Child Orientation.

If you have any questions or to RSVP for the Parent's Orientation please call or email: Lon Garrison 203-246-8005 toothandnailwood@gmail.com and Susan Marcus 203-531-3327 SusanMarcusLCSW@gmail.com

Jan. 26th -

"Coming of Age Growing Here and Now" Service at both 9 & 11 am - Teen Choir will sing.

CoA Family Potluck follows the service and 1:00 pm Gratitude statement.

Feb. 2nd

K-6thgrade START IN SANCTUARY
Pre-K- Winter brings snow -Lower Level
K-6th - Social Action- topic:
Immigration -Sanctuary then Lower Lev.
7th - TRIP - Wilton Meeting House
(Quaker) - pkg lot here 9:30 am
8th -Decisions -Meeting House-3rd Flr
9th -12th-Youth Group- Youth led
welcome-Mtg Hse-Ground Flr

Tues. Feb. 4th -

Religious Education - Council Mtg. -
7pm- Fellowship Hall.

Fri. Feb. 7th -

RE Valentine (Teacher Appreciation)
7 pm Mtg Hse Main Floor

Feb. 9th -

Pre-K-Love Means Saying and Doing -
Lower Level
K-4th-Confucian
5-6th - Life of David
7th - Christianity review
8th -Things to know about Abuse,
Harassment, Acquaintance Rape
9-12th-Youth Group - Intoxicants &
youth

Feb. 14-16 -

Youth Service Trip to NYC
Feb. 16th (Pres. Day/Weekend) No RE
classes -Nursery only -Lower Level

Feb. 23rd -

Pre-K- Cooperation-Lower Level
K-4th - Taoism -Tai Chi
7th - **TRIP** -UCC Bridgeport - meet in
pkg lot here 9:15am
8th -STD facts-Meeting House-3rd Flr
9th -12th-Youth Group- BRING A
FRIEND-Mtg Hse-Ground Flr

Religious Education (RE) Participant Testimonial:



"My name is Ethan Farber. I like RE because we learn new things like one my favorites last week was immigration. We also have good opportunities to make friends."

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP...

by Mary Curtsmith
Youth Program Director

Coming of Age Process at TUCW

Did you know that many Unitarian Universalist Coming of Age Programs are unique to their community? Unlike the set rituals of Jewish Bar or Bat Mitzvah or Roman Catholic Confirmation, UU's create the way they honor the milestone acknowledging that their children are growing up! The age range that is marked as "Coming of Age" usually is somewhere between 7-9th grade. Some congregations spend an entire year utilizing a variety of activities and curricula, and some, like TUCW, spend part of the church calendar year. Most share a component of encouraging youth to think about the big picture about life and death, views of God and incorporate some service work. Most conclude with a "Coming of Age Service" where youth say what they believe "the Credo Statement" but the exact details of each program and service vary.

TUCW 9th Graders, after completing their program here, join Youth Group – who welcome them on Feb. 2nd this year.

TUCW 8th Graders, completing Our Whole Lives, will begin a few Coming of Age classes beginning in April (UU History on April 6th, and have the opportunity to go on a Boston Heritage Trip April 25-26th. There has been much behind the scenes work preparing for this trip. And we are looking for your input for classes and programming for this class.

Please RSVP to Mary Collins if you intend to have your 8th grader participate in the Coming of Age Program or if you are interested in working with this group program in some capacity.

February YG Schedule

Feb. 2 – Welcome to Youth Group CoA – Youth Led

Feb. 9 – "Intoxicants and Youth" -
A safe platform for the education/discussion/ questions about drugs, alcohol, and stimulants

Feb. 14-16 – Youth Service Trip NYC –

Feb. 23 - Bring a Friend to Youth Group

Transition Team News: Changes

On January 14th, we had our last Grief and Healing session with the Seniors Group, at their regular monthly meeting. This workshop was different from all the others in that the attendees all had one perspective on whether our congregation is involved in a grieving process. From their point of view, nothing that has gone on, or is currently going on in our congregation constitutes a real reason for grief. "We have lived through real grief and this is nothing like that". The word that they thought was missing from the Grief graph was "disappointment". As a group, they described that they were simply disappointed in some of the things that have happened.

Here are the final statistics from these workshops.

Denial	4
Grieving	21
Depression	17
Physical Symptoms	8
Panic/Anxiety	11
Anger/Acting Out	33
Regret/Guilt	39
Resistance	25
Hope Appears	71
Reaffirmation	57
New Reality	24

This is hopeful. As we continue with this process of change, please remember that there are lots of different and valid opinions about our history, and that the person you are talking to in the foyer may be able to give you a new perspective about an old issue.

You have probably noticed that we have started creating a History Wall in the sanctuary. We encourage you to add your own perspective by writing it down on a post it note, signing it and putting it in place. If you would like to write more than can fit on a post it note, feel free to type it up and send it to Roberta at Roberta@uuwestport.org. Please remember to write legibly and to own your ideas by putting your name on the note.

In February we will be starting Oral History Panel Discussions. A few of the topics we are considering are: The Early Days, Music through the Years, Our Beautiful Building and Memories about the Ministers. We also want to display historical items that would be of interest to everyone. Please contact anyone on the transition team (see names below) or write to Kristen at kristensleddy@aol.com if you would like to participate on one of the panels, or if you have any items to display. We are looking for photographs and documents or any other cool stuff that will help us learn about the history of TUCW. Watch the email blasts for more details and dates.

Welcome to the New Year!

The Transition Team is made up of:

Lorna Donnelly, Andrew Graham, Kristen Leddy, William McEvoy, Bob Perry and Connie Rockman

Climate Change and the Global Shift in Human Consciousness

The Bhagavad Gita, The Song of the Bhagavan, or simply the Gita, is a 700-verse scripture that is part of the Hindu epic, The Mahabharata. The Bhagavad Gita's call for selfless action inspired many Indian leaders including Gandhi who referred to the Gita as his spiritual dictionary.

Suppose that the Gita is right, that everything that has happened has happened for the best. Then how would we tell the story of climate change and other environmental degradations? What is the purpose of all the technology that we have created at the expense of the environment?

Join us on Sunday, February 2, 2014, at 12:30 pm for an Environmental Action Group program featuring Sailesh Rao's presentation on "Climate Change and the Global Shift in Human Consciousness". His talk will explore a story that weaves together these developments and predicts the imminent global shift in human consciousness that is already underway.



Sailesh is an electrical engineer, international climate activist, serial entrepreneur, and Executive Director of Climate Healers (www.climatehealers.org), a not for profit formed to combat the climate crisis.

He is also a speaker with the Climate Reality Project, (www.climate realityproject.org) the world-class organization founded and chaired by former Vice President and Nobel Laureate Al Gore to combat the climate crisis.

We are very fortunate to have Sailesh as a speaker. Please join us for this special event! The room at The Unitarian Church is to be determined.



Dear Congregation,
Thank you for supporting our KIVA/Microfinance program.
We had another successful KIVA Christmas card sale even though we didn't get to sell cards our second day due to the weather.
We have now made a total of \$28,200 in loans to 648 people in 57 countries. Great work!!

Did You Know?

The Unitarian Church in Westport is proud to celebrate our 20th year as a Welcoming Congregation! In 1994 members of our congregation underwent a 10 week educational course on gay, lesbian, and bisexual (GLB) issues and then voted to become a welcoming church.

Since then, The Unitarian Church in Westport has committed itself to being inclusive and supportive of the concerns of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (GLBTQQ) persons at every level of congregational life—in worship, in programs, and at social occasions—welcoming not only their presence, but also the unique gifts and particularities of their lives as well.



For additional resources on GLBTQQ issues please visit:

- uuwestport.org/social-justice.html (Rainbow Task Force),
- www.uua.org/lgbtq or
- The Triangle Community Center website:

Interfaith Council Program “Music on the Road to Freedom” to Honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



The Interfaith Council of Westport and Weston will present its Ninth Annual Martin Luther King Day program on Sunday, January 26, 2014 at 3:00 PM. The event will take place at the Norfield Congregational Church, 64 Norfield Road, Weston CT 06883.

“Music on the Road to Freedom” celebrates African- American spirituals and their historical significance. This program tells the story of slavery from its beginning to emancipation through narrative and song. Reverend Dr. Bernard Wilson, Senior Minister of Norfield Congregational Church, a descendent of slaves and its author, will narrate. His story, reflected in the spirituals to be sung by the Norfield Choir and guest singers, depicts the slaves' struggle for survival and determination to prevail in their journey to emancipation. Ellen Dickinson, Musical Director of Norfield Church, will conduct many familiar and beloved spirituals.

This program, sponsored by the Interfaith Council of Westport-Weston, is free and open to all. A reception will follow. Don't miss this special celebration in honor of Martin Luther King, and his efforts to advance equality for all people.

There will be a good will collection to benefit the Warm Up Funds in Westport and Weston and the ABC, A Better Chance, program.



From Your Year-Round Stewardship Committee

“Words Matter”

I am not a professional writer, though I do find myself writing a great deal in my career. I learned one thing. Words matter. They frame how we think about issues. Changing even one word can send the reader or listener down a different path.

At a recent meeting of the Year Round Stewardship Committee we were reviewing brochures and other materials in preparation for the upcoming Annual Budget Drive. We were looking at materials from other churches to steal ideas... I mean to be inspired by the way others have gone about sharing their story.

The word “generosity” is used frequently. I made the offhand comment that I hated the word “generous” when it comes to giving money to the Church. For me, it simply does not relate to the way I think my relationship with The Unitarian Church in Westport. Its irrelevant.

For example, last Sunday I was at the 9 am service. In my wallet was one \$20 bill. I do not normally leave a \$20 in the plate. I wasn’t going to leave anything that morning. I even asked my kids if they had a couple bucks in their pockets, to spare myself the embarrassment of passing the plate empty. They did not. But it was Share the Plate Sunday. David Vita spoke so eloquently about Operation Fuel and how great the need was. Things haven’t always gone our way, but my family was always warm.

I dropped the \$20 in the plate. You could say I was generous.

But I don’t feel “generous” when I give to the Church... to my Church... to our Church. “Generous” is not one of the words Mary Elizabeth and I use when we discuss our annual pledge. I don’t say, “How generous do I feel this year,” or even, “how generous can I afford to be this year?” My relationship to my Church is not based on generosity. I use different words in asking and answering the “how much?” question. I use words like Commitment, Relationship, Community, and Responsibility (which is an essential part of the definition of stewardship). I think about History, Legacy, Involvement, Entrusting, Ensuring, Providing... until Roget begs for mercy.

But never “generous.” To me, “generous” implies a one way street, a giver and a getter. Generosity implies giving without an expectation of getting anything in return. I do get something back. Not an item or a specific action, but things far more important. I get a community, an identity, a connection to the world that I could not replicate at any price. I wish I had more to give – I know I would get even more back in return.

My way of thinking won’t resonate with everyone, as several of my YRSC co-conspirators were quick to remind me. You don’t have to see it my way. Though I do ask, when you are thinking about your annual contribution, change the words you use. See if you get a different answer. You may find yourself feeling more connected, more engaged, and more involved. If it leaves you feeling more generous, that will be OK as well.

Matthew Peterson, *member of the Stewardship Committee*

A Letter from your Board Chair

My Fellow Congregants,

As we enter the new year there is much that is changing and much that remains the same in our beloved community. The transitions in our governance structure are many: A Head of Staff; a Functioning Human Resources Committee; and of great importance, a Year Round Stewardship Committee (YRSC).

This committee has been charged with stewarding (protecting and being responsible for) our considerable resources. This includes attending to any Capital Campaigns, our Endowment, the Annual Budget Drive and all other fundraising.

I like to think of these resources as our individual, collective and institutional time, talent and treasure. Please note that the Stewardship Committee is "Year Round," so unlike in the past when the canvass was finished and the committee was disbanded, these folks are committed to continuing their role as stewards. Along with them we need to change the conversation – and that is the title of our annual appeal this year: "Let's Change the Conversation".

As we look forward to our future, we contemplate the following question: "What could we be if we were more generously funded in terms of time, talent and treasure?" This is a conversation worth having and that is exactly what this year's Annual Budget Drive aims to do. To enable these conversations, we are introducing one-on-one stewardship conversations as a key part of our Annual Budget Drive. These will be opportunities for sharing our stories, our passions, and our hopes and dreams for the future of TUCW. The Board and YRSC are excited about these conversations as a way to deepen our commitment to one another and to the congregation, and to provide feedback useful for our search and future plans.

This interim period is a great time to question and think differently. It is an opportunity to question not only how we do things but also to reexamine our commitment to this beloved community and its impact on our lives. A strong annual budget drive is exceptionally important this year because it informs ministerial candidates about the kind of community they might be joining. We are hoping for 100% participation!

Here is what you can expect in the next few months:

During February: A team of Visiting Stewards will be recruited and trained. These will be members of the congregation who agree to visit and have a personal conversation with four fellow congregants. The training will be provided by our own in-house UUA stewardship consultant Barry Finkelstein! If you are interested in being a Visiting Steward please speak with me or any Board member. By the way, all of our Board of Trustees have volunteered to take the training. Also during February we will have a leadership event to thank our most committed donors and ask them to pledge early to build momentum. We hope more of us will be included in this group as we promote the UU Suggested Share Giving Guide which inspires us to consider our pledge in terms of our UU values, our commitment to the congregation, and our capacity.

Sunday, March 2: This will be "Congregational Stewardship Sunday" – the congregation-wide kick-off to the Pledge Drive marked by a special Sunday worship service. It will be different and inspiring! Mark this date in your calendar and don't miss it!

The first three weeks of March: The Visiting Stewards will be active. We are asking everyone to be welcoming to your Visiting Steward's phone call and be open for a visit. Remember these are your fellow congregants who will be interested in getting to know you better. They will want to find out about your interests, how you spend your time in our congregation, what are your talents and connection to our community, and what future you wish for us...meeting with them is key to "Changing the Conversation." We will be following a new model for these conversations as presented by Barry – they will be different from anything we have done before: they will be positive, engaging, and fun – and will make a real difference for our collective future.

This is an exciting opportunity for us. Your Board is eager to take part. Please join us in Changing the Conversation. This is our community joining together to "steward" us toward the bright future we all can create.

In Faith and Fellowship,
Randy Burnham, *Chair of the Board of Trustees*



Love Letters



Real-life couple
Scott Bryce & Jodi Stevens

will star in
A.R. Gurney's "**Love Letters**",
to be presented at
The Unitarian
Church in Westport.
February 22 at 8:00 pm



The play chronicles the 50-year love affair carried on primarily through letters. Bryce has received two Best Actor Daytime Emmy Award nominations for his role as Craig Montgomery on ABC's "As the World Turns". He has appeared on Broadway in "Caesar and Cleopatra" and Off-Broadway in "Sally's Gone She Left Her Name".

Stevens recently completed the Off-Broadway run of "Dietrich and Chevalier: The Musical", starring as film icon, Marlene Dietrich. Her Broadway credits include "Urban Cowboy" and "Jekyll & Hyde".

Tickets are \$20 ... Call for tickets at (203) 227-7205 x 10

All proceeds will go to the Unitarian Church's General Fund.

"The Bryce/Stevens team has us in tears (as is Bryce himself) as this bittersweet story ends. There is nothing like a good cry, when it is teamed with a charming, endearing love story, a series of love letters." Connecticut Post

Do You Need Compassion, Attention, Someone to Listen?

By Janet Luongo

Are you suffering from a loss, a death or a health crisis? Need a ride or a meal, a visit or a little comfort and compassion? Good news – now you can just contact the office and ask Reverend Roberta, or any staff member for a Pastoral Care Associate (PCA). Or send an email request to PCA@uuwestport.org.

What is a Pastoral Care Associate (PCA)? We provide a caring presence to people going through difficult times. We are members of TUCW who volunteered to be trained in shared ministry.

More than a dozen of us will be introduced by Roberta at both services on Sunday, February 2, 2014.

What can a PCA do for me? We may provide companionship during illness, loss, transition, or any challenging circumstance. We will be a caring presence and we will listen to you. We are loving and non-judgmental. We may reflect back to you and ask clarifying questions to help you find guidance and peace within yourself. We may also, in connection with Circles of Care, provide food or rides to appointments. We may help gather resources or discuss spiritual issues. Contact with you or your families and caregivers may be in person at home or hospitals, or by phone.

What is NOT a service I can expect? PCAs do not give therapy, nursing, medicine, or advice. We do not “fix” the situation. We simply give support to you with our caring presence.

Can I trust my Pastoral Care Associate? You can be sure conversations are absolutely confidential. The only exception is a critical situation, where you or someone else may be hurt, in which case your PCA will let you know they must inform the minister.

What is the mission of Pastoral Care? In the spirit of our first UU principle, “to affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person”, we strive to convey in manners dependable, inclusive and discreet a ministry of hope and caring so that no member of our congregation need be alone.

How Do Find a Pastoral Care Associate? If you are going through a challenging time, or know somebody in the congregation who needs support, contact the minister, or any staff member and ask for a Pastoral Care Associate. -Coordinating Committee: Jim Francek, Alex Horsky, Roberta Tom Hearne and Suzan Converse.

Call the office (203-227-7205), or email PCA@uuwestport.org.



Last week the Shawl Ministry delivered 46 sets of hand knit scarves with matching hats to Beardsley School in Bridgeport. It was a joy to give each student in the two kindergarten classrooms a gift to keep them warm during recess. Please stop to enjoy pictures on the bulletin board in the foyer.

GA Prospecting... for a Roommate

Because GA (General Assembly) will be in Providence, RI, this year, we are hoping that YOU will attend. Unfortunately, my roommate plans have fallen through, so I am looking for one or more roommates to share the cost. GA is June 25-29 this year. I will be arriving either Tues. evening or Wed. morning, June 24 or 25. I will be looking also to share a ride from somewhere in CT (i.e., not a NYC airport) to GA. Important dates for GA: Registration opens March 1; housing reservations open March 3. Elaine McMillan: 203-858-3221; emcmillan9@gmail.com. Please remember I am now on MTN time, 2 hrs. earlier than YOU.

Newcomer Orientation at The Unitarian Church in Westport

If you're somewhere on the path of deciding whether or not The Unitarian Church in Westport is a community where you can find a supportive environment in which you can truly belong, contribute, learn, and grow as your spiritual journey continues; a community where, for example, you can find connection through religious education, music, and social justice then our Newcomer Orientation can be your next step.

The upcoming Orientation is Saturday, February 1 from 9:00 am to 2:30 pm in the Fellowship Room (lunch provided). If you can't attend this one - don't worry, we'll be holding another one before June. If you would like general information about our community or more information about the Orientation please contact David Vita, Director of Membership at 203.227.7205 x14 or david@uuwestport.org.



VILLAGE BAGELS

Our many thanks to Darran (proprietor), for his donation of bagels every week for our coffee hour.

Let's show our appreciation by supporting Village Bagels and their wonderful catering service located at:
415 Westport Avenue, Norwalk, CT.
Tel. # 203 847-3383

UU Movie Discussion Group, Friday, Jan. 31



The UU movie discussion group meets again on Friday, January 31. The films to be discussed are “*American Hustle*” and “*The Wolf of Wall Street*”. Dessert Potluck at 7:30, discussion begins at 8. At the Meeting House. All are welcome!



In the last couple of months several people have handed me articles or books on the subject of music and its beneficial effects.

Last month I was at the Westport Public Library to hear author Stacy Horn speak about her new book, "Imperfect Harmony; Finding Happiness Singing with Others". In the book she talks about her experience in singing with various choral organizations. While her mainly biographical material is a fascinating read, I would have appreciated more details about the latest scientific findings. However, it serves as an easy starting point.

Julene K. Johnson is a cognitive neuroscientist in the San Francisco area who is working specifically with senior citizens in the area of healthy aging. According to her, choral singing allows people "to use their bodies and minds while creating something beautiful." Her research includes choirs from around the world and the beneficial aspects (physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually) that the singers usually obtain from singing.

The most thorough piece of writing that I have found is a book entitled: "Healing at the Speed of Sound", authored by Alex Doman and Don Campbell, published by Hudson Street Press in New York, 2011. It is not biographical. It analyzes our relationship to sound and music in such a way that we can easily recognize our patterns, the way that we ingest sound and music. It provides many great suggestions as to the active and passive ways of letting music work in our lives. Everything is discussed from the way in which we use our voice to the types of music that we consume and what the effects are on the neuro-emotional-physical systems in which we live. The book is replete with the latest (as of 2011) scientific research in an area that is becoming increasingly important. And it provides many on-line links where one can continue to discover things about the amazing world of sound. It also has indexes containing information about resources, organizations and publications that might be helpful. Most importantly, it has websites where one can go to hear the precise piece that the authors are discussing. This means that you need not purchase vast amounts of CDs (or downloads) in order to experience of sounds and their effects. I can highly recommend this valuable book.

Of course, many of us have known about this for a long time, but it is so great to have the scientific information as to why it works. If you have questions, concerns, curiosity, musings that you need to share with me, just let me know.

SOUNDINGS

Newsletter of the Unitarian Church in Westport

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visit our website at
www.uuwestport.org

The next SOUNDINGS deadline is Friday, Feb. 14 at noon (or before).

Please e-mail your copy to:
carpo@optonline.net



RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR'S

Valentine Appreciation Day

Friday, Feb. 7th, 7pm, at the Meeting House
Hors d'oeuvres & Beverages & Appreciation

VOICES CAFÉ PRESENTS
TWO BANDS FOR THE



PRICE OF ONE TICKET

SATURDAY, JAN. 25 AT 8:00 PM
IN THE SANCTUARY

1ST SET: ROOSEVELT DIME

2ND SET: POOR OLD SHINE

Come take a journey through American roots music inspired by Memphis soul, New Orleans dixieland, and folk Appalachian Mountain music.

By the end of the evening you'll want to know when they'll be coming back to Voices Café!

Tickets- <http://voicescafe.org/buy-tickets/>
Information- 203.227.7205 x14
Reservations- david@uuwestport.org

Join us to learn

“The Future of Plants”

At the Darwin Day Dinner Celebration
Saturday, February 8, 2014,

with **cocktail hour**, full course **dinner**, fascinating conversation, a **science quiz**, and a **presentation by the head of Yale University’s graduate School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, Sir Peter Crane FRS.**



Plants can make our lives beautiful, are sources of raw materials of all kinds, and regulate processes that make our planet habitable. Yet we are surprisingly ignorant about the changes that are underway in the world of plants. How many species of plants are there and how many species of plants are we losing as a result of changing patterns of land use? Are we on the verge of a botanical mass extinction? What will be the consequences for plants of changing climates? How quickly are plants changing at the genetic level? And how are we changing plants through plant breeding and genetic engineering?

PETER CRANE’s work focuses on the diversity of plant life – its origin, fossil history, current status, conservation and use. A Fellow of the Royal Society (UK’s equivalent of the Academy of Sciences), he directed Chicago’s Field Museum’s scientific programs, became Director of The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and is now Dean at Yale.

DARWIN DAY is an international celebration of science and humanity held around Charles Darwin’s February 12th birthday. Specifically, the event celebrates the discoveries and life of the man, born in 1809, who first described biological evolution via natural selection with

For reservations fill in and return the bottom portion of this flyer by February 1st.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ E-mail address _____

City, State, ZipCode _____ Number of people you are paying for _____

Names of your guests & menu selections: _____

Prime Rib of Beef(B) _____ Chicken Marsala(C) _____ Grilled Salmon(S) _____ Eggplant Parmagiana(E) _____

Enclose a check for \$60 for each person (\$65 after February 1) made payable to CT Darwin Day Committee. **Mail to** 249 Chestnut Hill Road, Norwalk CT 06851-1412

scientific rigor. More generally, DARWIN DAY expresses gratitude for the enormous benefits that scientific knowledge, acquired through human curiosity and ingenuity, has contributed to the advancement of humanity.

A memorable event for all, everyone is guaranteed to go home smarter, or at least knowing more than when they arrived!

For more information visit darwindayct.org or contact the Southern CT Darwin Day Committee: John Levin at (646)371-9280 jlevin@tfm-llc.com, or Craig ctomarkin@aol.com.

This event is sponsored by the Congregation for Humanistic Judaism of Fairfield County, The Wilton Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the Unitarian Church in Westport, Humanists and Freethinkers of Ffld County (HFFC), the Norwalk Public Schools Science Department, the Norwalk Aquarium, Earthplace, and the Bartlett Arboretum.

Date: Saturday, Feb 8, 2014
Time: 6 pm Cocktail Hour, 7 pm Full Course Dinner
At: The Continental Manor, 112 Main Street, Norwalk
Price: \$60 per person.