

# Universalist Anchor



November 2006

**Words by Rev Lillie**

## *Spiritual practice.*

What is your spiritual practice?

Research shows that having some kind of meditative or contemplative habits is good for us physically. That's right—our bodies, the physiology of our being, benefit from spiritual practice.

There is a story of monks in a monastery in Europe that had sung each and every prayer service since the Middle Ages. They sang all the prayer liturgies: *lauds*, *prime* at daybreak, *terce* at mid-morning, *sext* at noon, *non* at mid-afternoon, *vespers*, *complines*, and midnight *matins*.

When Vatican II initiated liturgical changes throughout the Roman Catholic Church in the 1960s, the monks were no longer required to sing their prayer services. At the time, they thought it was a good idea. Before long, however, the monks began to get sick. Many had ailments they had never had before. The story goes that someone even said there seems to be a "general malaise" at the monastery.

The physicians began to worry about this outbreak of diseases and wondered what could be the cause. Somehow, someone came up with the observation that this began when the monks stopped singing their prayer services.

Just to experiment, the monks began to sing their prayer services again. Sure enough, after a few weeks, they began to get well. The diseases they experienced were healed by their renewed choral practices.

My journey toward my own spiritual practices began when I read an article on how devastating *stress* is to your well-being. Without going into the symptoms caused by the stress in my life, I candidly say, there was a considerable amount of **dis-ease** in my life.

Dis-ease—physiological, emotional, or spiritual—is the result of some kind of imbalance in our lives. In truth, when there is dis-ease of any kind, we are not living in a whole and holy way.

When we recognize our dis-ease, however that happens, it is a call to spiritual wholeness. It is a call to some kind of *spiritual practice*.

Perhaps you already have a spiritual practice. If so, you already know the benefits and blessings of your practice.

If you haven't thought about a spiritual practice, then I encourage you to begin to think about incorporating some contemplative and meditative habits into your life.

It will lead to greater wholeness and holiness, and ease the dis-ease you may have.

Why not begin that journey today? Meditate on what a *spiritual practice* could look like in your life.

Blessed be.

## Congregational Meeting Sunday, November 12, 2006

Members mark your calendars!

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHURCH BYLAWS, THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES HAS CALLED A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

- VOTING ON THE PROPOSED REVISED "DECLARATION OF FAITH"
- DISCUSSING CHURCH GROWTH
- HEARING REPORTS ON CHURCH BUSINESS

## Religious Education

By Sally Segal

Religious Education class has begun with a practical study of the Bible as a "library of books" and a hands on study of various stories of our "faith ancestors." We made a chalice with a Dead Sea motif and are creating an "ancestral" tree as a visual for our progress throughout the year. Come see!

We are also busy planning service projects to help the needy in our neighborhood. The October project was a "spare change" collection used to buy small toys for Iraqi children in Balad. (Thank you!) The November/December projects are the Mitten Tree and the Holiday Shoe Boxes for the neighborhood needy. These projects are collections of gently used/new scarves, hats, gloves, mittens; and empty shoe boxes and new toiletries (shampoo, combs, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, etc.). Thank you for support in any or all of our efforts—look for the exciting collection area in the foyer/parlor!

## Declaration of Faith Review Process to Conclude Nov. 12

The process of reviewing and potentially revising the Declaration of Faith concludes this month with a vote at the congregational meeting November 12 on whether to adopt a new Declaration or return to using the 1899 “Five Principles.” We have been using a draft revision of the Declaration in worship since Rally Sunday.

At the final scheduled feedback session Oct. 22, thirteen UNMC members and friends generated some fresh ideas on how a revised Declaration might reflect our values and aspirations. They suggested moving the proposed “action statement,” which describes how we are called to act in the world, so that it sets the stage at the beginning of the Declaration and leaves “the final harmony of all souls with God” as the last word. In recognition of our tradition of liberty of conscience, they also suggested adding “freedom” to that first statement and having the liturgist introduce the Declaration of Faith with language that makes it clear that reciting the Declaration is optional. A third suggested change was to use “I believe in ...” at the beginning of the section that is based on the Five Principles. Together, those changes yielded this latest revision:

In faith and freedom, we are called  
to bring hope and healing to the world,  
so that all may rejoice in God’s grace.

I believe in  
the universal love of God,  
the spiritual authority and  
leadership of Jesus Christ,  
the trustworthiness of the Bible  
as a source of divine revelation,  
the need for repentance  
and forgiveness of sin,  
and the final harmony  
of all souls with God.

The Worship Committee – Rob Bertram (chair), Kirk Denton, Lisa Harris, Richard Hurst, Sue Mosher, and Donna Simonton – remains interested in your feedback on the revised Declaration, so that they can bring to the congregational meeting a proposal that best reflects the wishes of the congregation.

## Board Passes — “10% Resolution”

At its October meeting, the Board of Trustees passed a resolution to give 10% of the Sunday worship service plate offering to a neighborhood, non-profit organization. Each month the Board will designate a local charity to be the recipient.

In October, The House of Ruth (<http://www.houseofruth.org>), a local non-profit group that helps women recovering from abuse, will receive our donation.

The Diaconate and the Committee on Ministry supported this idea and recommended to the board that they pass this resolution.

What is actually donated will be 10% of the offering over and above any pledges that are placed in the offertory plate.

Rev. Henley suggested to the board that we give this money as a congregational effort to become more visible in the surrounding community. The idea came to her after thoughtful consideration and discernment of the Congregational Covenant, especially the specific wording in the Covenant in the section, “In Our Service to the Church and Greater Community”:

We will stay engaged with the church community and answer the call to serve each other.

We will engage more purposefully with the local community, structuring opportunities in a way to increase participation.

We will work to make our facilities and activities more accessible to people with disabilities.

Until we have a “Social Concerns Ministry,” the board will name a recipient each month. When we gather a social concerns ministry, they will recommend to the board the nominee.

If you have a suggestion, comments, or want to nominate a non-profit organization in our neighborhood, contact Greg Wigle, our moderator.

## Sunday Services

**November 5:** Our first Unitarian Universalist Principle is “The Inherent Worth and Dignity of Every Person.” What can this mean for us as Universalists? A sermon by Rev. Henley

**November 12:** This Sunday is our semi-annual Congregational meeting. The sermon today will be on “Stewardship.” It will look at giving one’s time, talents, and offerings to the church.

**November 19:** Rev. Alida DeCoster, a Unitarian Universalist minister, who is a spiritual director, and Rev. Henley will offer a collaborative service on “Establishing a Spiritual Relationship with a Spiritual Companion.” Their dialogue will be grounded in their conversation in which they explore the possibilities of spiritual companionship.

**November 26:** “Telling the Sojourner Truth Story” Rev. Henley will share Ms. Truth’s struggle as a slave who becomes a celebrated anti-slavery activist.

**December 3:** The first Sunday in Advent. Rev. Henley will preach on Luke’s exhortation to “Be a Vigilant Follower.” The words are rooted in first century Christian ethical concerns. Luke 21:25-36.

## Chancel Flowers

**Mary Simmons, Coordinator**

**November 5:** Chancel flowers are given in memory of Hope’s grandmothers Mabel E. Fogwell and Marion B. Carter by Esther & Hope Fogwell.

**November 12:** Chancel flowers are given by Dara Petersen in loving memory of her grandfather Edwin Forkel.

**November 19:** Chancel flowers are given in memory of Sunny Ambursen and Kay Cronister by Mary Simmons.

**November 26:** Chancel flowers are given in memory of Dr. & Mrs. Clarence A. Weaver by their family and friends.

## Youth Ministry

By Sally Segal

First, a big "thank you!" to Stephen Pepper for helping with the Religious Education class. You were super! We look forward to having the youth of the church help with the Religious Education throughout the year.

In the meantime, the young adults in the church are organizing a youth ministry/youth group. Sunday evenings will be the gathering time for discussions and planning of activities, under the fun and able leadership of Dana Peterson and Scott Robertson.

Pastor Lillie will be available to conduct a "Coming Of Age" program for any interested young adult. If you would like to participate in such a program, please call Sally Segal, and we will set it up.

## Community Service

Feeding The Hungry — Food For All

UNMC serves as a storage center and gathering point for the community program, Food For All. This program delivers food to poverty stricken members of the D.C. community. Food For All needs volunteers who are available on Fridays to move food from a local food bank to UNMC. The program also needs volunteers on Saturday mornings to pack and deliver boxes of food to local residents. If you would like more information, you can contact the church office to get contact information for Food For All-[jsandler@amurt.net](mailto:jsandler@amurt.net).

### •Proof Reader Needed•

Volunteer wanted to proof the Anchor.

Need Microsoft Word, call Quawanna at the church office.

## UUA Seminarian Needs Assistance

Dear Friends,

I am working toward my Doctor of Ministry degree at Meadville/Lombard Theological School, and I'd like your help. As part of my final project, I am attempting to understand UU attitudes toward military and police chaplaincy, as well as toward the military and police in general. Toward that end, I have created an on-line survey that I would both love you to complete, and then to forward the link on to others in your congregation(s). I want to get broad participation, so feel free to forward this email to other UUs you know. And please, personally answer the survey only once-I want this to be as accurate as possible.

The link for the survey is:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=709832521237>.

Thanks so much, and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Lisa Presley, Doctor of Ministry Candidate  
Meadville/Lombard Theological School

## Conversation with the Minister

Soon the board will begin planning a meeting with the Congregation and our new minister. Be thinking about sharing your hopes and dreams for the church, along with what you see are our corporate pastoral needs as well as your own personal, pastoral needs.

## Support UU Social Concerns

Support the Unitarian Universalist Social Concerns while sharing the spirit of the holiday season. Purchase the UUSC holiday cards and help advance human rights and social justice in the United States and around the world. The design is: "Be the Light" by Alex Leaver of First Parish Church in Plymouth, MA. To view this year's cards and to order, go to [www.uusc.org/holidaycards](http://www.uusc.org/holidaycards) or call 617-868-6600.

## Universalist Revival!

This year's Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship Revival will take place in New York City Nov. 2-5, 2006, at the Fourth Universalist Society (<http://www.4thu.org/>), across from Central Park, with the theme "God's Reviving Grace." The historic church is located at 76th St. and Central Park West, close to the Museum of Natural History and many other New York City attractions.

The Friday keynote speaker will be the Rev. Jim Mulholland, co-author of two popular books on universal salvation, *If Grace Is True* and *If God Is Love*; he will also present a workshop on the parallel paths of Quakerism and Universalism. Saturday's keynote speaker will be the Rev. Gary Dorrien, the new Niebuhr Professor of Christian Ethics at Union Theological Seminary and author of the acclaimed series on *The Making of American Liberal Theology*.

The UUCF has reduced the usual registration fee and is providing a wide list of lodging options to help as many people as possible to attend. The early registration fee is \$100 including a catered dinner. One-day registration for either Friday or Saturday will be available for \$50. The cost of full registration is \$150. Complete information is available at the UUCF web site at <http://www.uuchristian.org/2006/register-now-uucf-revival-2006-news/>.

Revival weekend in New York City is also the weekend of the New York Marathon.

The *Universalist Anchor* is published monthly for the members and friends of the Universalist National Memorial Church in Washington, DC. It is also on our website, along with Rev. Henley's sermons, and announcements and activities.

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Rev. Lillie Henley, Minister

The Rev. Dr. William L. Fox, Minister Emeritus

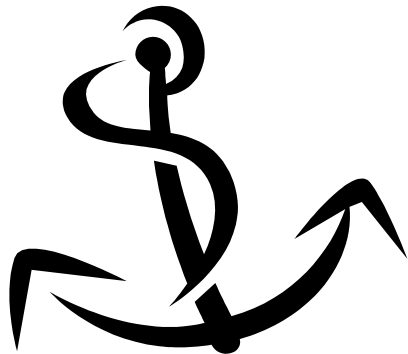
Board of Trustees: Rob Bertram, Catherine Bocskor (Assistant Treasure), David Burton, Elizabeth Crawford, Lisa Harris, Mark McNabb (Secretary), Brian Pepper (Treasurer), Jennifer Sandberg, Al Templeton, and Greg Wigle (Moderator).

Mr. David Skidmore, Head Deacon  
Donna Simonton, Interim Music Director  
Mr. Kirk Denton, Organist  
Quawanna Thomas, Church Office  
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### **Our Mission (adopted May 2002)**

We create a loving community  
for worship and service  
in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

We welcome all and respect individual beliefs as we grow together



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