

November
2006

Cobblestone News

Unitarian Universalist Church of Cortland: 607-753-0020. Web site: <http://www.uucortland.uuism.org/>



The Artist

Last night
I dreamed
a fire in the sky

strokes of color
layerd
the horizon

billows of smoke
clouded
barren tree limbs

orange embers
illuminated
soot littered snow

as an empty house
blazed
on the canvas.

- Joyce Morgan

Chris's Corner

As the holiday time approaches, it gives me pause to think about the why we have such celebrations. One of my favorites is Thanksgiving, perhaps because it is the least commercialized. We gather with friends and family for a delicious meal that is often cooked together as well as eaten together. We may even share in the clean up together. It's a time for adults as well as children to enjoy good conversation and each other's company and an opportunity to express our gratitude for good health, our beautiful surroundings, our companionship - things we overlook in our busy, daily lives. So I wish to all of you, time to realize what is really important in your life and to express it to those who need to know it. Happy Thanksgiving! And may the rest of the holidays take on a new meaning and significance in your life.

Chris Ogden
President of the Board



Barb's Column



Hi All,

Our new year is well under way and many exciting things are happening at the UU Church of Cortland! Grant writing is producing some results putting us in the lucky position of making wish lists and seeing some of our wishes come true! If you are interested in how we will be spending the monies we receive, please join the Board of Trustees in the decision making process. Board meetings convene on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:30 pm. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Ogden, President of the Board (seaogden@twcny.rr.com or 756-4580).

There is an old groaner joke often told by UUs and even others, "What do you get when you cross a Unitarian

Symptoms of Inner Peace

Be on the lookout for symptoms of inner peace. The hearts of a great many have already been exposed to inner peace and it is possible that people everywhere could come down with it in epidemic proportions. This could pose a serious threat to what has, up to now, been a fairly stable condition of conflict in the world.



Some signs of inner peace:

- An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.
- A loss of interest in judging other people
- A loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others.
- A loss of the ability to worry. (This is a very serious symptom.)
- Frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation.
- Contented feelings of connectedness with others and nature.
- Frequent attacks of smiling.
- An increased susceptibility to the love extended by others as well as the uncontrollable urge to extend it.

Barb's Column, cont'd from p. 1

Universalist and a Jehovah's Witness?— Someone knocking at your door who is speechless.” Yes, we UUs are not good evangelists, (not to be confused with an evangelical, one who zealously preaches the inerrancy of the Bible.) An evangelist is one who spreads the good news and we do have good news to spread!

Like many of you, I came to a UU church because I was disillusioned with the mainline churches but felt I needed a spiritual home, a place where I could explore the transcendent mystery that would sustain me in times of trouble and serve as a guide as I make the chaotic journey through life. When I first discovered a UU Church, I was afraid to talk about it in my group of cynical and secular friends, but, needless to say, after I went to seminary it became a little more difficult to avoid the subject! What I now find when I talk about what I do and why I do it, is that most people are very interested and want to share their own religious journeys. Often their religious journeys sound much like my own, they are questioning yet have individual ideas, opinions, and ways of expressing their beliefs and their values. Most people want to talk about religion, spirituality, and the ultimate questions surrounding mortality and immortality and most are looking for a safe place to explore and face their fears, their insecurities, and their questions about the unknown wonder of life in the fellowship of others.

Spreading the good news isn't about more money or simply more bodies supporting the church; it is about offering to others the opportunity to explore and discover peace in their own lives, for individual peace leaves us better able to work for peace in our relationships, our families, our communities, and ultimately, in our world. Yes, it is wonderful that the church is growing, that you we are an increasingly dynamic congregation and that the Religious Education, Building and Grounds, and Social Responsibility committees are vibrant and active and that money is coming in to keep the beautiful old building standing, but what is even better is that we are spreading peace, peace within and without—spread the good news!

In the Spirit of Shalom, *Cobblestone News*

Barb

For those who have experienced a loss...

I am not there

Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there, I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow.
I am the diamond glints on snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry.
I am not there; I did not die.

- Mary Elizabeth Frye



We have attitudes, thoughts, feelings, and experiences that have alienated us from our place in nature. One can do only so much of that before there is what this culture thinks of as a breakdown, but I think of it as a breakthrough- and then one can reconnect to their place in nature. That is what I call the transformation of consciousness.

- Luisah Teish

Expressing Our Gratitude

Thanks to Julia Schult, you can now view up-coming church events (and any updates,) including Sunday programs, dinners, films, and other activities, on the web site Julia created. Go to <http://www.uucortland.uuism.org/> and click on "Calendar".

A birthday party for Vola Sutton was enjoyed by all thanks to Bess Koval for all her planning and the children for making cards expressing their birthday wishes.

Thanks to Kate Koffey, Jena Curtis, Dick Benchley, John Ogden and others who gathered requested information, put their heads together and wrote and submitted three grant proposals. WOW!!!

Appreciation goes out to all who actively participate in our church committees. This is what makes the congregation strong and helps it grow.

To all those who help with the Children's RE program, a big thank you! The children add a lot of vitality and joy to our congregation and we appreciate all the work that the children's program entails.



UU Jokes (from the Web at <http://stoney.sb.org/uujokes.html>)

UU Prayer: "Dear God, if there is a God, if you can, save my soul, if I have a soul."

What two things do UUs and Dracula have in common? - They both have origins in Transylvania and they both shy away from the cross.

Three religious persons are discussing when life begins. The Catholic says: Life begins at the moment of conception. The Jew says: Life begins at the moment of birth. The Unitarian says: You're both wrong. Life begins

Memory

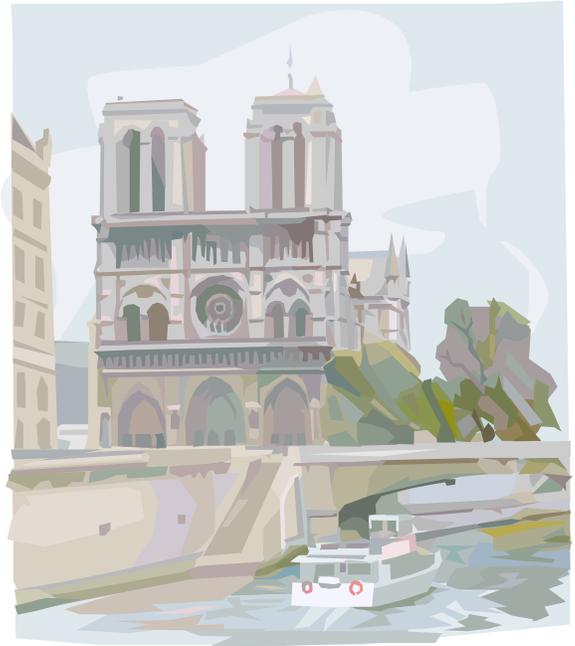
Dark eyes focused
on yellow glint of sun
in the shallow water
of a cold clear stream,
I wander back to my childhood when bare feet
ran through dew-
glittered grass
in the early morning light.

I walk down
a narrow road
in my mind
to a harrowed field
my grandfather sowed,
his skin wrinkled
and bronzed
by the sun.

Farther back
down a pebbled path
I come to a farmhouse,
where my grandmother,
hands worn
and speckled
with age spots,
reaches out to me
and I know she
and her grandmother
are part of me.

My ancestors followed
ancient trails
over mountains
in the quiet dawn.
I remember rocks
rough brown bark of trees
planting seeds in dirt
and green sprouts
in rich fields of earth.

- Joyce Morgan



Newsletter Editors

Chris and John Ogden

YOU KNOW YOU ARE A TRUE
UPSTATE NEW YORKER WHEN:

You often switch from “heat” to “AC” in
the same day and back again.

You know all 4 seasons: almost winter,
winter, still winter, and road construction.

Driving is better in the winter because the
potholes are filled with snow.

You find 10 degrees “a little chilly”!



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*Congregation active
since 1813
Building dedicated
in 1837*