

# the chalice

Apr. 2005

**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME  
BEGINS 2AM APRIL 3**

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Onward to  
Our Futures »»»

**Special Congregational  
Meeting Sun. May 1**

newsletter@uusharon.org  
**Deadline: April 15, 5pm**  
Submit items via Email  
or on Disk, please



## Onward to Our Futures

Below please find our mission statement, reworked after consideration of the graffiti around the original (previous) version. We'll be holding a special congregational meeting on May 1 at 12 noon to vote on accepting it.

"We gather as a liberal religious community, honoring our differences, to support one another as we grow in mind and spirit and reach out to serve the world."

These are some of the considerations we had while discussing this version:

- "We gather" – this is stating a desired concept, a bringing together, which is reminiscent of the language of our historical roots of congregational polity.
- "as a liberal religious community" – in general we felt it best to use this language as a statement that we stand for religious liberalism, more than the current politically charged connotations of the term "liberal". Liberal means among other things: generous (like a portion of spice in a homemade dish), and progressive (leading the way, in the forefront of new reforms and views). The term liberal is yet another reference to how Unitarians and Universalists defined themselves in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Another meaning of the word liberal is "free". We are a non-creedal congregation of free thinkers thus a liberal religious community.

*See Page 6*

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newsletter@uusharon.org  
www.uusharon.org

**President**  
Valerie White

**Minister**  
Rev. Deborah Cayer  
Study: 781/784-9460

**Director of Religious Ed.**  
Louise Marcoux  
Office Hours  
Tu W Th 8:30am - 2:30pm  
781/784-3652 ext. 3

**Administrative Assistant**  
Janet Mayo  
Office Hours  
M W 9am - 11am  
Th 5:30pm - 7pm  
781/784-3652

**Newsletter Editor**  
Edele Panessidi

**NEWSLETTER  
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(preferably on disk)

## Night Songs

I woke up one morning and even though it was still quite dark, I heard birds chirping. Which was confusing to me as I shifted out of my foggy dream state and began to actually think, because it was only mid-March and there was actually a foot of snow on the ground. And then I looked at the clock and saw that it was only 3 a.m. Which explained the darkness, but not the birds, for I could still hear some kind of chirping.

### *From the Minister*

They would be quite ambitious birds, I thought, and a bit later wondered if maybe they were in some kind trouble, until I finally figured out that what I heard burbling in the night was actually the water in the pipes for the radiators. (At which point I was quite awake.)

Some things don't make sense, do they? And yet, still, we hear them chirping in our minds and hearts. All logical evidence to the contrary, what we hear inside often makes good sense, eventually, after we've allowed these odd truths some time and turning over, some pondering...some contemplation.

I know that what I heard in that still-deep-winter night was water pinging in the radiator pipes. Yet I believe that another part of me did hear birds, birds that sometimes sing for each of us in the darkness. They are birds of hope, birds of spring, irrepressible birds that bring us messages of love and courage. We hear them with a part of us that does our deeper knowing. "Winter has been long and cold," they seem to say, "and sometimes life is like that too, but there will be spring. We're here to remind you of that essential truth."

I know that what I heard with my ears was the heating system. I believe that what I heard with my heart was something more essential. And I hope that some dark night if you, too, hear something similar to those birds you will pay attention. I hope that you will give your experience some time, and turn it over in your imagination. I hope you will let yourself understand the song you've heard in your heart as you wait for spring to emerge from under that last, unrelenting foot of snow.

See you in church,

Deborah

## Presidential Ponderings

I have a vision. My vision is of an inspired, cooperative effort to make our Meetinghouse accessible. I see a welcoming entry with stairs and an elevator, built on the rear corner of the building in the parking lot. Designing this new entry to be compatible with later construction of an RE addition and to be harmonious with the historic character of our Meetinghouse will require the services of an architect. Building this new entry will require a capital fund drive.

Do those three words bring dread to your heart? They don't to mine. I have confidence that we have the resources and the will to create not only a Welcoming Congregation but also a welcoming Meetinghouse.

Whether to begin this project will be the subject of a special congregational meeting May 1.

I have another vision. My vision is of a congregation that is able to express clearly and with joy the essence of its character. The Futures Task Force has worked hard and imaginatively—and so have you, at small group meetings and at potlucks and on the bulletin board. The result of this work is a mission statement which I, they and the Board believe reflects the values and priorities of this congregation, as expressed by you all.

At the congregational meeting, the Board will ask you to adopt the final version. This statement of who we are, what we do, and how we are together will guide the ministry of this congregation. For each decision we make in our committees, on our Board, and as a congregation, we shall ask, "Would this act advance our mission?"

The text is:

"We gather as a liberal religious community, honoring our differences, to support one another as we grow in mind and spirit and reach out to serve the world."

Valerie White

## An Invitation to Membership

Membership in this congregation is open to all persons over the age of fourteen who are in agreement with our principles and who wish to actively support the mission of the congregation. Friends are always welcome at all congregational events, however only persons who have been a member for at least 30 days may vote at congregational meetings. If you are thinking of becoming a member now would be a great time to contact Membership Co-Chairs, Wilbur Edwards and Terry Fitzgerald. Wilbur and Terry will be glad to assist you with the very simple process.

## Women's Goodwill Alliance Plans Movie Night

Please join the Goodwill Women's Alliance on Friday, April 8th at 7:30 pm at the home of Cindy Wilson in Sharon for a movie night. We'll watch the documentary "Radical Harmonies," about the Women's Music movement that occurred in the USA during the 70's and 80's (and continues to influence artists and the music industry today).

Academy Award nominee Dee Mosbacher chronicles a revolution in the roles of women in music and culture. According Rene Rodriguez of the Miami Herald-Tribune, "Dee Mosbacher's lively documentary is bursting with terrific clips and insightful interviews. Mosbacher's vision is a moving tribute to those who made the music."

General Assembly is in Fort

## GA Reminder

Worth, TX this year, from June 23 - 27. If you're interested in being a delegate (representing the Unitarian Church of Sharon), speak with a Board member.

## Fun to be a UU

I've been interviewing children about their experiences in our religious education program. What started as a

*From the Director of Religious Education*

bulletin board project has evolved into a thought-provoking experience for me.

What's struck me most has been the children's response to "what I like about being a Unitarian Universalist." Many kids have told me that it's fun to be a UU.

Fun? As a child, I would never have said it was fun being from my particular religious denomination (which shall go nameless). Years spent memorizing prayers and things I should believe, watching peers being shamed by teachers for not doing a good job memorizing (and vowing that I'd never let that happen to me). It was a forced march.

As I grew up, I noticed that my friend's church (a different denomination) was a community. They still had to believe a lot of things but they had a lot of fun together, too. I longed to be part of a community of caring people like that. People who enjoyed coming together.

Kids in our church have told me about teachers who "teach in a fun way," about fun activities in class. They like being given the freedom to explore what they truly believe. They also tell me that they are glad to be part of a church that is welcoming and accepting – that seems to be part of what makes this place fun for them. It's fun to be who you are – not just someone you are expected to be. And you get to meet lots of different people here – different maybe because they're having fun being who they are, too?

I encourage you to take a peek at the evolving "REflections/REvelations" bulletin board in the RE corridor (right across from the nursery). Please come see what our children, youth, and adults have to say.

Have fun!

Louise

## We Want You: Join the RE Committee

The Religious Education Committee is seeking new members to join in early summer. Come help shape the future of our church and community.

You don't need to have children in the program to join. Men are especially encouraged to apply. Contact Rick Dumont or Beth Hoke or [rec@uusharon.org](mailto:rec@uusharon.org) to express your interest or to get more info.

## Food Donations Needed for RE Social Action Projects

On or preferably before March 27: *Canned good for the Stoughton/Sharon Food Pantry:* vegetables, fruit, soup, tuna. Your donations will be part of our annual Easter Can Hunt on Easter morning (regardless of weather and ground conditions) then transported to the Food Pantry for distribution.

On or slightly before April 3: *Lunch fixings* are needed for our monthly lunch making for 80 homeless men and women from *MainSpring House* in Brockton. Please contact Louise Marcoux if you are able to donate any of the following: 8 long loaves of whole wheat bread, 12 juice boxes, 1 large jar of peanut butter, 3 large jars of jelly, 100 lunch bags.

Thank you to all of you who have been supporting our MainSpring lunch making all year long!

## Celebrating Our Whole Lives

What has OWL meant to you? What difference has it made in your life? Youth participants, parents, teachers – all are welcome to share their stories in a web publication of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Send your submission (of any length) to [owl@uaa.org](mailto:owl@uaa.org) by April 15, 2005.

## That All May Be Welcome

Did you know that if you were a person with a disability, you'd be a member of the largest minority group in the U.S? According to the book *What Do You Say After You See They're Disabled?*, it's a demographic group that cuts across racial, ethnic, religious, economic and social lines. It may now, or someday, include a neighbor, a loved one, or you. Accessibility is a justice issue that calls us to act on our principle honoring the inherent worth and dignity of all by removing any barriers that keep people with disabilities from fully participating in our congregation. The Accessibility Committee has been considering these, and many other, reasons to move forward with the process to open our doors to all by making our historic building physically accessible.

Have you been wanting to hear more about how the Accessibility Committee and the Board of Trustees have been laying the groundwork towards accessibility? What are the options? How can you get involved? For these answers and more, please come to a special congregational meeting on Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, right after our worship service. The Accessibility Committee is eager to share all we've learned and to tell you what we and other church leaders see as a good way to make our vision a reality. Please plan to attend this important session. We want to hear what you think! Questions? Ask Accessibility Committee members Linda Godfrey-Bailey, Laura Raymond, Jean Zaniewski, or Susan Edinger, or any board member.

## First Friday Feast

Come unwind with church friends at First Friday on April 1 from 6 - 8:30pm. Arrive as your schedule permits and enjoy a relaxed, end-of-the-week communal meal in the vestry.

No sign-up or reservation is needed – just bring food to share (main dish, salad, vegetable or dessert) and your family's choice of beverage. Without any planning, we enjoy a delicious, varied menu. Clean-up is fast and easy, and we're all home early.

Parents: child care is not provided, so please bring a quiet activity for your children.

## First Friday Film



The Welcoming Congregation Committee of the Unitarian Church of Sharon is pleased to revive this unique film/video/documentary series on the first and third Fridays in April and May.

The committee has carefully prescreened the films to assure there is both quality entertainment as well as thoughtful and, at times, provocative exploration of issues that concern the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) community.

We will use the back room of the vestry from 7:30-9:30. A 20-30 min. discussion will follow each film depending on the length of the film so that we end on time.

"Celluloid Closet" 1996 (102 min) will be shown after Friday potluck on April 1st at 7:30pm. Assembled footage from over 120 films showing the changing face of cinema homosexuality from cruel stereotypes to covert love to the activist triumphs of the 1990s. This includes some graphic scenes and violence - appropriate for a mature audience. Many actors, writers and commentators provide anecdotes regarding the history of the role of gay men and lesbians on the silver screen. The narrator is Lily Tomlin.

Save the following dates for additional films, to be announced:

April 15<sup>th</sup>  
May 6<sup>th</sup>  
May 20<sup>th</sup>

Please let us know if childcare is needed.

Welcoming Congregation Committee  
Janet Limke 781/769-6378  
Gare Reid, Jon Slavin, Mia Joiner-Moore  
welcoming@uusharon.org

## The Way to Our Futures

*From Page 1*

- “honoring our differences” – always having faith that those who find that our values resonate with their own, and find a spiritual home with us, no matter what superficial differences exist between individual members, are welcomed, respected, and cherished in our faith home.

We are committed to the work of going beyond tolerance to active respect, caring and listening to each other, even when our theology, politics, background or lifestyle may differ.

- “to support one another as we grow in mind and spirit” – Supporting one another is central to our community. We are companions to each other, we sustain and encourage each other in the ups and downs of our lives, and we learn from and teach each other, helping ourselves and others to grow. Growth is the essential part of life. We need help to keep us from idolatries, or being “stuck” along our spiritual growth paths. And we each, in our faith, find our own faith path, and work with each other by discussion and listening. This is part of being a UU.

Another paramount part of being a UU is growth in mind. This takes a lot of hard work too. Our RE program as an example is one of the most important parts of our religious community. We hope and dream for the free and fearless futures of our children. We are also hoping to act on the calls for adult education in the congregation.

- “and reach out to serve the world” – if our bowl is full of riches, it cannot help but spill into the rest of the world. We believe we have much to offer the world, our offerings to the world can be summarized in the principles of our organization. We believe as a community that we need to “get the word out” about the good news of who we are, and what we do and do not stand for. We need to become a voice in the larger world, to governments, friends and even angry faces, that we are not here to go

along for the ride, but to make the world a better place for all.

It is planned that this mission statement shall be voted on in a special congregational meeting on May 1, 2005. Plan to join us then!

### **The Futures Task Force**

Gary Webber, Laura Raymond,  
Beth McGregor and Deborah Cayer

## Chalice Lighter Calls

Chalice Lighter grants assist congregations or groups of congregations to pay for programs and projects to promote numeric and programmatic growth. Chalice Lighters agree to donate \$10 (or more) up the three times per year, in answer to district calls. (The just-completed Unity Church of North Easton call raised \$1845.)

The Ballou Channing District (BCD) Board selected two projects for the 2005 Winter grant, First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) for furnishings in its new RE area and Cape and Islands Cluster for radio advertising.

FUSF raised \$250,000 in Spring 2004 to build an RE classroom addition to its new meetinghouse. The over 150 children and youth in their program had been meeting in two small classrooms and a foyer. The Chalice Lighter grant will assist in acquiring furnishings for the classrooms.

Six congregations in the Cape and Islands Cluster formed a C&I Growth Council to implement a radio/web-based growth campaign. An initial radio ad campaign began in Fall 2004, paid for by the participating congregations. This grant will allow the Cluster to continued the ad campaign in Winter and Spring 2005 and maintain the new C&I website ([www.capeuus.org](http://www.capeuus.org)).

To participate in the Call and/or enroll as a Chalice Lighter, mail your donation with your name, address and congregation name to BCD Office, 325 West Elm Street, Brockton, MA 02301. You may enroll online or print out a donation form at [www.bcd.uua.org](http://www.bcd.uua.org).

## Alliance Supports Guatemalan Women's Health Initiative

The Unitarian Church of Sharon women's group, The Goodwill Alliance, has voted to support Guatemalan women in obtaining contraception and to help prevent cervical cancer by providing funding for pap smears. We'll be selling baked goods after Sunday services in April. Your donations will go towards supporting these women.

Interested in helping to coordinate the sale and in baking? Contact Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks or Melissa Mills.

## Bikes Not Bombs

Clean out those cellars and garages and bring your unneeded bikes to church on Saturday, April 30 from 9am—12pm, when Sharon Friends of Conservation will hold a used bike collection.

Bikes not Bombs will provide refurbished bikes to people in need, both locally and abroad. They also train young people to be bicycle mechanics.

A donation of \$5 per bike to help fund the processing of bikes would be appreciated.

For more information or to volunteer to help, contact Rick Dumont.

## Walk for Hunger May 1

Project Bread's 37th Annual Walk for Hunger is Sunday, May 1. Pledges support 400 food pantries, soup kitchens, food banks and food salvage programs in 132 communities across the state. Info at 617/723-5000 or [www.projectbread.org](http://www.projectbread.org).

## MSPCA Offers Clinic

A rabies clinic will be held Saturday, April 2 from 12 to 3 p.m. at the MSPCA animal shelter, 1300 West Elm St. Ext., Brockton. Shots are \$10. Microchip ID's will also be available for \$20. All proceeds benefit the shelter.

## Tsunami Relief

The immediate, critical needs of the survivors of last December's devastating earthquake and tsunami are being met by the governments themselves, with assistance from other countries and international humanitarian organizations. They continue to deliver clean water, food, shelter, and medical help and have begun the daunting task of rebuilding thousands of communities. Many have responded generously to the immediate need for assistance.

News of continuing hardship and recovery efforts has moved to the inside pages of the newspapers and is now seldom featured on television news. But when we hear the news, we realize that many people are still seeking word of their loved ones, families are still living in tents, children are still coping with the trauma of loss, and people still fear returning to their fishing.

The devastated communities will need long-term assistance in a world that may gradually begin to focus on other things. The Sharon clergy and Board of Selectmen support a proposal to form a partnership between Sharon and a community in one of the countries in the devastated area. We hope to learn what the community needs to re-build. Then we, as a community, could come together to help in their efforts. When we know what the needs are, it will help fill that need. It could be funds to buy books and other supplies for a new school, equipment for a medical clinic, farm animals, or fishing equipment. Together we can help the survivors dig new wells for safe water, rebuild homes, schools and businesses, and regain their lives.

Having a partner relationship will enable us to offer sustained assistance and let local residents know just how their support and contributions are helping people recover from this disaster. In the process, everyone involved will learn about people in a distant country.

Janet Schmidt and Colleen Tuck have been meeting with the Steering Committee. If you would like to know more about this effort, or would like to become involved, please talk to us after church or give us a call.

## Calendar

Events take place at church unless **otherwise noted**. Event times are "pm" unless **otherwise noted**. Choir rehearses Weds. at 7pm and Sun. at 9am. Services and child care begin at 10:15am Sundays.

Tu	Mar. 29	Walden Discussion 7:30	F	Apr. 15	Prism Film Series 7
F	Apr. 1	First Friday Potluck 6-8 (flow)	M	Apr. 18	Women's Group 7:30
Su	Apr. 3	Whamcake! Breakfast <b>9am</b> <b>CHANGE</b> (Sr. Youth Group Fundraiser) <b>YOUR</b> Language of Reverence 12 <b>CLOCKS</b> SCMA Concert 2	Tu	Apr. 19	Walden Discussion 7:30
M	Apr. 4	Women's Group 7:30	Th	Apr. 28	Men's Group 8
Tu	Apr. 5	Walden Discussion 7:30	Sa	Apr. 30	Bike Collection <b>9am</b> - 12pm
F	Apr. 8	Alliance Movie Nite (@Cindy Wilson's)	Su	May 1	<b>SPECIAL CONGREG. MTG 12</b>
Su	Apr. 10	RE Committee <b>8am</b>	M	May 2	Women's Group 7:30
Tu	Apr. 12	Walden Discussion 7:30	F	May 6	First Friday Potluck 6-8 (flow) Prism Film Series 7 SCMA 7:30 M
W	Apr. 13	Board Meeting 7:15	Sa	May 7	SCMA 7
Th	Apr. 14	Men's Group 8	Su	May 8	RE Committee <b>8am</b>

## Senior Youth Group Calendar

March 27: No meeting - Easter Sunday

April 3: "Whamcake! Breakfast." **We'll meet at the church around 7am to start preparing/cooking.**

April 8-10: CON in Duxbury! Everyone who can go should go. There will be no meeting Sunday night.

April 17: No meeting - April vacation

April 22-24: Retreat at Cedar Hill in Duxbury. We need to call and reserve the weekend and work out how it will be financed.

May 1: Youth Service!

May 6-8: Tentative date for SchoolCon, a social action con about education reform. Details will come soon.

The rest of May will be planned out at a later date (maybe we can finally do that museum trip that got cancelled).



## Among UUs

We offer the condolences of the congregation to Suzanne Howard and her family; Suzanne's grandmother died in February.

Our thoughts and sympathy are also with the Fitzgerald family; Patty's father died in early March.

Welcome to our newest church members Liz Moore and Mia Joiner-Moore who were voted into membership at the March board meeting. There will be a ceremony in church and welcome dinner for all new members in May. (And if you're interested, see the article on Page 3 on how to become a member!)

Thank you to Peter Wilson who once again took apart the vestry door latch mechanism and rebuilt it. Actually, Peter does this about every 6 months since the slight skew of the historic entry way now regularly presses the door lock out of working order. And thanks to Gare Reid and Paul Tuck who figured out the problem with the vestibule lights upstairs (it was just a blown fuse, but one that's hidden away in an old fuse box way up in the belfry.)

Thank you to Tom Yeransian and Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks, this year's Canvass Co-Chairs, and to Louise Marcoux, DRE, for an inspired new version of "Stone Soup!" Thank you also to our canvassers who led discussions and to all 80+ people who attended a "Stone Soup" event. Canvass results will be reported as soon as they're available.

## Stone Soup Canvass Questions

As individuals and families, what are we thankful for in this congregation? What values do we live out here?

What inspires you, what is your personal calling, and how do these values guide your life?

As a church community, what opportunities would help us realize both our deepest personal callings and our shared values?

What dreams and hopes might emerge from the canvass this year and in the future?

## District Annual Meeting Set

The 2005 Annual Meeting and Spring Conference will be held on Saturday, April 23, 2005, at First Parish Church, Norwell. The theme is Steward: Envision the 21st Century church. The keynote speaker, the Rev. Alice Blair Wesley, UU minister, author and lecturer, will open the conference addressing the topic of congregational relationships as the foundation for the 21st century church.

A collection of reading material to help participants think about the issues facing the 21st century church and Unitarian Universalism in particular is available online at [www.bcd.uua.org](http://www.bcd.uua.org), for use during the afternoon discussion.

Early Registration is \$18 - \$30 on a sliding scale. Child care for ages 2 to 6 is available by pre-registration. Registration material is available in the church office or in downloadable form at [www.bcd.uua.org](http://www.bcd.uua.org).

## The Language of Reverence

A couple of years ago, David Bumbaugh, a humanist UU minister and professor at Meadville-Lombard Theological School said (in essence) that UU's will miss out on a good deal of life's experience if we don't have a language with which to talk about the human experience of transcendence. His ideas were picked up by Rev. Bill Sinkford, UUA President, Professors Sharon Welch and Thandeka, and others who've written extensively in response. Five of their essays have been gathered into a slim, readable volume called "Language of Reverence." In April we'll use the essays in the book to have our own conversation about this interesting and important topic. **DATES/TIMES TBD**

Participants will need a copy of Language of Reverence which is available through the UUA Bookstore (617-742-2100x102). Also please sign up on the Adult Ed Bulletin Board and indicate the day and time that works best for you. Questions? contact Rev. Deborah Cayer.

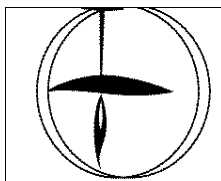
# the church

**SPECIAL  
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
SUNDAY MAY 1, 12 NOON**

**UPDATES: ACCESSIBILITY, OUR FUTURES  
PRISM FILM SERIES RESUMES  
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME  
BEGINS AT 2AM APRIL 3**



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## APRIL SERVICES

**SERVICES AND CHILD CARE BEGIN AT 10:15AM. JOIN US!**

April 3

*Cosmos and Creativity*

The story modern science tells us about the universe is of chaos breaking in and breaking down, and of creativity taking all the bits and pieces and forming them into entirely new systems for life forms. What kind of faith fits with this view of reality? Rev. Cayer, worship leader.

April 10

*Enter, Rejoice and Come In*

Our work on vision and mission this year showed us clearly that our top values as a congregation are openness, diversity and inclusivity. How well do we currently live this way? What would it take for everyone to be able to "enter, rejoice and come in?" Rev. Cayer, worship leader.

April 17

*H<sub>2</sub>Oly Water*

Only one percent of all the world's water is available for human consumption, and yet a great percentage of it is contaminated. How might we protect this precious resource that supports all life on earth? Rev. Cayer, worship leader.

April 24

*World Without End?*

In our infinite universe, there's always more to discover and learn, but every day we must make decisions based on what we know so far. Whether it's global warming, drilling for oil in the arctic, or deciding what coffee to buy, how do we decide when we know enough to take action? Karl Arruda will lead this morning's worship.