

April, 2019

# NEWS & VIEWS

Unitarian  
Universalist  
Church  
of Rutland



## President's Letter

JOURNEYS TO UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM:  
"BIRTHRIGHT"?

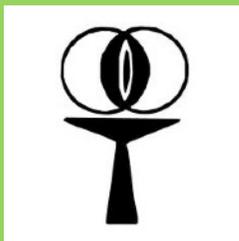
There were two things prompted this month's column. The first was a post in a UU online discussion complaining that the UUA takes a top-down approach in policies about non-white or non-straight people, but I'm not sure the topic makes much difference. The comment came from someone describing herself a "fifth generation UU, from the Unitarian branch." It contained a term that has never made sense to me: the writer called herself a "Birthright UU." I first heard it from the late Janet Martin, brought up Universalist, who said she was "birthright." I respected Janet and her roles in our church greatly, but the term bothered me. I regret that I never discussed it with her.

I'm an at least fourth generation UU, from the Universalist side, but I do not think this gives me or people like me any special rights. We should just identify ourselves as "brought up UU" — if it matters. It may matter when we describe our upbringing or compare our reactions to various religions with the reactions of those who practice or practiced them. For example, not having been brought up Roman Catholic, I probably cannot understand the feelings of ex-Catholics as well as other ex-Catholics can. Maybe that's what the

writer had in mind when she explained her use of "birthright" by adding "and yes, we are different." But being different from those who were brought up in other religions or with no religion at all gives none of us any special rights.

This column was also prompted by anticipation of one of our April sermons. One of our own members will speak about a process that brought her to Unitarian Universalism. It's more fully described in the calendar of coming sermons. (I realize few of you may read what I write here, but, for those who do, this is a shameless attempt to goad you into reading the descriptions of upcoming sermons.) I look forward to this because it probably will help me understand the religious feelings of at least some of our congregation whose religious upbringing differed greatly from mine. I do not want to be encouraged to look down on other religions. Instead, I do want to be encouraged to look into them at least deeply enough to better understand why those who come from them deal with UUism and with religion in general they way they do. I hope my curiosity is shared by those of us who were brought up UU and those who were not brought up in any religion.

-Herb Ogden



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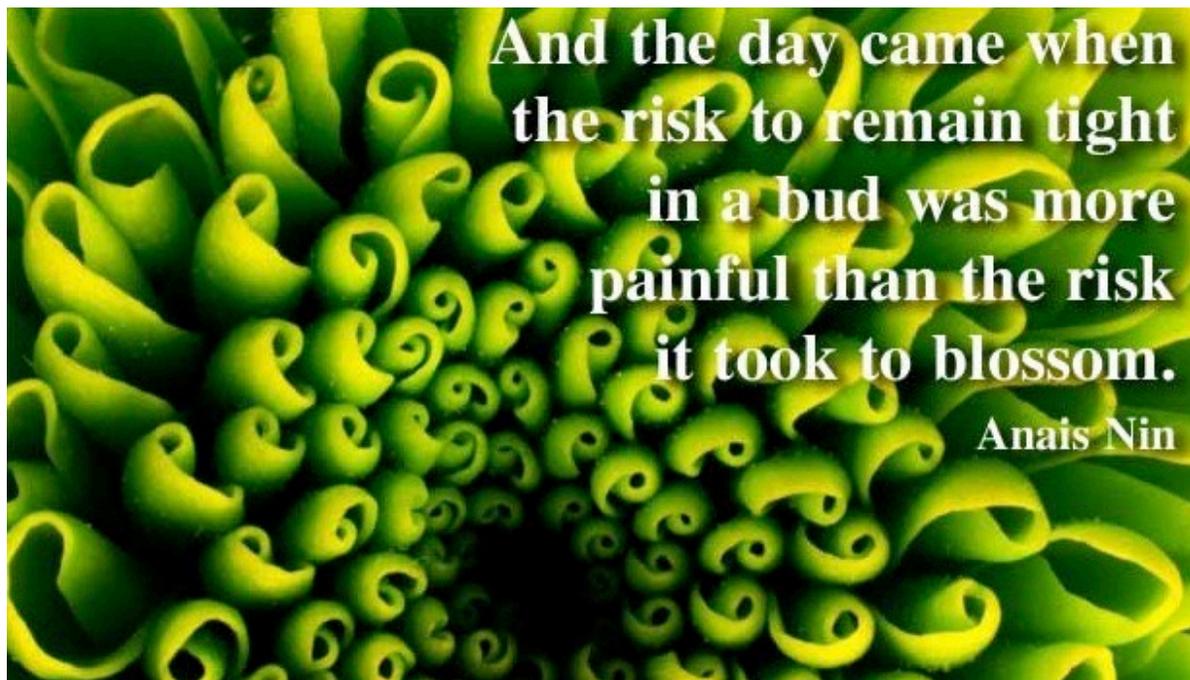
## UU AUCTION - MANY THANKS!

Thank you all for your participation in the annual Goods & Service Auction on Saturday night. Whether you were a donor or a bidder or a well-wishing bystander, you made a difference and helped raise over \$4,900 for our church.

Special thanks to those who brought delicious finger food to share. A well-fed bidder is a happy bidder! The evening was joyful with abundant twinkle lights and hearty laughter. And, while the auction continues to support the congregation financially, it also offers an opportunity for us to explore new hobbies, have new experiences, and make new friends.

The auction won't happen without a dedicated group of volunteers: Erin Robbason, Kimberly Bushnell, Diane Sander, Kevin Kiefaber, Ed Safford, Yvonne Brunot, and Theresa Krieger.

with gratitude,  
Kimberly & Erin



## From Rev. Barbara's Desk

Emails. I get lots of emails. Most of them are fairly routine – committee minutes and discussions, service planning, updates from a host of social justice and UU organizations, notes from friends and family. Some are addressing some significant problem or asking for help with a time-sensitive issue. And there are also some that are specifically offering joy or beauty or uplift, often quite unexpectedly. One of those arrived a few weeks ago, with an offer that will bring joy and beauty to all of us!

It was from Diane Sander, one of our two pianists, making a generous offer from a choir called Ladies' Night Out, a women's community choir in which Diane sings (and so does Becky Eno, our other pianist). The Choir suggested they sing several songs as part of our service on April 28th! They'll be doing a concert in Rutland on Saturday night April 27th and again in Middlebury on the afternoon of April 28th, so to offer to sing several of their songs on Sunday morning as well is a truly wonderful offer!

Their offer has inspired a service with a great deal of song – four sung by Ladies' Night Out – and a lot more congregational singing than usual, including some songs and chants which will be part of the sermon itself. The songs will include some that are very familiar and some which probably are new, but especially with the addition of our community women's voices, it promises to be lovely. One can hope that by then that weather may be lovely too – crocuses and daffodils by the front door, perhaps?

One of my favorite songs is Eva Cassidy's uplifting version of 'How Can I Keep from Singing'?



*My life flows on in endless song, Above earth's lamentation  
I hear the real, though far-off hymn, That hails a new creation.*

*Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear its music ringing,  
It sounds an echo in my soul, How can I keep from singing?*

*While though the tempest loudly roars, I hear the truth, it liveth.  
And though the darkness 'round me close, Songs in the night it giveth.*

*No storm can shake my inmost calm, While to that rock I'm clinging.  
Since love is lord of heaven and earth, How can I keep from singing?*

*When tyrants tremble in their fear, And hear their death knell ringing,  
When friends rejoice both far and near, How can I keep from singing?*

*In prison cell and dungeon vile, Our thoughts to them are winging,  
When friends by shame are undefiled, How can I keep from singing?*

There's plenty of tumult in the world these day, plenty of strife. I would say there are even tyrants, and I suspect a tyrant or two may even be trembling. And there is also, and always, song: it's often what gets me though, and the same may well be true for you. Song is often a place of inmost calm, a vehicle for centering and refocusing and remembering that along with everything else, there is beauty and joy

and light in the world. Our service on April 28th will make a special effort to bring music into our lives, and hopefully, it will send us forth with a song (or maybe many songs!) in our hearts. Hope to see you there!

Shalom and Salaam,  
Rev. Barbara

## From the Treasurer's Desk...

<i>INCOME</i>	
Pledges and Contributions	\$29,918
Fundraisers	\$566
Rental and Other Income	\$16,052
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$46,543</b>
<i>EXPENSES</i>	
Dues	\$4345
Ministry	\$24,063
Building and Insurance	\$18,169
Programs and Outreach	\$2658
Office Administrator and Expenses	\$8234
Loan Payments	\$2915
Reserve for Future Loan Payments	-
Reserve for Major Maintenance and Other Funds	\$707
Reserve for Minister (all net income applied here)	(14,556)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$46,534</b>
<i>NET INCOME</i>	
	(loss)
<i>TOTAL RESERVE FOR MINISTER AS OF 2/28/19</i>	<b>\$41,117</b>

# Announcements

## COFFEE HOUR \ GREETER STAFFING

One of the friendliest parts of our congregation is the coffee hour held after the church service. Staffing it has been a challenge. We are trying something new. Posted on the back wall of the sanctuary is a grid with the dates of Sunday services for the rest of the year. There are some names entered and several blank areas. This is where you can choose when you would like to be part of the staffing, according to your schedule. Tejal will continue to send reminders. Greeter duties will be managed in the same way.

-Thank you for your cooperation.  
Membership Committee

## CIRCLE DINNERS IN APRIL

Our spring circle dinners will be held April 12th, 13th and 14th; Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

These are planned potlucks, held at a private home. We will need hosts, who can chose the day they wish, the time and how many guests they can accommodate. We would like to have one child-friendly location. You may contact Ruth or Luther if you're willing and able. To spice up the gatherings, we are suggesting discussion of the question: *What has been new and good or meaningful for you in the church over the last year?*

-Looking forward to friendship and community, the Membership Committee

## HALF PLATE UPDATE

A few years ago, we had raised \$474 through half-plates to support the efforts of *Rutland Welcomes* in settling Syrian families in the Rutland area.

This is a very real demonstration of the care this community has for others in need. Unfortunately, *Rutland Welcomes* was not taking cash donations. When the political climate towards refugees changed, our options became very limited on using the funds. The board has decided to wait on using the funds in the hope that immigration policies will change in 2021 and that these generous funds raised can eventually go towards helping more refugees resettle in our community.

## ABOUT THE PHOTOS...

This months, we celebrate signs of spring! Photos are borrowed liberally from the worldwide web, with credits maintained as available. Thanks to their creators for lending their beauty and visual concept to our humble newsletter.

## April Birthdays

**4th: Kurt Kretvix**

**5th: Bela Francoeur-Schug**

**Best wishes to you and all  
other April birthdays!**



# Upcoming Services: April

## **April 7th: Linda Bryant** ***“Blinded by the Right”***

Linda tells the story of spending her formative years in the Midwest in the conservative 80's, and young adulthood in the 90's when she observed many changes. She talks about going from being clueless about how politics affected her life, to finding herself in a situation where suddenly she was forced to navigate through a legal and government process that eventually brought her to Unitarian Universalism.

**ALSO- RE Sunday!** Kids aged 5-12 are invited to join us downstairs at 10:30am to continue exploring our UU faith- with the topic, “what does it mean to serve humankind in fellowship?”

## **April 14th: Rev. Barbara Threet** ***“The Glove in the Subway”***

In Christian tradition, on Palm Sunday, Jesus entered the city in triumph, although being divine, he knew what would unfold in the next several days. He went for it, in current parlance, even though he knew there was a cost. And what does that have to do with gloves in subways?

## **April 21st: Nancy Weis** ***“Spring, and Other Good Things We Can Depend On”***

Spring is absolutely dependable, and we have solid evidence that it will always come again. What are some other, perhaps less obvious, good

things that we know will happen, based on solid evidence?

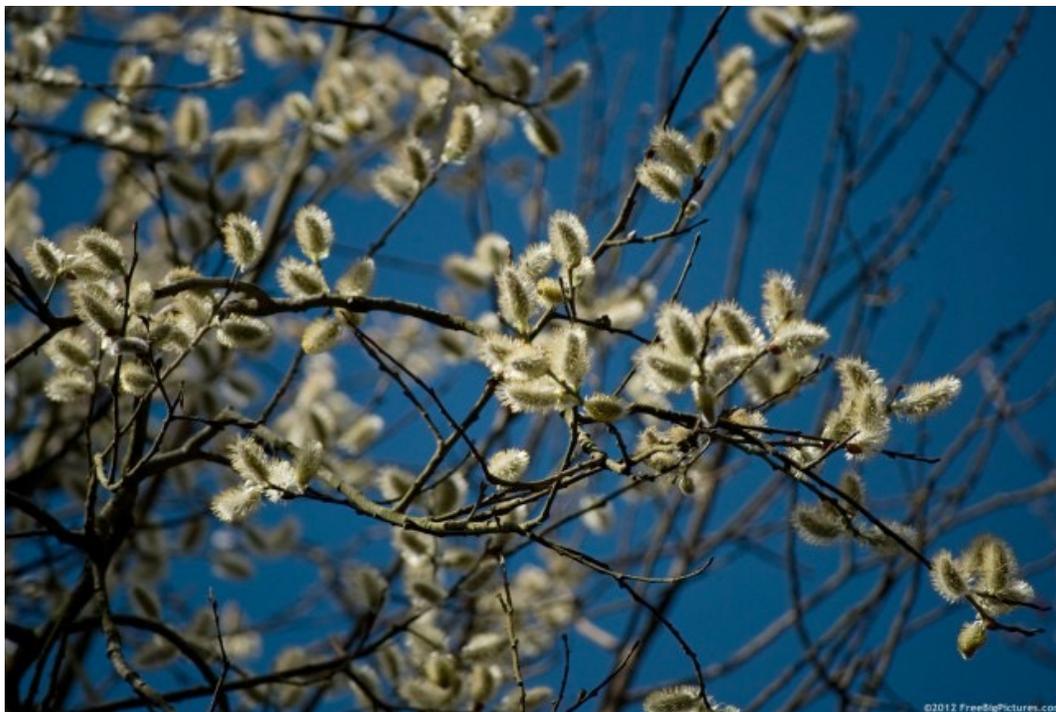
## **April 28th: Rev. Barbara Threet** ***“Singing in the Night”***

Both light and song can provide a path through night-time, giving us a guiding point to move toward. Today, thanks to a generous gift of song from the Ladies' Night Out women's choir, we'll explore how song helps us move through hard times. Come listen, and leave singing!

## **May 5th: J. P. Cass** ***“The Practice – and Science – Of Gratitude”***

J. P. Will show and discuss a TED talk, which says that there is actual research about the value of gratitude, including in the world of business.

**ALSO, UU Sunday!** Kids aged 5-12 are invited to join us to continue exploring our UU faith with the topic “What does it mean for ‘all souls to grow in harmony’?”



## Upcoming Events

April 5th	Open Mic
April 7th	RE Sunday
April 12th, 13th, 14th	Circle Dinners
April 15th	Board Meeting
April 21st	Soulful Singles Luncheon
April 28th	OWL class: ages 5-7
May 3rd	Open Mic
May 5th	RE Sunday
May 5th	OWL class: ages 5-7
May 19th	OWL class: ages 5-7

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