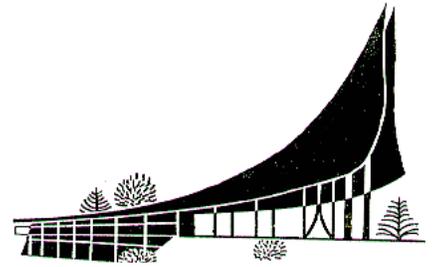


# SOUNDINGS

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



**THE NEXT SOUNDINGS DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, MAY 15**

April 26 - May 23, 2015

A Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>April 26</b> Worship Services: 9 & 11 am  Congregational Snack Potluck, Sanctuary, 12:30 pm	<b>27</b> Meet the Stewardship, & Finance Committees, E.W. .... 7:00 pm  Search Committee, Fellowship Rm., ... 7:30 pm	<b>28</b> Meet the Seniors Coffee Hour, E.W.-11:00 am  Meet the Circle Facilitators, Worship & PCA, E.W., ... 7:00 pm	<b>29</b> Meet the Shawl Ministry & SGM E.W. ... 1:00 pm  Chant & Meditation, M.H. ... 7:00 pm  Meet the Social Justice Comm's E.W. ... 7:30 pm  Chamber Choir, ... 7:45 pm	<b>30</b> Youth Choir -5pm Teen Choir - 6 pm Women's & Men's Choir - 7:45 pm Meet the Choirs, Sanct. ...7:30 pm  Finance Comm. Fellow. Rm. - 6 pm Meet the Young Adult Group, E.W., ... 8:15 pm	<b>May 1</b>  Shawl Ministry, Meeting Hse., ... 12:30	<b>2</b>  Meet the New Members Brunch, E.W. - 10:30 am  Congregational Potluck, Sanctuary, ... 6:00 pm
<b>3</b> Worship Service, <b>11:00 am only</b>  Youth Group, Library, ... 12:00 am  <b>Congregational                      Member Meeting                      and Vote,                      Sanctuary,                      ... 12:15 pm</b>	<b>4</b>  O&AF Sanctuary, ... 7:45 pm	<b>5</b>  Parents of Incoming 8th Graders, Fellowship Rm., .. 7:00 pm  Men's Choir, Fellowship Rm., ... 8:00 pm	<b>6</b>  Chant & Meditation, M.H., ...7:00 pm	<b>7</b>  Youth Choir -5pm Teen Choir - 6 pm Special Projects Choir, - 7:45 pm	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>  Special Projects Choir, ... 9:00 am  Neighborhood Circles, M.H., ... 10:00 am  Pastoral Care Assoc., M.H. ... 1:00 pm  Voices Cafe, Sanct., Doors open 7:30 pm Performance at 8
<b>10</b>  Worship Services & Child Dedications 9 & 11 am <i>Share the Plate Sunday</i>  Rainbow Task Force, Chapel ... 12:30 pm	<b>11</b>  Gun Violence Prevention, Chapel, 7:30 pm	<b>12</b>  Senior Luncheon, E.W....11:00 am  Membership Committee, Library - 7:15pm  Men's Choir, M.H., - 8:00pm	<b>13</b>  Chant & Meditation M.H. ... 7:00 pm  NVC Practice, E.W. ... 7:00 pm  NLDC Practice, E.W. ... 7:15 pm	<b>14</b>  Youth Choir -5pm Teen Choir - 6 pm Special Projects Choir - 7:45pm	<b>15</b>  SOUNDINGS Deadline, 12 noon  Boston Heritage Trip ... 8:00 am  Shawl Ministry, Meeting Hse., ... 12:30 pm	<b>16</b>  Boston Heritage Trip Return  Paper Shredding Fundraiser, Church Parking Lot, ... 9:00 am  Small Group Facilitators, Meeting Hse., ... 10:00 am
<b>17</b>  Services: 9 & 11 am Jewelry & Scarf Sale, <i>after both services</i> , E.W.  Voices Cafe Comm., Library ... 12:30 pm Conversation on Race, Chapel ... 12:30 pm Fairfield Circle Potluck. M.H. 12:30	<b>18</b>  Stewardship, E.W. ... 12:15 pm  Board of Trustees, Fellowship Rm., ... 7:30 pm  O&AF, ... 7:45 pm	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>  SOUNDINGS Mailing, 1 pm  Chant & Meditation, Meeting Hse., ... 7:00 pm  Conversation on Race, E.W., ... 7:00 pm	<b>21</b>  Youth Choir -5pm Teen Choir - 6 pm Special Projects Choir - 7:45 pm  Finance Comm. Fellowship Rm., ... 7:30 pm	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>

*Sermon information on following page.*

## SERMONS for MAY

**APRIL 26 ... 9 & 11 AM .....Facing Grace ..... Rev. John Morehouse**

*Here is our first chance to meet and hear from our selected candidate for Senior Minister!  
Stay afterwards for refreshments and a chance to chat with Rev. John*

**Worship Associate: Music: Anita Pfluger**  
**Music: The Once & Again Folksingers at both services**

**MAY 3 .. 11 AM ONLY .....”Anybody Got a Match?”.....Rev. John Morehouse**

*This Sunday concludes Candidating Week! Following the service is an all-congregation meeting, at which members will vote to 'call' Rev. John Morehouse as our Senior Minister. This is an historic moment for our congregation as we begin our next chapter, so please plan to attend. There is no absentee voting.*

**Worship Associate: Linda Hudson**  
**Music: Chamber Choir**

**MAY 10 ... 9 & 11 AM .....Rev. Roberta Finkelstein, Rev. Ed Thompson, Youth Choir**

*We will celebrate Mother's Day with a multi-generational service. Rev. Roberta will dedicate new babies and children. The Youth Choir presents "The Three Questions", a musical based on a short story by Tolstoy. It is the culmination of a semester of work by the Youth Choir. It is replete with solos, choruses, intriguing story lines and show our youth at their best. It is a place where Buddhism, Unitarian Universalism, world philosophy, youth and Fairfield County intersect! Don't miss it.*

**MAY 17 ... 9 & 11 AM ..... “Act” ..... Rev. Roberta Finkelstein,**

*In the third sermon in the series on the congregation's mission statement (Inspire, Connect, Act) Rev. Roberta will be joined by members of the Rainbow Task Force. They will talk about their experiences of being inspired to act for justice. What are we called to act for next?*

**Worship Associate: Maria Mendoza Smith**  
**Music: 9 am: Men's Choir. 11 am, Women's Choir**

### BEGIN ONE SERVICE AT 10 AM

**MAY 24 ... 10 AM .....And We Remember ..... Rev. Roberta Finkelstein**

*Memorial Day is a time to remember and honor those who have given their lives in service to our nation's ideals. This year Rev. Roberta will lead us in remembering service women and men those who have died in combat overseas, as well as those innocents who have died in acts of violence here at home.*

**Worship Associate: Martha Constable**  
**Music: Guest tenor Fidel Zayco at both services.**

**MAY 31 ... 10 AM ..... Music Service .....**

*The Special Projects Choir presents their final project for this year which is titled, "Images of the Divine". There will be a series of musical pieces that explore metaphorical images which point us in the direction of our spiritual home. Provocative, thought-inducing, touching and heart-growing. The service will include a New Member Recognition Ritual*

## ***Candidating week is almost here.***

From April 25th - May 2nd, a full week of events has been planned so that you can get to know Rev. John Morehouse. Meetings are open to all, and the schedule is designed so that everyone will have the chance to attend at least one before the May 3rd vote. There are sign-up sheets in the foyer for the large potluck events on Sunday, April 26th Saturday, May 2nd. We need volunteers to set up, clean up, and to bring food and beverages. Please sign up! A full schedule is on the website and in the foyer and on the Soundings calendar.

April 22, 2015

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## In The Interim

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He's almost here! By the time you read this he might actually be here! To help prepare you for candidating week, my sermon on April 19th was about what a UU minister is and is not. Since some of you might not have been in the sanctuary that Sunday, here's a brief summary of what I said.

We are not magicians. Do not for a minute think that if the match is just right everything will be wonderful. Money will not magically appear in your treasury, new volunteers will not suddenly flock to your doors begging to do the work of the church. Not magicians, just leaders. Collaborative, skilled, respectful leaders. Our authority for leadership comes from you, in the agreements we make together. Some of it is specified in a formal letter of agreement, much more agreed upon covenantally as we walk together. We are called to inspire and to comfort, to remind people of their best selves, to cast a vision of vibrant and healthy congregational life. We do our best when we are in right relationship with our congregations.

Given that, I have some practical suggestions for you as you begin to establish that relationship. First, avoid unreasonable expectations. Put aside any notion you might have had that once the vote is taken, it will all go back to normal, to the good old days never were. Transition and change are the normal states of any organic, living system. Instead of looking for glimpses of a savior who will magically bring things back to the old and no longer possible normal, look for glimpses of an emerging vision of shared ministry. That vision, grounded in the very real world of your everyday lives, will be quite uplifting and glorious.

Second, remember that ministers are not perfect. Not even the best among us can be everything that every one of you wants us to be. Your new minister will not be perfect; he will probably not fit the picture you have in your mind of the ideal new minister. What he will be is imperfectly human, and that's good news. Because that is just what all of you are – imperfectly human. Flawed, incomplete, sometimes unsure, sometimes too sure. A good way to prepare for a successful candidating week is to examine your personal expectations carefully and discard those that might get in the way of your honest engagement with Rev. John. Then you will be able to welcome a perfectly imperfect human minister into your lives so that together you can articulate a vision of shared care and concern, a way of being together that supports the strengths of everybody involved, and allows each one of you to find your particular place in the overall ministry of the church. Let each of you, Rev. John included, do what you do best. Let each of you spend your time and energy on what you feel most passionate about. Expect a great deal of each other – minister and lay leaders alike. Just don't expect perfection.

*continued*

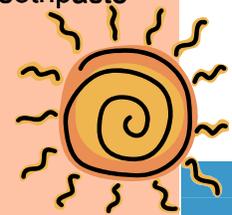
So then what is a Unitarian Universalist minister? Somebody who will sit with you in times of loss and walk with you in advocacy. Somebody who will use their leadership to cast a vision for what you could be as a congregation. Somebody who has been called out from among you to do the work of professional ministry. Somebody with a theological education and years of experience, combined with a deep and abiding commitment to Unitarian Universalism.

Candidating week is the first step in a journey of mutual self-discovery. I rejoice with you as you take that step, and I know that the result will be a fruitful and mutually supportive new ministry.

In Faith,  
Rev. Roberta

## HELP OUT THE BEARDSLEY SCHOOL BY DONATING ITEMS FOR A SUMMER CARE PACKAGE!

FOOD ITEMS	TOYS	PERSONAL CARE
Crackers / Snack bags Granola Bars Individual sized microwaveable meals including Mac & Cheese 100% Juice Boxes/OJ Water bottles Single serve cereal boxes Shelf-life milk Raisin packs, dried fruit	Frisbees Jump ropes Bubbles Art supplies: markers, coloring books Math flashcards Brain Quest cards Puzzle books Inflatable balls Small bouncy balls Hackie sacks	Sun Screen Insect Repellent Band-Aids & Neosporin Chapstick Calamine lotion/aloe vera Soap, hand sanitizer Shampoo & Conditioner Toothbrush & Toothpaste Hats or visors Flip flops Sunglasses



Please place items in BACKPACK box

## RE Connections to Social Action

Thank You for donating your gently used books for Beardsley school! K-3rd graders are continuing their connection with the Beardsley committee members Carol Seiple, Kathy Roberts, Mary Beth Mollica, by creating donation boxes for Beardsley Summer Backpacks.

Can you imagine children worrying when Summer is beginning? Imagining they won't have something food and toiletries you need, or something fun to do. If you want to help:

- **Look for the LIST on the decorated boxes in the foyer** (or list in Soundings)
- **We will be collecting April 19th through May 17th** (the day the children will sort our donations into backpacks) in time to be given out before the end of the year.

**Thank you as well to: Carl Serbell, Julie Kennedy, Jim Keenan, and Doug Jones** for speaking to the 8th grade coming of age class about how you got interested in social actions within TUCW and in the greater community. Thanks for showing them how you started, what you/we did and are doing. It matters to share our experiences with youth!

## PARENTS - Things TO-DO before YEAR END:

- **Registration for 2015-2016 -Paper forms on the RE Sign In Table in foyer.**

As we transfer from one data base to another, we will have paper forms to begin registration process. Getting this done now means I can plan better for who intends to come, and to match teachers as needed.

- **Parents of incoming 8th grade Parents - May 5th - Mandatory Meeting -**

We have some big decisions about when to offer programming next year and this is the VOTE - Bring your school sports & activity schedules, or contact [mary.dre@uuwestport.org](mailto:mary.dre@uuwestport.org) BEFORE the meeting to add your schedule preferences and vote.

- **Contact Mary Ellen Keenan - Teacher Support & Appreciation Circle**  
[mek1297park@optonline.net](mailto:mek1297park@optonline.net) to:

Help with Teacher Appreciation activities this year-end,  
Apply (or re-up) to teach a particular age next Fall or Spring,  
Assist in other Teacher support year-end and start-up activities.

## Summer Programming for Children:



After Religious Education Celebration Sunday (June 7th) we will continue the tradition of have Nursery/Pre-K care during the 10 AM services. We also have some older children join them, in what I now think of as our multi-age child care during services.

Last year we had a successful, relaxed, welcoming summer program of: Free Play, circle time for joys & concerns, read a "real life" situation/dilemma, discuss how we might act to act out our UU Principles and Sources, and a related activity.

At the last Youth & Elementary Circle meeting, it was decided to enrich our summer activities by utilizing Multicultural Books each week (appropriate for Pre-K - 5th graders).

- **I am seeking assistants to: suggest preferences for our children from a list of fifty, procure the books, print out the directions for the activities and list any supplies needed so we can get them in time. Contact [Mary.dre@uuwestport.org](mailto:Mary.dre@uuwestport.org)**

## Sunday, April 26th ...

(candidate preaches today and next Sunday)  
Pre-K: Friendship - bring in a teddy bear!  
K-3rd: Revisit the 7 Principles - UU  
4th-5th: Expression (paintbrush) - Cellist of Sarajevo  
6th-7th: Hinduism / Buddhism  
Closing  
8th: COA: UU Theology  
9th-12th: Youth Group

## Sunday, May 3rd ...

-NOTE: SINGLE 11:00 am Service today + Candidate VOTE  
Pre-K: May Day  
K-3rd: Hagar & Ishmael (Islam)  
4th-5th: Faith in Action, bring in your instruments  
6th-7th: Quaker Visitor  
8th COA: Your God Project  
9th-12th Youth Group

## Sunday, May 10th ...

(Mother's Day weekend)  
Pre-K: Mother's and Father's Day  
K-3rd: Rev. Olympia Brown - UU woman of note  
4th-5th: Spirit of Life (Canteen) Water ritual  
6th-7th: Mother Goddesses  
8th COA: The God You Believe In, The God You Don't  
9th-12th Youth Group

## Friday, May 15th - 16th

8th Grade COA Boston Heritage Trip

## Sunday, May 17th ...

Pre-K: Teddy Bear Fixed (First Aid)  
K-3rd: "What's UU?" Playground Response  
4th-5th: Listening (stethoscope & sea shell) - Desegregation and listening games/rhythms  
6th-7th: Quaker Closing  
8th: COA: Day of rest, no group meet, go to service if you do come today.  
9th-12th Youth Group:

## Sunday, May 24th ...

10 am sessions start  
Pre-K: Teddy Bear Lost (about fear)  
No other Groups meet, stay in service or go to child care

# HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP...

*Cal Wacker, Youth Program Director*

I want you to imagine you have just left TUCW thinking the following: "Today I spent time in community with dynamic-youthful-energetic-people that exist right in my own spiritual home. I can't wait to do that again." I'm talking about our High School Youth Group. I'm talking about becoming a part of our youth adviser team.

Now I have a guess that several thoughts have run through your head. Questions on time commitment, having to run a class as a volunteer, and not being sure you can connect with young people. Those are all valid thoughts to have, and I want to offer facts on what I'm talking about in terms of being an adviser.

Let's start in true UU fashion by defining what an adviser is not:

- You are not a teacher. That means it is not your job to run a curriculum for the youth. Nor does it mean that you'll have to spend time every week preparing a lesson plan. You are not there to talk at the youth.
- You are not the one in charge, unless needed. Most of the day-to-day operations of the youth group are done by the youth themselves, with support from RE Staff. (Like Me! Your Youth Program Director)
- You are not there to rubber stamp everything they want to do. That doesn't help anyone.
- **YOU ARE NOT JUST A WARM BODY IN THE ROOM.**

Based on the above you may be asking "So, what IS a youth adviser?"

Here are some of the things a youth adviser IS.

- **A guide:** to use a clichéd metaphor, imagine a shepherd or sheep dog. As an adviser the job is to help create and protect large enough boundaries that youth can explore and experiment. All the while they are kept from wandering too far into the wolf den.
- **A listener:** Think of how often we want and need to talk to people about what is important in our lives. Youth want and need that too.
- **A participant:** Advisers are there to engage with our Youth, building and acting under the same covenant the group creates each year. Everyone's thoughts and opinions are welcomed.
- **A resource:** This can be mentally, emotionally, and/or logistically.

If this interests you, then please contact me at [cal@uuwestport.org](mailto:cal@uuwestport.org) by May 15th. Without advisers, next year's schedule will have to be re-evaluated and condensed

## A Place of Gratitude and Service is a Great Place to Meet

*This is an open letter of appreciation to The Pastoral Care Program.*

"Since July I've had several surgeries which required lengthy hospitalizations and recuperations. I asked for a Pastoral Care Associate (PCA) to visit with me while I healed. My PCA has been a great source of strength over these months. She listened to my fears, worries and all my kvetching and helped me through some tough times. And her support took some pressure off my wife.

It's a great program and I encourage anyone who needs some support to avail themselves of it."

*Jack Medoff*

# Thank you!

Many thanks to Sal and Mary Beth Mollica for going to Ikea in New Haven and purchasing new plates, more of our coffee cups and glasses and donating them to the kitchen. They are much appreciated and will be well used!

## Senior Group Meeting. Tuesday, April 28.

It's official! Our settled minister candidate, Rev John Morehouse, will attend our Senior Group meet and greet session at 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, April 28, in the Fellowship Room. Don't be late. He has to leave at noon.

Anyone affiliated with the church is invited to attend, but this is especially for us. So share your wisdom and concerns with Rev. John.

If you can arrive a few minutes early and help set up, great! But the important thing is to come and meet the candidate.

## SAVE THE DATE

Spring Jewelry & Scarf Sale  
Sunday, May 17th  
after both services.

*We are saddened by the recent death of*

**Laurel Blaydes.**

*After a very brief illness she died with all four of her children present. A memorial service will be held on*

*Saturday, May 30 at 2:00 pm.*

*A reception will follow the service.*



## SPRING CLEANUP WAS A WONDERFULL SUCCESS DUE TO THE HARD WORK OF:

Mary Beth Mollica  
Susan Brady  
Susan Pugliese  
Marie Claire Bue  
Dave Bue  
Kristen Leddy  
Kevin Leddy  
Ryan Leddy  
Morgan Leddy  
Shari Brennan

Charlie Brennan  
Carol Goddard  
Lynn Whitton  
Nancy Hargraves  
Cal Wacker  
Mary Jane Cross  
Bart Stuck  
Steve Rosenberg  
Elena Blake

Betsy Wacker  
Marilyn Reed  
Julie Fatherly  
Kathy Kurzkowski  
Marcia Chithlen  
Allison Waggoner  
Bob Welch  
Yvonne Serbell  
Ralph Tartaglione  
Dan Valentine

**They all deserve our gratitude. If I missed anyone or misspelled a name... I apologize. *Chuck Colletti (Building & Grounds)***



"How do you know so much, Mrs. Paul?" the fifth graders ask. "Because I'm a curious person!" Cheryl Paul responds, and the students know that once again they are off on their weekly adventure with their beloved reader.

Cheryl Paul has been a volunteer reader at Beardsley school for the last 10 years. She doesn't just read a story each week though, she researches the characters, uncovers the historical background, leads the children to make personal connections and encourages them to ask lots and lots of questions. "I call it the popcorn approach," she says, "The kids are interacting with the story and we are diving into the journey together." Over these years the students have gotten more from Cheryl than just excitement about stories.

One year, she did an in-depth study of the Holocaust, sensitively guiding them through appropriate Holocaust stories and then watching and discussing the film, Paper Clips. Another year, she noticed that fourth-graders did not know how to tell time. When she mentioned it to her husband Erik, the choral and orchestra director at Weston High School, he told his students who then pooled their money and bought each child a watch.

Another time, when she realized the children would not have Christmas gifts at home, Erik reached out again to his choir members who bought and wrapped piles of presents for each child. These are highlights of her years at Beardsley, but Cheryl finds her weekly interactions with students the most meaningful. "I can only describe it as freeing," she said. "I love seeing children 'wake up' in the Buddhist sense of being aware of their world and their interconnectedness to others beyond their neighborhood. If I can do that for a child, I have given him or her a priceless gift."

If you would like to be a Beardsley classroom reader, please contact Carol Seiple at [carol@theseiples.com](mailto:carol@theseiples.com) or 203-682-4584.

## Eliminating Racism Group

Dan Iacovella  
& Sonja Ahuja

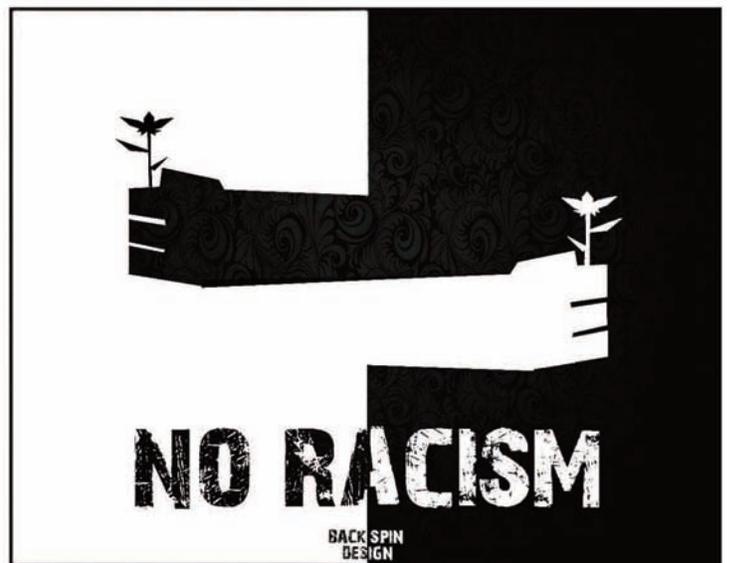
Following up on our "Conversation on Race" after the Martin Luther King service we're reconfiguring the Eliminating Racism Group. We're seeking to create a safe environment where people will be able to build relationships and share experiences around race without judgment through Listening Partnerships in order to be able to think more clearly and move forward on the issue. If you're interested, please join Sonja and me for one of the three introductory meetings listed below. If you have any questions, please contact Dan Iacovella at [zestfully@gmail.com](mailto:zestfully@gmail.com).

### Listening Partnerships:

Sunday, May 17 at 12:30 in the Chapel  
Wednesday, May 20 at 7:00pm East Wing  
Tuesday, May 26 at 12:00 (noon) East Wing

**Dan Iacovella:** I view racism as a central issue that is intertwined within all other forms of discrimination and social justice issues and so focusing on the elimination of racism enables the work towards eliminating all other forms of discrimination to move that much faster. I believe such a large undertaking can only be done in partnership with one another and so I look forward to doing this work together.

**Sonja Ahuja:** I believe that we all are connected and that we all are harmed by the pervasive elements of racism in our lives. In coming together to share and support one another, we start to heal ourselves and our community. It is my hope that together we grow in awareness and understanding, creating a new experience in a space where each finds respectful caring relationships.



## Close the TRO Loop Hole Before Another Life is Lost

David Vita

In the previous issue of Soundings I wrote about the need to fix the problem that allows someone served with a Temporary Restraining Order to possess firearms. Background

While Connecticut prohibits anyone who is the subject of a full one-year Restraining Order from possessing a firearm, there are no prohibitions tied to a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) put in place for two weeks until a hearing is held to consider issuing a Permanent Restraining Order.

Plain and simple, if there is sufficient demonstrated danger to issue a TRO then there is sufficient cause to remove firearms.

This was demonstrated by the tragic death of Lori Gellatly, a young mother from Oxford, who had obtained a TRO but was shot and killed by her estranged husband, Scott Gellatly, on May 7, 2014 -- the night before the hearing to consider a Permanent Restraining Order.

Here's an Update

Two pieces of legislation have been proposed to address this problem; the Governor's Bill No. 6848: An Act Protecting Victims of Domestic Violence and Proposed Senate Bill No. 650: An Act Concerning Temporary Restraining Orders. Both were approved by the Judiciary Committee in a close vote. Now they will head to the General Assembly for a floor vote. I will contact you at that time to ask you to encourage your representatives to vote in favor of these bills.



*Catalina Horak, Executive Director of Neighbors Link Stamford speaking with Joan Harnett from TUCW.*

## Linking Communities

Our Immigration Committee hosted a dinner for 90 immigrant families and volunteers at Neighbors Link Stamford on Friday, April 17. Neighbors Link's purpose is to strengthen the whole community by actively enhancing the healthy integration of immigrants. NLS' goals span 3 areas relative to immigrant integration:

- EDUCATE (English language, computer and other classes);
- EMPOWER (connect individuals and families with schools, health, legal, law enforcement and other vital services); and
- EMPLOY (develop job skills and a worker center to match day workers with available jobs).

Immigrants comprise 37% of Stamford's total population.

If you would like information about our Immigration Committee please contact Marjolijn de Jager at [marjolijn36@gmail.com](mailto:marjolijn36@gmail.com).

## BYRD & BARRIS

Southern Country Music Comes to Westport at Voices Cafe



Jonathan Byrd, with his rich North Carolina Southern Country music, and Sally Barris, an A-List Nashville songwriter with an expressive mountain soprano voice join forces at Voices Café.

**Saturday, May 9 at 8:00pm at Voices Café!**

Tickets are available at <http://voicescafe.org/buy-tickets/>

# No Covenant This Spring, *Goodbye from the Transition Team*

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by William McEvoy

In February, the Transition Team started the process of soliciting contributions from the congregation to establish a congregational Covenant of Right Relations, a document that would make explicit promises about how we expect to treat and be treated by one another. We received some wonderful suggestions (some of which I've detailed below) but alas, only received about 60 responses. The weather was horrible, the congregation's attention has been on the search, and understandably, there's quite a bit of "transition fatigue" after two years of interim and the other self-examination processes we went through in the two years preceding. The Transition Team and Reverend Roberta felt that 60 responses, as good as many were, could not "speak" for nearly 500 members. So we've decided to pass that forward to Reverend Doctor Morehouse to pursue when he starts later in the year.

We want to thank those who participated in the covenant-building process, and wanted to share with you just some of the gems we received. Because we promised anonymity, we won't publish the author's names here – but you know who you are!

"I will be welcoming and tolerant and I will smile."

"Show up! Volunteer for at least one committee/project/cause."

"I will be my own authentic self when I am here."

"Each time I come to the church, reach out to and get to know at least one new person I didn't previously know."

"I need people to welcome and love my children so they feel they are an important and needed part of the community here."

And my personal favorite:

"I promise never to omit anyone - neither their opinions or them as an individual."

Great stuff, and I know that there's more like it in the rest of the congregation's hearts and minds. I hope that if and when Rev. Dr. Morehouse restarts the process, that you jump at the chance to participate.

The covenant project was the last for the Transition Team, we've had our last meeting; as the church looks towards the future, we take off our purple ribbons (yes, that's what the purple ribbons meant!) and join with everyone here in moving forward to create, deepen and strengthen our community at the start of a new era. On behalf of the other members of the team, *Lorna Donnelly, Andrew Graham, Bob Perry and Connie Rockman (as well as Kristen Leddy, our chair in the first year)* I want to thank you all for participating in the various projects and meetings we've had in the last two years, and thank Reverend Roberta for guiding, encouraging and pushing us to achieve all we did.

Transition Team

**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@uuwestport.org](mailto:PCA@uuwestport.org).**



## FROM THE BOARD

### **The Magic of General Assembly June 24-28, 2015 Portland, OR**

**GA:** It's a Unitarian Universalist thirty-ring circus featuring four or five thousand of your soon-to-be best friends. It's learning and singing and worshipping and laughing and embracing the awesomeness that is the wide, wider, widest world of Unitarian Universalism. It is history and future and multiculturalism and problem solving and debate and social justice and finding out your congregation's strengths and weaknesses are not unique to Westport, CT. It is a huge exhibit area where you could happily spend several days. And this year, it's in Portland, OR!

*Come and join us in a really fun event!*

The Unitarian Church In Westport has 10 voting delegate spots. We still have a few of these open, and as many non-voting people who want to can also attend. Expenses are deductible on income taxes. Check it out on the web at <http://www.uua.org/ga>.

### **The Mini-Magic of Metro NY District Annual Meeting May 1-2, 2015 Morristown, NJ**<http://uumetrony.org>

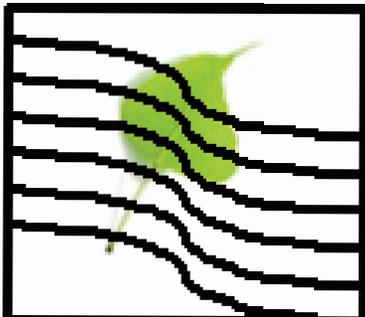
*Can't get to the West Coast for GA?*

Try out the smaller, closer-to-home, more personal environment of the Metro NY Meeting. It's got the learning, singing, worshipping, laughing, history, future, multiculturalism and more. Share with folks whose concerns and hopes and issues are closer to home.

We also have 10 voting delegate spots at this meeting; some spots are still available. Check it out at <http://uumetrony.org>.

Please let Tom Croarkin ([tcroarkin1126@att.net](mailto:tcroarkin1126@att.net)) know if you are interested in attending either meeting.

## **Don't miss out on the 'SHRED FOR GOOD' Fund Raising Event Saturday Morning - May 16, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. in the back parking lot.**



Get rid of all your unwanted paper, the mess and the security risk quickly and effortlessly. As you are doing your Spring Cleaning remember to save all your junk and scrap paper for the event. Entrepreneurs and small business owners don't forget to dispose of office waste this way. Even help your favorite charity (2nd to TUCW of course): to securely handle scrap paper. Watch it shredded before your eyes in seconds - **SAFE - SECURE - GREEN!**

Good for you - And the environment!!! \$10/BOX All Proceeds to TUCW!

We still need volunteers if you are interested!

For more info on the company follow the link below -

For more info on the event Deborah Quinn 203.345.8517

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**On the Musical Horizon ...**

**May 2, Saturday,**

the Youth Choir will present “The Three Questions” a musical written by Ed Thompson at the UU Metro New York District annual meeting in Morristown, NJ. Our youth are very excited about making this presentation. To my knowledge, it is the first time that a youth choir from the district has made a presentation at the annual meeting. All 17 members of the choir/ensemble are working hard to do this presentation from memory. We have so much to be proud of!!!

**May 10th, Sunday,**

at both services, the Youth Choir will present “The Three Questions” at both of the morning services. It is a musical based on a short story of Tolstoy. While the story is set in Medieval times, the message of the musical and the truth of Tolstoy’s theme is timeless. And each one of us can relate to that message because it is universal. Come and get a first-hand experience!

**May 24th, Sunday,**

guest tenor Fidel Zayco, will offer some pieces in his own inimitable, vibrant and energetic style .

**May 31st, Sunday,**

the Special Projects Choir will present their annual summer solstice offering a bit early this year. This project will focus on individual works having to do with the metaphors of spirituality. Hymn #23 “Bring Many Names”, was written by hymn-writer Brian Wren. Mr. Wren presents a wide variety of attributes for God, all of which and none of which are true. The choir will expand on that idea and the musical examples will feature a wide variety of styles and textures. Hope you can join us for this unusual and exciting service.

**Voices Cafe** committee members seeks volunteers.

There is an immediate opening for Hospitality Volunteer.

**Duty:** Food, and water pick up and meal set up for band.

**Perk:** You meet the band!

For information ask any Voices Caf Committee member, stop at our ticket table, or email Monica at [icebow2005@gmail.com](mailto:icebow2005@gmail.com)

**SOUNDINGS**

*Newsletter of the  
Unitarian Church in Westport*

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The next SOUNDINGS deadline is  
Friday, May 15, at noon. Please e-mail  
your copy to: [soundings@uuwestport.org](mailto:soundings@uuwestport.org)

# News from Your Ministerial Search Committee

## We have a candidate for Senior Minister!



We're very excited to welcome Rev. Dr. John Morehouse as our candidate for Senior Minister. For more information about Rev. John, please visit our website at [www.uuwestport.org](http://www.uuwestport.org), click on the announcement, and refer to the two-page bio in this issue of Soundings.

## Candidating Week is Almost Here!

Starting with our weekend retreat, having focus group meetings with all of you, looking over surveys, learning about potential ministers, spending weekends with four pre-candidates, we came to the unanimous decision to ask Rev. Dr. John Morehouse to be our candidate for Senior Minister, sharing the joy with you all after he said YES. Candidating Week is now upon us. This is the time for you to meet Rev. John, hear him preach on two successive Sundays, and discover why we feel he will transform our congregation and guide us to increased opportunities to "Inspire, Connect, and Act."

Listed below are numerous congregational events occurring as part of Candidating Week. Some of the events are being hosted by certain groups or committees, but everyone is free to participate in any of these events. This article was written while some of these events were being planned. So please double-check any times and locations against the church calendar and website, which will be updated as final details are confirmed.

### Saturday 4/25

**4-8 pm:** Religious Education Activities and Potluck

### Sunday 4/26:

**9 am and 11 am:** Worship Services – Rev. John will preach

**After 11 am service:** Meet and Greet Potluck Brunch in the Fellowship Room and Foyer

### Monday 4/27:

**7- 8 pm:** Finance Event, in the East Wing - hosted by Finance, Auditing, Endowment and Stewardship Committees

### Tuesday 4/28:

**11 am:** Seniors Meet and Greet in the Fellowship Room

**7 pm:** Neighborhood Circles, Pastoral Care Associates, and Worship Associates Meet and Greet in East Wing

### Wednesday 4/29:

**1 - 2 pm:** Shawl Ministry and Small Group Ministry Meet and Greet in the East Wing

**7:30 - 8:30 pm:** Social Justice Meet and Greet in the East Wing

### Thursday 4/30:

**7:30 - 8:15 pm:** Choirs Meet and Greet in the Sanctuary

**8:15 pm:** Young Adults Meet and Greet in the East Wing

### Saturday 5/2:

**10:30 am – Noon:** New Members Meet and Greet Brunch in the East Wing

**6 - 8 pm –** All Congregation Potluck in the Sanctuary and Foyer

### Sunday 5/3:

**11 am: Worship Service –** Rev. John will preach (There is no 9am service)

**After 11 am Service:** Congregational Vote and Reception

Our vote to call Rev. Dr. John Morehouse as our Senior Minister will be held after the single service at 11 am on May 3. We need a quorum of at least 40% of the membership, which calculates to around 200 members. It's critical that all of us be there to vote.

### Can't make it to one of Rev. John's Services?

The Sunday services during Candidating Week will be recorded and made available on our website.

Please sign up in the foyer for the potlucks on 4/26 and 5/2, or by contacting Joann Coviello at [coveillojc@optimum.net](mailto:coveillojc@optimum.net).



10 Lyons Plains Road Westport, CT 06880

Phone: 203-227-7205

## Please welcome Rev. Dr. John Morehouse as our candidate for Senior Minister!

Your Ministerial Search Committee is thrilled to announce that our candidate to be the next Senior Minister of the Unitarian Church in Westport is **Rev. Dr. John Morehouse**. Rev. John is currently Senior Minister of Pacific Unitarian Church, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. In Rev. John, we believe we have found the experienced, knowledgeable, compassionate, visionary minister who will lead our congregation into its brightest future.

Lee Barker, the President of Meadville Lombard Theological School, has said, "John is a great preacher, pastor, and educator. Above all he is a minister who sees possibilities. Each congregation he has served has been taken to a new size and a new level of service.

John is able to honor a church's past and, at the same time, galvanize the congregation to take on new projects and shape a new vision for itself. That is a rare ability!"



Rev. Dr. John Morehouse is a fifth generation Unitarian (one of his great-grandfathers was a Unitarian minister) and he grew up in the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Croton-on-Hudson, NY. After graduating in anthropology from Grinnell College, Iowa in 1979, he started a solar energy business, and later held several positions in sales and marketing before feeling the call to ministry. He graduated from Meadville Lombard Theological School in 1990 and was ordained that year.

Rev. John's first ministry was at First Unitarian Church, South Bend, IN. From 1994-2005 he served as Senior Minister of the UU Congregation of Frederick, MD. There he led the congregation through a three-fold increase in membership and budget, and a five-year multi-million dollar building campaign. Since 2005, Rev. John has been Senior Lead Minister of Pacific Unitarian Church, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. Under his leadership, the congregation grew in size by more than 50% and its budget doubled. In 2008, it was recognized by the UUA as a "Breakthrough Congregation."

Rev. John is well known as a leader in the UU movement. He is an Adjunct Professor and Teaching Pastor at Meadville Lombard Theological School, where he has taught courses in congregational polity and actively mentors intern ministers. He has completed his doctorate of ministry (graduating May, 2015), and his thesis "Creating Theology Together: A Curriculum for Spiritual Leadership" is focused on helping church leaders develop their shared theology. Rev. John is also board president and senior consultant of the Chalice Oak Foundation, an organization he founded to incubate and grow UU social justice programs.

Rev. John's ministerial record says, "I seek a calling with a congregation that is searching for a new direction forward, uniting the past with the potential for a new future. I have special skills in transforming congregations to dream of a better future, and in building stronger communities. The ministry I am hoping to find will be with a congregation interested in growing in spirit, institutional maturity and civic identity. I believe we could be the religion for our times."

Rev. John talks about "setting free the ministry" in each of us, creating a congregation that is not "minister centered" but "ministry centered."

Rev. John and his wife, Francis, have been married for 30 years. They have five daughters, Portia (41), Fiona (37), Courteny (29), Emma (27), and Madeline (24), and three grandchildren, Skye (11), Iris (9), and Ashur (9).



## Your chance to meet our candidate

Rev. John will visit our congregation from April 25 to May 3 for "candidating week" and will preach on two successive Sundays (April 26 and May 3). You'll have various opportunities to meet him. Visit the church website soon to see the complete schedule, and watch for further announcements.

At the end of candidating week, on Sunday, May 3, there will be only one worship service at 11:00 a.m., and this will be immediately followed by a meeting of the entire membership at which you will vote whether to call Rev. John to be our new Senior Minister. Please plan to attend this important meeting. We need a quorum of at least 40% of the membership, which is about 200 members.

### By the numbers...

- This year, **42** UU congregations were in search for a settled minister.
- About **120** UU ministers were in search for a settled ministry.
- Our congregation received **21** applications for Senior Minister.
- We narrowed those down to **9** candidates for further follow-up, and we interviewed **7** of those candidates for **2** hours each by Skype.
- We narrowed those down to **4** pre-candidates each of whom we met for a weekend of intensive in-person interviews and preaching at another UU church in the area (a "neutral pulpit").
- We had **30** phone interviews with references.
- We had **16** meals with candidates.
- The search process lasted **10** months and we each put in about **400** hours of work.
- We have found the **1** candidate who we feel is the best match for our congregation!

**Vote on  
May 3<sup>rd</sup>,  
following the  
only service  
at 11am**

Your Ministerial Search  
Committee:

Jim Cooper  
Charles Harrington  
Linda Hudson  
Kristen Leddy  
John Mason  
Carrie McEvoy  
Catherine Onyemelukwe  
Anita Pfluger  
Kathy Roberts