

# COBBLESTONE NEWS

November 1, 2013

Volume 5, Issue 2



Unitarian Universalist Church of Cortland, 3 S. Church Street, Cortland, NY, 13045  
Uucortland.uuism.org

## THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF CORTLAND CELEBRATING 200 YEARS AS A CONGREGATION

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING THIS MILESTONE  
OF OUR HISTORY

YOU'RE INVITED TO a special service to  
KICK OFF our CELEBRATION

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2013 AT 10:30 AM

In the pulpit we welcome the renowned  
Unitarian Universalist minister,  
The REVEREND RICHARD GILBERT

RECEPTION TO FOLLOW the service  
BRING A FRIEND OR GUEST, IT'S A  
SPECIAL DAY!

3 CHURCH STREET, CORTLAND, NY 13045  
For additional information, contact  
Bess Koval [607-753-8413](tel:607-753-8413)

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Reverend Gilbert's sermon for November 10<sup>th</sup>:

### Universalism: A Faith Whose Time Has Come

Theological Universalism, based on the loving kindness of God, has evolved into ethical Universalism, based on the loving kindness of people. Drawing on the Book of Jonah, we'll take a look at the mission of the Cortland congregation - 2013.

On this bicentennial celebration of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Cortland, our eyes behold the past, but our vision looks to the future.

## Putting Our Best Foot Forward

By Kathy Tew Rickey and Marion Lutz

As many of you know, we've been working hard at getting our church building ready for the celebration kick-off November 10<sup>th</sup>. Marion, her son and daughter, Bess Koval, Julie Ganson, Autumn Pfister, and Jim Pelton have been working diligently to paint the fellowship hall and children's RE room. The carpets upstairs and down are scheduled for cleaning and the hardwoods downstairs will be cleaned, as well. This is all part of wanting to look our best for the

community as well as many invited friends and family of our membership.

So what can you do to help? Well first, think of a time when you were a stranger or a newcomer to a place or an event. How were you received? With warmth, enthusiasm, indifference? If you're reception was memorable because it made you feel welcome, think about what it was that made you feel that way. Was it someone who reached out and introduced themselves? Did they give you some tips for getting around the place? And,

Please see *Best Foot Forward* on page 4

## Pumpkins and Mittens

By Marion Lutz

Autumn Pfister and I represented our church at a PumpkinFest booth again this year. We had many handmade items for sale including wool mittens and decorative cloth pumpkins. Also, Autumn made quite a few ingenious items including a tote bag made out of plastic grocery bags – what a great idea!

We had a rainy Saturday and even though Sunday was mostly dry it was unusually warm and muggy. While that dampened mitten sales a bit, we still netted \$350 from Pumpkin Fest and expect more from post-festival sales. We still have mittens, pumpkins, and other items for sale if you missed



us at the festival. Please see me, if you would like to purchase something.

I'd like to thank everyone who contributed and made another year at PumpkinFest a successful one.

Marion

## Traveling Light

By Lynn Olcott

### *Symbols and Stars*

“....my cup runneth over...”  
Psalm 23:5

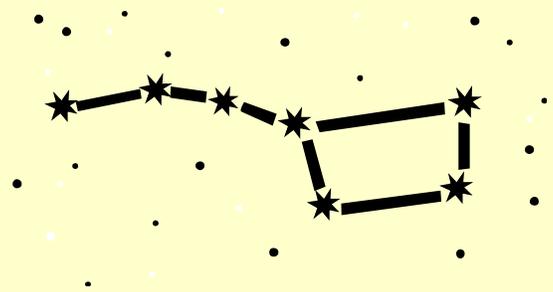
Working in jails and prisons, I see all kinds of tattoos. Some still shock me but I slowly came to realize that some are really quite beautiful. The symbols, words and pictures have meaning for the people who have them. I have always believed in angels. After much

thought, I had a small, simple angel tattooed on my shoulder. Of course, my tattoo artist does not see many grey haired grandmothers in his shop. But he designed a lovely angel for me and I was happy with my decision.

A few years later I miraculously survived a bad accident and spent months in the hospital recovering. That gave me plenty of time to think. When I came home from the hospital I had several tiny stars, distributed

Please see *Traveling Light* on page 5

*Of course, my tattoo artist does not see many grey haired grandmothers in his shop...*



## Children's Religious Education

By Ashley Vormwald, RE Coordinator

November is an exciting month for the Children's Religious Education class. We will be spending our time together preparing for the Annual Children's Service scheduled for December 8<sup>th</sup>. As the season of giving approaches, we will be exploring kindness, compassion, and generosity as we look for everyday ways we can give from the heart. The children will be encouraged to practice what we are learning in class throughout their daily lives and discuss their experiences when we are together. Bess Koval will be working with us to prepare a performance that will include some acting and possibly some dancing and singing as well! All children are invited to participate by attending the children's RE classes throughout November and the beginning of December. Be sure not to miss our special service next month!

Sincerely,  
Ashley Vormwald



### General Information about Our Children's Religious Education Program:

Childcare is provided downstairs for children 3 years old and younger. Older children start in the service with the adults for about the first 20 minutes. When the service leader announces the *Story for All Ages*, children are invited to come up front and sit with the storyteller. Afterward, the children are sung out of the

Please see *Children's RE* on page 4

## What Does it Mean to be a Person of Hospitality?

By Kathy Tew Rickey

There are some nuanced meanings in the word "hospitality." Hostess-with-the-Most-est immediately comes to my mind. I used to be one of those people who over-functioned when it came to hosting guests. I had quite the reputation for putting on dinner parties for friends and holiday feasts for family. But being a Hostess-with-the-Most-est had its costs: at the end of the day, I was exhausted and often found that I had barely engaged with any of my guests because of my over-functioning.

This is *not* the kind of hospitality we should be considering this month. The hosting I describe above has a materialistic and competitive edge to it. It involves pride and serves mostly to feed the ego of the

host, not her spirit. While it's lovely to be on the receiving end of such hospitality, it doesn't grow the host spiritually.

It's not that throwing a dinner party is bad or wrong - I'm sure I'll throw many more; I just want to differentiate it from the hospitality which is held up in the Genesis story of Abraham. We'll explore this idea further in the services on November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. For now, just consider that Abraham's hospitality to the three strangers who came upon his encampment involved his radical acceptance of who these men were. Further, there was a risk involved for Abraham in

Please see *Hospitality* on page 4

*Best Foot Forward* from page 1

what about the place? Was it clean and accessible? Was it easy to find your way around?

Whatever it was that made you feel welcomed, you are invited to pay that hospitality forward to newcomers and guests on November 10<sup>th</sup> and on every Sunday. Kathy may sound like a broken record when she says it but wearing your name badge is one simple way to be welcoming. In a way, you are already introduced by your name and the newcomer can know it just the same as other members who know you well. If you leave your badge at home or if you have misplaced it,

*Hospitality* from page 3

welcoming these strangers but one that richly rewarded him.

The qualities of risk-taking and acceptance are part of what is called Radical Hospitality. It's a UU buzz-phrase that is being discussed not only as a necessity to congregational growth but also as a spiritual practice. Here are a couple of links which might help clarify that concept:

<http://www.uuworld.org/spirit/articles/23888.shtml> and [http://www.uuabookstore.org/client/client\\_pages/3101.pdf](http://www.uuabookstore.org/client/client_pages/3101.pdf).

*December 8<sup>th</sup> is the Annual Children's Service. All children are invited to participate by attending the children's RE classes throughout November and the beginning of December.*

there will be temporary ones available at church.

November 10<sup>th</sup> will be a wonderful opportunity to introduce ourselves anew to the Cortland community by putting our best foot forward. Let us each participate in being welcoming to our guests. Plan to arrive early and be seated in the sanctuary when the service starts promptly at 10:30 a.m. Remember, the Reverend Richard Gilbert is our guest, too!

Kathy invites you to read elsewhere in this issue about this month's worship theme and explore what it means to be a person of hospitality.

This month let us consider to what and to who are we called to be hospitable to; what are the risks and rewards involved? As you might well know, welcoming the stranger into our lives is not only counter-intuitive, it's also counter-cultural. What in our religious life inspires us to challenge cultural norms in order to be compassionate and kind?

Consider any or all these questions as you like and let's talk about it over coffee after the service.

Many Blessings to you...

*Kathy*

*Children's RE* from page 3

service with "Go Now in Peace." The children follow the Religious Education Coordinator or an appointed Religious Education teacher downstairs for classroom activities during the remainder of the service.

If at any time you as a parent want to go with your child to their class you are welcome to do so. Also, your child may remain with you in the service; however, your child may be more comfortable in the child-friendly atmosphere of our downstairs classroom.

Please let us know how we can help you and your child feel safe and comfortable at our church. You may contact Ashley Vormvald, Marion Lutz, or Kathy Tew Rickey with questions or concerns.

*Traveling Light* from page 2

in the pattern of the Big Dipper, tattooed on one ankle. All my life, I've watched this constellation in the night sky. Over the years, it became a symbol of God's abundant mercies, pouring over me, wherever I've lived. My tattoos keep me constantly aware of the intervention of angels, and of God's mercies raining down.

*Thank You, God, for symbols of your love throughout my life and now. Amen.*

Contributed by Lynn Olcott from her column "Traveling Light" which she writes for her home congregation in Homer. Lynn is a member of UUCC and she leads the Women and Spirituality Group (see below for more information).

*Being a Unitarian Universalist since childhood means*

*that no matter where I am in my long and lovely search for the truth:*

*on the days I believe there is no God,  
on the days I believe God is a man,  
on the days I believe God is a woman,  
whether I am at God's throat or at her feet,*

*I can still go to the same church and sit safely in a familiar faith where I can continue to wonder."*

Contributed by Ruth O'Lill who submitted this in 2004 to the UUWorld Magazine. She submitted the above as her "elevator speech" describing Unitarian Universalism.

# News from the Wider Community

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**The Women and Spirituality Group** continues to meet the second Tuesday of every month from 6:30 to 7:30 at the Congregational Church in Homer. Women from many faith traditions share insights, questions, stories and prayers. All are welcome. For more information, call Lynn Olcott at 607-749-4873.

**From member Julie Ganson:**

*Here is some information from the Cortland Community for Peace group that has a 1-hour vigil from 11:00 am – noon every Saturday morning on the corner of Tompkins and Main Street.*

*Please join us if you can... and "Honk for Peace!" when you drive by and see us!*

*over 250 enthusiastic honks and cheers for peace. By the way, the ticket that the police gave me last Saturday for "posting handbills" has been dismissed and we can continue doing what we are doing. Peace, Brother Dave (Narby)*

**WAR = PROFIT...a documentary.**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xU4GdHLUHwU>

*Please join us Saturday for the peace vigil from 11 am until noon. Only one hour, but we usually get*



## NOVEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Nov 3

Daylight Savings Time Ends

10:30 am - 11:30 am Sunday Service with Kathy Tew Rickey: Welcoming the Stranger

### Nov 10

10:30 am - 11:30 am Sunday Service with the Rev. Richard (Dick) Gilbert: Universalism, a Faith Whose Time Has Come

### Nov 17

10:30 am - 11:30 am Sunday Service with Kathy Tew Rickey: A Friendly Emptiness

### Nov 24

3 pm - 4 pm Silent Meditation

4:30 pm - 6:45 pm Dish-to-Pass Family Supper!

Please refer to the website for the full calendar:

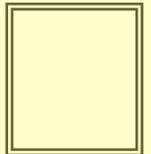
<http://uucortland.uuism.org/calendar.html>

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Celebrating 200 years  
Of Liberal Religion in  
Cortland

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Cortland, NY 13045



**Name**  
**Street Address**  
**City, ST ZIP Code**