



The Steeple

November 20, 2015

Caring for Each Other and Our Community

Dear Friends,
 This month's "Steeple" has a two-topic focus: Caring & the Holidays! Our **Mission** requires us to "...care for each other and our community." We fulfill this part of our mission in so many ways, from donating bags of food and toiletries to **JUMP** to purchasing our holiday wreaths at the **Bazaar** to donating money to our **Socially Responsible Santa** program to spending a quiet hour in worship on the **Solstice**. This is why we thought Caring & the Holidays were a perfect match for this month's "Steeple."



Christina Fulton

Our **Care Network Ministry** is always working hard to care for us. In this issue you'll learn more about the work they do to keep us all feeling cared for and loved. While Rev. Mara is away on Parental Leave, our Pastoral Care needs will be filled by **Rev. Phyllis** and **Rev. Jennifer Pader**.

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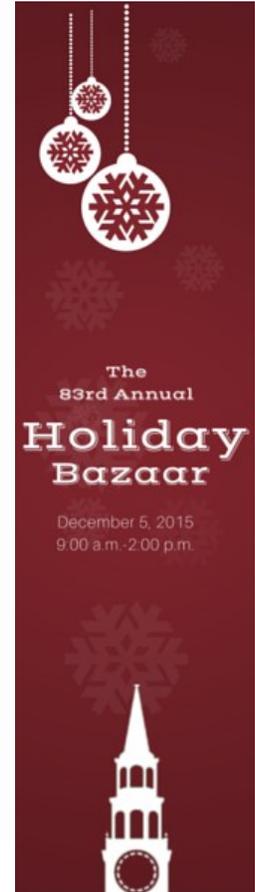
A Network of Caring



The **Care Network Ministry** helps promote a caring community by offering support to members in need and opportunities for others in our faith community to share the care. This network of about 15 members works under the direction of the Senior Minister and provides support through cards, calls, friendly visits, arranging meal trains and rides, and recruiting assistance for other tasks.

The Care Network welcomes new members and volunteers. You will see specific requests in eNews blasts and on the Meeting House bulletin board. The coordinators are **Janice Lange** and **Martha Molpus** at carenetwork@uusociety.org

Thank you for your caring!



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"Impart as much as you can of your spiritual being to those who are on the road with you, and accept as something precious what comes back to you from them."

-Albert Schweitzer

Introduction (cont'd)

In this issue you'll find a **Frequently Asked Questions** paper prepared by Rev. Mara, so we know exactly how to access the care that we need while she's away.

And the Holidays, they are upon us! This issue will give you some insight into all the great things happening at FUUSB for the holiday season. Take a look and find out how you can get involved!

Enjoy this season of Caring!

Christina Fulton

Director of Operations & Finance

Mara's Parental Leave FAQs

What are the dates of Rev. Mara's leave?

The expected dates of Mara's leave are November 16 through February 7. If the baby arrives sooner than expected, Mara's leave will begin a little bit early. We'll keep you informed!

Who will be handling Mara's tasks while she's away?

We have hired a parental leave minister to cover ministerial duties in Mara's absence. **Rev. Phyllis O'Connell**, a Boston-based, retired parish minister (and mentor and friend of Mara's) will be with us for the duration of the parental leave. Phyllis, as she prefers to be called, comes to us with 25 years of experience in active ministry. She is excited to be with us! Phyllis will be serving $\frac{3}{4}$ time; her primary duties will be worship (including **Christmas Eve** services!), administration, and responding to urgent pastoral care needs. She'll meet with the staff and lay ministry teams that Mara usually does, and will be available to lead rites of passage as needed.



How do I reach Phyllis?

Phyllis' email for the duration of the parental leave is phyllis@uusociety.org. You will also be able to reach her by phone at the minister's office: 802-862-5630, ex. 24. Her office days will likely be **Monday, Tuesday** and **Wednesday**.

Who do I go to if I experience a pastoral emergency (like a death in the family or major hospitalization) and/or need pastoral counseling while Mara is away?

Phyllis will serve as a first point of contact for pastoral care in Mara's absence – you can reach her at the above email

and phone number. Like Rev. Mara has been doing this year, Phyllis will work with and make referrals to Rev. Jennifer Pader, who is contracted to provide about 9 hours/month of pastoral care to our community this year. You are also welcome to use our designated pastoral care email and phone numbers, which forwards to the minister who is "on call" for pastoral care at the time. For much of the parental leave, that will be Phyllis. However, Rev. Jennifer will also be providing "on call" coverage the weeks after Thanksgiving and Christmas, when Phyllis will be returning to Boston for the holidays. This is similar to the way Rev. Jennifer was on-call during Mara's study leave last summer.

Pastoral care email: pastoralcareministries@uusociety.org

Pastoral care phone: 802-870-0447

Also, keep in mind that the **Care Network** is available to provide support in the forms of meals, rides, prayer shawls, cards, and friendly visits. If you find yourself in need of this kind of support (or become aware of someone in our community who is), you can reach out directly to our **Care Network** co-chairs, **Martha Molpus** and **Janice Lange**, at carenetwork@uusociety.org or by calling them at home. Martha and Janice will work closely with Phyllis.

Will we see Rev. Mara at all during her leave?

Probably not. Mara (as well as Ben and Dean) will be away entirely during her leave. Of course, you may bump into her around town, but we don't expect to see Mara until the end of her leave, when she will look forward to rejoining us and introducing us to the baby. Mara may stop in for a Sunday service or two while she's away, but mindful of the unpredictability of infants, we shouldn't count on seeing her until February.

Also, Mara **won't** be checking email or voicemail while she's away. If you have something you want to share with or talk with Rev. Mara about, it's probably best to save it until her return in February.

Children Widen the Circle of Our Being in Ways That Are Limitless

By Rev. Gary Kowalski-

Children widen the circle of our being in ways that are limitless.

Every baby that's born connects us to our history, our own parents, grandparents and unknown forbears who brought new life to the world in each successive generation.

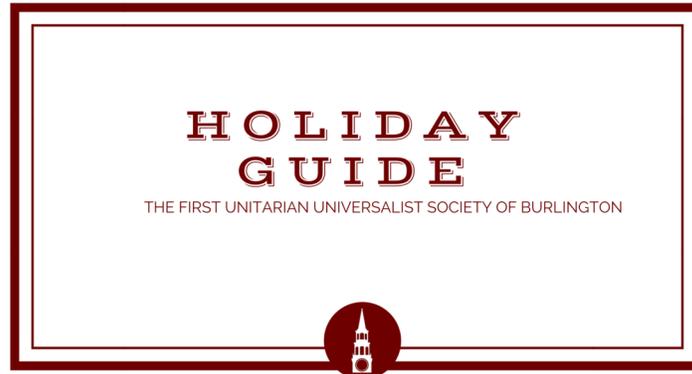
Every baby that's born links us to the future, to a world yet to come that belongs to our descendants and that we hold in trust for our posterity whom we will never know.

Each child connects us to nature, to the innocence and exuberance of a world always hatching newborns: kittens and pups and lambs and babes.

Each child reminds us of the kinship we share with people of other lands and races who love their young as purely and tenderly as we do.

Each child connects us to the universe, to the holy mysteries of birth and death and becoming from which we all emerge.

Children widen the circle of our being in ways that are limitless.



December 5

The 83rd Annual Holiday Bazaar

9:00 a.m.– 2:00 p.m.

Our iconic building will be busy on all three floors with holiday fun! In the basement you'll find baked and household goods, books for all ages, toys, beautiful holiday greens, and our famous Silent Auction. Also in the basement, is the Children's Gift Making Workshop (where children can make quality crafted items to give as gifts). All ages are welcome – a parent needs to stay with kids 5 and under. On the first floor enjoy a savory soup & sandwich lunch (choose from four soups and sandwiches) for only \$8.00. Our second floor will have craft vendors offering jewelry, fiber arts, and more!

December 6

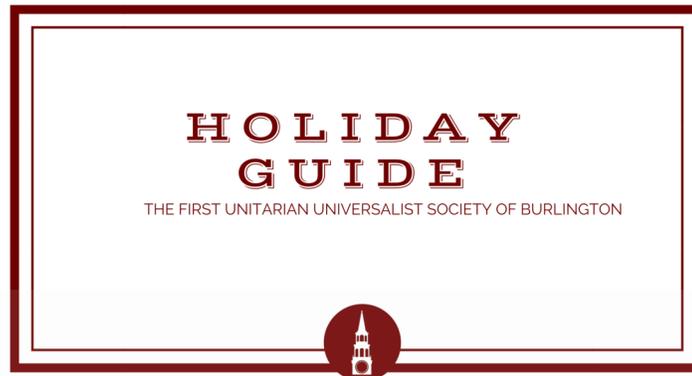
Socially Responsible Santa

This program, started in 1986 by the late Michael Ferrell, is unique in holiday giving programs. At Michael's suggestion, we decided that, in keeping with our principal of the worth and dignity of every person, we would give cash gifts so that the families could make their own decisions about what to purchase. We also decided to give the RE children treats of small boxes of raisins. The program was quite successful, the treats were not. For the next several years we gave different treats and the program grew amazingly well. Although the treats have now been discontinued, the program continues to grow and serve more and more families. These families are chosen with the assistance of our ministerial staff and wonderful "community elves". Most families are headed by single parents who have exhausted all other resources and are truly desperate for some way to provide a special gift or holiday meal for their loved ones. In addition to gifts or food, purchases have included warm clothing and boots, assistive devices for a special needs child, payment of past due bills and even the opportunity to move out of a shelter. For the last several years we have been able to offer gifts to more than 30 families. People can participate by becoming an "assistant elf" on **December 6** when we will take up a special collection for the Santa program. If you wish to donate but are not able to be at either service on that Sunday, they can send a check to the church with "SR Santa" in the memo line. If they have any questions, they are welcome to contact Maggi at: mehayes@uvm.edu

December 11

Mid- Winter High School Madrigal Festival

7:30 p.m. -9:30 p.m.



December 20

Multi-Gen Winter Solstice Celebration

9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

We'll celebrate winter solstice together; in the darkest day, together we'll bring back the light of the sun! As UUs, we find meaning in the deeper roots of holidays and their associated rituals

December 24

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Our Meeting House will be bathed in candlelight while the scent of our holiday wreaths waft through our 200 year old building.

Rev. Phyllis O'Connell

4:00 p.m.—Family Service (geared towards families with young children).

“No Rehearsal Nativity Pageant”

6:00 p.m.—All Ages

8:00 p.m.—All Ages

December 25

20th Annual Christmas Breakfast

8:00 a.m.—10:30 p.m.

Friends, neighbors and folks from FUUSB gather for a hearty breakfast, great conversation and sometimes a few tunes on our old piano. It is also a gift we give to folks living alone and to people with no housing. It is the chance to gather together with someone we've never talked to before (even someone from our own Society).



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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.UUSOCIETY.ORG

Holiday Guide (cont'd)

December 31

New Year's Eve: First Night

Events at the Meeting House will start mid afternoon with the last event starting at 10:00pm. Each performance lasts approximately one hour . Please note that the line up could change.

2pm: Migmar Tsering

3pm: Daniel Gaviria

4pm: Tenores de Aterue

5pm: Michele Choiniere

6pm: Will Patton Ensemble

7pm: Francesca Blanchard

8pm: Va-et-Vient

9pm: Deja-Nous

10pm: Grup Anwar

Lasagna Dinner

Enjoy warm lasagna made by our congregation members in our cozy Meeting House served by our Youth group as they raise funds for their service trip.