

We are a spiritual community.

Third Annual Free Holistic Healing Clinic Returns February 24 & 25

Come in out of the cold on Friday, Feb. 24, from 3 - 7 pm, and Saturday, Feb. 25, from 9 am - 1 pm, for a free treatment at our Holistic Healing Clinic. The February newsletter will detail the generous offerings of participating practitioners.



No reservations will be taken. For information from jkhoenig@optonline.net, please put *Holistic Clinic* in the subject line.

**Joan Garro,
Reiki Master, is
treating Jeanne
Hoenig.**



Building Emily the cow for our December 18th service. From left: Milo Youngerman, Darius Dorph-Lowrie, Martha Potter and Leyla Dorph-Lowrie.

Reader's Forum, a new feature of this newsletter

Martha Potter, UUCSF's Communications Coordinator, has come up with a new feature for our newsletter. Each month we'll quote from outside sources that might resonate with UU concepts. Readers can then respond by email, and comments will be summarized in the following issue.

For openers, Eric Weiner, author of "Man Seeks God, My Flirtations with the Divine," wrote a New York Times (12/11/11) article about what he calls Nones, Americans whose religious affiliation is "none." This is "our fastest growing religious demographic," he says, adding that at least a quarter of young people are Nones.

He cites a number of reasons for this, including religious polarization, a jumbling together of politics and religion that makes people opt out of both, and serious confusion about the nature of God.

He wants to find a new way to talk about religion, which is "at core, a personal affair." But how to talk about its private nature publicly?

"We need," he concludes, "a Steve Jobs of religion. Someone (or ones) who can invent not a new religion, but rather a new way of being religious. Like Mr. Jobs' creations, this new way should be straightforward and unencumbered, and absolutely intuitive. Most important, it would be highly interactive. I imagine a religious space that celebrates doubt, encourages experimentation and allows one to utter the word *God* without embarrassment. A religious operating system for the Nones among us. And for all of us."

Margaret Logan

(Send your responses to marlogan@optonline.net)

Thoughts from Alison ... **A Purposeful Discourse About Love**



We've had such a long, mild fall that it wasn't until a frosty morning in the middle of December that I dug my winter coat out of the back of the closet. I was in such a hurry that I slipped it on and

was out the door without paying much attention to anything, just grateful for the warmth against the cold north wind blowing down the creek. So it wasn't until I was in a store buying groceries that I sensed something might be, well, off. The clerk squinted at a spot near my left shoulder. Oh no, I thought, there's probably an enormous stain and I never even stopped long enough to take a look at what I had thrown on.

"Standing on the Side of Love? What does *that* mean?" the cashier puzzled.

I looked down. Of course. I had put my coat away for the summer without taking off my rectangular "Standing on the Side of Love" campaign button, a miniature version of the banner that hangs in our sanctuary.

"Oh, that!" I said, feeling quite relieved. "Well, yes, love. It's a good thing, isn't it? Hard to argue about love."

"Well, what kind of love are you talking about?" countered my unusually conversational clerk. "Physical love? Emotional love? I mean, there're lots of kinds of love, aren't there?"

I caught his drift. "Sure, there's agape love, love of neighbor ..."

"Oh, yeah! That's the hard one, you know. Trying to love the neighbor who won't even talk to you ..."

We went on in that vein for a while. I said my goodbyes, happy holidays, and on to my next errand. Sure enough, this store worker peered at my

button, too. "Hey, aren't you the people over there on Nicholl's Road?" (I was shopping up-the-island.) "Well, yes, you're right – this is a slogan associated with the Unitarian Universalists – and one of our congregations is over there. Thanks for recognizing us!" And off we went, talking about local faith communities: hers, ours and others.

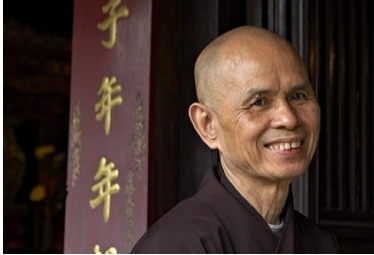
Actually, this wasn't the first time this has happened. Ever since I put that button on that coat, it has piqued the interest of, and generated conversation with a whole range of people; in doctors' offices and gas stations, at the post office and at the recycling center. The button and its slogan just seem to provoke a response. It's led me into some of the most interesting conversations with the most unlikely of partners. Everyone, it seems, has something to say about love. And linking love to justice, as our Standing on the Side of Love campaign does, is unusual enough that people want to hear more.

So that each and every one of *you* can engage in this practice that I'm calling "A Purposeful Discourse About Love," when this column goes to press, you'll find a whole box of "Standing on the Side of Love" buttons at the meetinghouse. Pick one up, wear it out and around, and start the conversations!

Blessings,
Alison
acornish@uuma.org

P.S. Want to know more about the UUA's Standing on the Side of Love: Harnessing Love to Stop Oppression campaign? Check out <http://www.standingonthesideoflove.org>

Editor's note: For a recent service, John Andrews, Board President, and Jaki Jackson, Worship Associate, offered reflections on how Unitarian Universalism draws truths from sources both humanistic and spiritual. John reviewed his thoughts in the December newsletter, and here, in his usual space, is Jaki's distillation of hers.



A Message Inspired by Thich Nhat Hanh

We come together as a community
From different denominations and faiths
Knowing that our searches for meaning
With or without beliefs
In or out of philosophical or religious
concepts
Can revert, settle down or continue
Can add to or eliminate
As much or as little
As each of us chooses.

Can we accept these individual freedoms as
the soil that binds us?
Can we acknowledge the diverse richness
we consequently share?

Freedom to choose requires self-reliance.
Self-reliance is an independent act.

The first independent act
For each of us here on earth
Has been the same.
The first volition that initiated and
continues our lives here on earth
Is the same.
We all became alive with the first breath in.

(As I breathe out I imagine that the
outgoing breath is unlimited in connecting
me as an individual to my surroundings.
But it's not until I am conscious-mindful
while breathing in this body that I can
do justice to the life I am being.)

Breathing is the simplest process in life.
Take time to breathe in.
Choose to care deeply while we mindfully
breathe in.
Choose to be generous,
kind while breathing out.

Perhaps we can accept that being intimately
aware of rounds of breathing in
and breathing out is a gift:
A gift that keeps us present, while and
where life can be found.

Let's not miss our appointment with life.

Jaki Jackson
jacksonjaki@yahoo.com

December 8 Board Meeting Summary

Our January Council meeting will focus on congregational growth and membership.

The Board is planning a "Dream Service" for February. The service will celebrate paying off the meetinghouse mortgage, and include brainstorming on congregational goals for the future.

The Stewardship Committee is looking for new members and beginning to plan for our pledging season.

Kent Martin, Secretary
kmartin@npr.org

**Dave Chorowski
plays a Turkish
version of the sitar
for our December
18 service.**



January Service Calendar

Sunday services begin at 10:30 am

January 8

A Multitude of Covenants

The Rev. Alison Cornish

Musicians: Harbor Bell Choir, led by Valerie Bell, with Megan Chaskey, flute

Unitarian Universalism is a covenant faith; we promise to walk with one another in love. But in fact, our lives include a multitude of covenants, of relationships grounded in love. In what ways might we periodically review, and renew, these life-giving covenants?

January 15

The Dignity of Difference

The Rev. Alison Cornish, Rabbi Leon Morris, and participants from our fall book group

Musician: Dave Cummings

This fall, our new book group, sponsored jointly by UUCSF and Temple Adas Israel, read and discussed the book, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*. This morning we share some highlights and insights from our discussions.

January 22

The Courage to Change

The Rev. Alison Cornish

If the only constant in life is change, one would think that, collectively, as a species, we would be more comfortable with the adjustments that life calls us to make. But engaging with change takes more than acceptance. True courage is needed.

January 29

Chinese New Year's and the Festival of Lanterns
Judy Chang, Margaret Logan, and Worship Associates Pat Gorman and Tuna Flores

Musican: George Cork Maul

Our guest, Judy Chang, a member of All Souls Unitarian Church, NYC, leads us in a multigenerational experience honoring the Year of the Dragon. The 2-week Chinese New Year's celebration oriented toward family and community has Taoist, Confucianist and Buddhist roots, as well as many ancient stories. Bring noise makers, musical instruments, and participate in the traditional Lion dance.

Service Date	Set Up & Greeters	Hospitality
Jan 8	Hoenigs; Jacobsen	Brolin; Curran
Jan 15	Logan; Coulter	Schmitz; Penny
Jan 22	Wittenbergs	Mason; C Murphy
Jan 29	Tusa; Wisner	Krinke; Krouse
Feb 5	Truitt; Dailey	Helfant; Martin
Want to help out on an occasional basis? Everyone new to these positions can count on having a veteran partner. To volunteer, please speak to Jeanne Wisner 208-8154, jkwisner@optonline.net		

February 5

Rejoicing and Dreaming

The Rev. Alison Cornish and members of the UUCSF Board

Musicians: Sara Gordon and Megan Chaskey

Today we celebrate an extraordinary moment in the life of the UUCSF, the satisfaction of our mortgage! And, not losing a moment, we turn to dreams of the future. What's next for our congregation? For what we dream, we can make real ...

A Congregational Conversation follows our service. *Please see next page for details.*

Upcoming Events

Unless noted, events are free, open to all, and held in the meetinghouse.

Sunday, Jan. 8, noon

Qi Gong class. Stay warm and safe in the cold and dark of winter as you build your reserves for spring. Come join us for these ancient Chinese healing movements and self massages. Free, and all are welcome.



Thursday, Jan. 12, 7 pm Council Meeting, tea and deserts.



Friday, Feb. 24 and Saturday, Feb. 25

Third Annual Free Holistic Healing Clinic. More details on page 1.

A Congregational Conversation Feb 5 following service

You are cordially invited to attend a congregational conversation on Sunday, February 5, following the worship service. The purpose of this gathering is to assess the various aspects of our shared ministries, including worship services, pastoral care, lifespan religious exploration (education programs for children, youth and adults), and community outreach. To make the most of our time together in conversation, we ask that you take some time before the meeting to consider the various aspects of these shared ministries. In each case, please consider our minister's role, the role of the congregation, and the interaction between the two. Our conversation will focus on:

- What you most value about these ministries
- What you think is working really well
- What you think could be improved - and how
- What three concrete wishes you have, regarding the ministries of this congregation

We look forward to seeing you on February 5 for this important conversation. A delicious soup lunch will be included! (If weather cancels the service, the conversation will be held on the following Sunday, February 12.)

The conversation is sponsored by The Reverend Alison Cornish, Minister, The Committee on Ministry: Mark Ewald, Jeanne Hoenig, and Carol Mason, and The Board of Trustees: John Andrews, Mark Potter, Kent Martin, Imke Littman, Margaret Pulkingham, and Myrna Truitt.



Flynn Martin playing Emily the Cow. Our December 18 service included the story of a cow who escaped the slaughterhouse and was adopted by a town.

The Green Corner

"OCCUPY EARTH." Each letter was as tall as the person holding it at the protest surrounding the White House on November 7. The rally was organized by Tar Sands Action, an offshoot of Bill McKibben's 350.org, and employed signs quoting candidate Obama's 2008 campaign promises to empower the President to deny the permit application of the Keystone Tar Sands XL Pipeline. This terrible project would release greenhouse gases from one of the planet's largest remaining carbon sinks, via an extraction process, itself highly wasteful. The State Department funneled the proposal through minimal review; Secretary Clinton was quoted as saying she was "inclined to approve" it. They weren't thinking, and thought no one was paying attention.

It turns out, however, that the people *are* awake, and they do mind. How heartening it is that all over the planet people are taking to the streets, flooding social media, and speaking out. The day I started writing this piece, *Time Magazine* named its 2011 person of the year, **The Protester!** Yes!!!

12,000+ people went to Washington D.C. that day in November, circling the White House twice in a human chain. Four days later, President Obama sent the Tar Sands XL Pipeline application back to the State Department for further review. The pipeline is still a threat, as are many other high-risk, inefficient fossil fuel projects. But the people are responding in ever greater numbers, connecting and organizing in expanding circles.

The Protestors' momentum is building, and I'm as optimistic as I've been in quite some time.

I decided to respond to an online invitation to host a Tar Sands Action Strategy Meet-up on next steps, not knowing if anyone would see my post with just a few days' notice. To my delight I ended

up with four guests, from Montauk, Amagansett, East Hampton and Sag Harbor; two of whom I already knew, and two are new friends. We're following up, exploring local anti-idling legislation, writing to the Governor to oppose "fracking," and drafting a plea to Congressman Tim Bishop to co-sponsor Representative Pete Stark's Save Our Climate Act, which would put a tax on carbon. I report our plans to the Tar Sands Action group, and I hear back from the liaison with suggestions and encouragement. Building.

Meanwhile, Dorothy Reilly, and Women's Initiatives for a Sustainable Earth out of Southampton, has shifted the Women Who Care, Women Who Dare action circles into high gear, with monthly meetings that morph into initiatives on food, water, waste, and changing the paradigm. Contact them on Facebook at the Women's Initiatives for a Sustainable Earth page; email co-coordinator lenib-girl@gmail.com; or ask me for information.

And, there's Occupy the Hamptons (where the 1% vacation). Their general assembly meets weekly, on Sundays at 2 at Redeemer Lutheran Church on Route 27, east of Water Mill. If you need a dose of hope and heart, just follow Occupy, at occupythehamptons.org; occupywallstreet.org; occupypolice.org; occupylove.org; or occupytogether.org; which offers "click here to find an occupy group in your area," and "plan and start a solidarity action in your area." Building!

I read somewhere that activism is the Earth's immune system kicking in – that sounds so right to me! Mother Earth is suffering; ailing; exhibiting symptoms ever more obviously. Humans, inextricably part of her, are something like this heavenly body's white blood cells: activating, protesting, striving for a return to balance and well-being. OCCUPY EARTH!

Sara Gordon
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Tar Sand, Suncor upgrader March 2010

© Garth Lenz

Tar sands open pit mine and refinery.

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Sara Gordon
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Photos from our Winter Solstice Celebration, December 17th.



We opened with meditation in a Chartres Labyrinth. Pat Moran in the foreground.



Our service included an Eastern European folk dance.



Escola de Samba Boom entertained us with their spirited Brazilian drumming after the service.



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appointment
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Deadline is the 15th of each month. E-
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Please start your subject line with "UU
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News from NY Metro District

The nationally-run Interfaith Immigration Coalition, in cooperation with "Standing on the Side of Love," has a how-to toolkit for organizing advocacy meetings with local officials, and for partnering with immigrant rights groups to help immigrant families. <http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/index.php/2011/11/21/iic-scomm-toolkit/> offers valuable insights.

If you have cabin fever and want to travel somewhere, how about attending the 2012 Worship Arts Festival, February 24-25, at the UU Church of Rockville, MD. All UUs are invited. Registration is \$60. Here's the link: <http://jpduua.org/news-and-notes/2012-jpd-worship-arts-festival-reframing-hope>.

If you want to be involved in the Long Island Leadership Institute, the three sessions are relatively nearby. For more information, contact Chris Morris at cmorris37@optonline.net. The first session is being held on January 7 at the UU Fellowship at Stony Brook, NY.

Pam Wittenberg
cpwittenberg@optonline.net



Guest at Your Table Boxes: Focus on Haiti



On January 22, following the service, we can learn more about the UU Service Committee's work in Haiti from Charlie Bateman, a Sag Harbor resident recently returned from helping to build the eco-village being constructed on Haiti's central plateau.

Please remember on this morning to bring the donations collected in your Guest at Your Table boxes. They will support this eco-village project, as well as others of the UUSC around the world. And please be sure to convert bills and coins to your check, made out to UUSC, and complete the form that came in the box.

On behalf of the UUSC, thank you for choosing to support real people engaged in struggles for justice worldwide.

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