

# the chalice

September 2005

**HERE'S JUST SOME OF  
WHAT'S INSIDE....**

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(Psst - need a desk?)

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Bean Supper »»  
(and there's a flyer)

[newsletter@uusharon.org](mailto:newsletter@uusharon.org)

**Deadline: Sept. 16, 5pm**

**Submit via EMail  
or on Disk**



## 53rd Annual Bean Supper Extravaganza

Save the date (10 September) and time (5 - 7pm), expect the very best weather (one of those sunny, warm and dry late summer evenings with just enough of a gentle breeze to tire out any lingering mosquitoes) and come on down to the Meeting-house Green for the 53rd Annual Bean Supper.



Yes, summer is waning and fall is not so far off, so it must be time for the social and gustatory event of the year. Ken Zaniewski and Gare Reid, this year's Bean Kings, are laying plans for a fun gathering to kick off the new church year. Bring your family and friends (do all of your neighbors know what a great event they may be missing?) and join us.

You should have been contacted by now about your possible contribution to the food tables and for times when you are available to work that day. Reminder postcards will be sent out soon with final details. Any lingering questions? Please call or Email Ken (781/784-1845, [zaniew@verizon.net](mailto:zaniew@verizon.net)) or Gare (781/784-4472, [agreid@rcn.com](mailto:agreid@rcn.com)).

And look for a pull-out poster for the Bean Supper inside this issue of The Chalice, suitable for framing if you like or, better yet, for posting where you work, play or shop, to help spread the word.

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**NEWSLETTER  
DEADLINE  
FRIDAY  
SEPTEMBER 16  
5PM FIRM**

**Submit EMail  
by 5pm to**  
newsletter@uusharon.org  
MS Word attachments  
preferred  
Or  
drop off in the RED  
Newsletter Mailbox in the  
Church Office  
(preferably on disk)

## Growth and Grace

The news this week has been dominated by anguish in places as far apart as Gaza and Crawford, Texas. The pictures show angry, distraught Israeli settlers resisting removal from their homes by equally distraught Israeli troops. They show Cindy Sheehan stoically camped out amidst increasingly angry pro-Bush supporters, determined to peacefully stay until she has the chance to ask the President why her son died in Iraq.

*From the Minister*

But even with all this very real pain and human drama playing out on the front pages and at the top of the newscasts, there's more to the stories, much more that's simply not there. Where are the interviews with the Palestinian family of twelve living in three rooms, one of which is a bombed out kitchen? Where are the interviews with Iraqi mothers whose children have died in recent bombings? What is their take on what's going on around them? And why is no one insisting that we get more of these complicated stories, as much in fact as possible?

We live in complicated, difficult times. The stories of our lives are incredibly complex, and so is the truth that we each know in our minds and hearts. I've been wondering if people will continue to scream and shout their individual truths as a kind of background score to the violence that is turning the world to rubble, or will we somehow find a way to live together in peace with all our differences?

I believe we need to hear one another's stories and the truth we've discerned from it. I believe our experience has a sacred dimension, and when we share this with one another it is a form of communion. Unitarian Universalists usually call this "creating community". It has deep and very real results; one is integrity for community members.

I believe that in a confusing, frightening world, communion and community might be things that actually point the way toward sanity and salvation; communion and community just might be the saving graces of our times.

I believe that in this frightening and very fragile world, our congregations can be places that shelter the saving grace of integrity and peace. However, I think this will only happen if we do the spiritual work that it takes to develop these qualities. We need to make it a priority to meet with one another, listen with open minds and hearts, and share our own thoughts and feelings whether or not others agree. And we

*continued on page 5*

## Presidential Ponderings

"There is a place I call my own, where I can stand by the sea . . ." A UU conference center, Ferry Beach is a magical place . . . sea and sand and wonderful food (cooked by somebody else) and Unitarian Universalist companions. I walked on the beach, waded in the COLD Maine waters, canoed in a salt marsh, and went tidepooling in Biddeford Pool. I sang and played the piano for hymns and performed in pennywhistle and recorder duets in a Variety Show. I sat on the porch in an Adirondack chair and looked out over the Atlantic. Next stop, Africa. I fell asleep to the roar of the surf and rose to watch the sunrise.

I wasn't there just for the unmatched ambiance of Ferry Beach. Susan Allison and I attended a conference on Small Group Ministry (SGM).

SGM is spreading rapidly through our denomination. Various named "covenant groups", "chalice circles" or "caring circles", these groups are intimate gatherings of members and friends of a congregation who come together for intimacy and ultimacy and who stay connected with the larger congregation. Congregations with groups report growth, stewardship, participation and healthy relating.

The "basics" of a group include:

Size: about 10 people. No fewer than six, no more than 11. Each meeting includes an empty chair, reminding participants that the group is open to others. If the group grows to 12, it divides.

Meeting: once or twice a month, in meetinghouse or private home, for two hours.

Format: lay facilitators lead groups through opening reading, chalice lighting, check-in, in-depth discussion of a topic, check-out and closing.

Covenant: Participants agree on rules for participation, such as making sure everyone can be heard, respect for each other, and so on.

Service: Each group works on a project for the church or the larger community.

At the conference, we learned about forming covenant groups, and we also got to participate in such groups, which met every day.

Susan and I are enthusiastic about these groups' potential to transform congregational life. I hope that you will be, too, and that we can have a pilot group up and running by, say, January.

Valerie White

## Partner Church News

Thanks to all this spring's loose change donors, we were able to send \$260 to our partner church in Gyulakuta in May, and another \$125 in July. It's amazing how small donations and rolls of coins add up!

Our partner minister Erika Demeter writes that "We are well the kids getting bigger and bigger. Reka already speaks and she become a radio, she loves to speak. The people started to tell: Of course, she is going to be a minister!" [You may recall that we assisted in financing Reka's cleft-lip surgery two years ago; clearly it was successful.] "Levente this year will start his first grade in the school. So we are preparing for this change to."

She also wrote in June about break-ins and robberies in two of the churches she and her husband serve, and asked whether they could apply our May donation toward purchasing an alarm for her new church building in Erdoszentgyorgy. (The long-awaited new building replaces one lost over 15 years ago when a whole village was flooded in an abortive hydroelectric project.)

Our small partner congregation in Gyulakuta doesn't own a building, but meets Sunday afternoons in the local Calvinist church).

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## Making a Commitment to Religious Education

The Sunday morning experience at church is one small but significant part of each child's (or youth's) religious

### *From the Director of Religious Education*

education. Small, in that it takes up at most 35 hours of the child's year (compare that to 1080 hours of school!).

Significant, in that it presents each child the rare opportunity outside of the home to wonder about what is of ultimate importance and to consider how their life could reflect that value – not alone but in the company of peers and trusted adult leaders.

This year the Sunday morning religious education program offers an array of thought-provoking and spirit-engaging experiences. Here's the curriculum plan:

Nursery: Loving Care for all.

Preschool: Celebrating Me and My World.

Kindergarten – Grade 2: The Indwelling Spirit: Experiences with Homes

Grades 3 – 5: Jesus and His Kingdom of Equals

Junior Youth Group: In Our Hands/A Social Justice Toolbox

Attending regularly helps. The lessons can stand alone, but they do build upon each other. Likewise, trusting relationships with the group and with adult leaders can grow strong with regular attendance. A rich experience awaits.

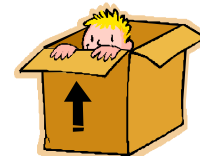
Classes start September 18. If you have any questions about the Sunday morning program, I invite your calls: 781/784-3652.

Peace,

Louise

## Environmentally Conscious RE Wish List

Do you happen to have on hand...



- paper towel cardboard rolls?
- Styrofoam or aluminum food trays?
- 8 oz plastic margarine tubs with lids?
- a few small, medium, and large cardboard boxes?
- Large sheets of cardboard
- A place in your home or garage to store large sheets of cardboard?

Please let me know if you can share any of the above items.

Sharing your "reusables" is one way that you can support children's religious exploration AND delay those reusables' arrival at a landfill. Thanks!

Louise Marcoux  
781/784-3652

## REGISTRATION

If you have not yet registered your child(ren) for the Sunday morning Religious Education program, please complete a form at the RE Registration table after church on Sunday, September 11.

Please bring your checkbook, too: family registration fee is \$20 for one child, \$35 for two or more children.



## Among UUs

Congratulations to David and Ellen Schoenfeld; their daughter Heather married Harvey Young, Jr. on July 31 in Bristol, RI.

Congratulations to Chris and Deb Cayer, whose daughter Laura married Judd West on August 6 at the Day House in Norwood.

Karl Arruda and Laura Raymond have successfully moved to Portland, Oregon and are staying with Laura's family until they locate housing. Their email is karlaura@juno.com and they'll send us their new home address as soon as they have one.

Edele Panessidi accompanied her son, Matthew, on his drive to Ocoee (near Orlando), to which he has re-located. He celebrated his birthday there, in part, by starting his new job.

Many thanks to Glenn Rivard who organized this year's summer retreat to Cardigan Lodge in New Hampshire. Hiking, swimming, talking, singing and banana boats and s'mores were enjoyed by all who attended.

## Grace and Growth (From the Minister)

*continued from page 2*

have to practice keeping our hearts open when we have the impulse to close up and turn away when we disagree with others. I think if we practice in this way we might develop skills that, in turn, offer saving grace back to the painfully hurting world.

A group of people in our congregation will meet in late August and early September to explore the possibility of small group ministry. Small groups can be a place for the kind of connecting and sharing that allow love and peace to fill our lives. Small groups can be a place to grow a soul, and also develop the spiritual skills that might make all the difference in the world.

May we each spend some time developing our spiritual lives this coming year, whether we do this at work, at home or at church. May we do this not only for our own growth, peace and well being, but also for the world's.

See you in church,

Deborah

## Partner Church News

*continued from page 3*



In other news, Erika's husband Levente was elected president of their District.

Partnership works within the U.S. too; at Erika's suggestion, we resolved some problems with ATM access to our funds by teaming up with the Mount Diablo UU Church in Walnut Creek, CA (a partner to another of Erika and Levente's congregations). A large church with a full-time administrator, they're willing to manage and send the funds for four partner churches to Erika and Levente and provide regular statements to all parties.

The "Small Change Makes a Change" jar will be at coffee hour again this fall--please feel free to unburden your weighed-down pockets and purses to help our partners in Romania. Thanks!

Beth McGregor,  
Partner Church Coordinator

## Calendar

Events take place at church unless **otherwise noted**. Event times are "pm" unless **otherwise noted**.

M	Sept 5	Women's Support Group 7:30
Th	Sept 8	Teacher Training 7 - 9:30 Men's Group 8
Sa	Sept 10	Bean Supper 5 - 7 SILENT AUCTION, TOO!
Su	Sept 11	RE Committee <b>8am</b> Water Service/Ingathering <b>10:15am</b> (bring water from someplace you spent part of your summer - we'll have representational water available, just in case you don't have yours!)
M	Sept 12	Sobriety Meeting 7:30
W	Sept 14	Board of Trustees 7:15
F	Sept 16	<b>Newsletter Deadline 5</b>
Su	Sept 18	MainSpring House Lunch Preparation
M	Sept 19	Women's Support Group 7:30
W	Sept 21	Membership Committee 7:30
Th	Sept 22	Men's Group 8
Su	Sept 25	Report on General Assembly (GA) 12 - 1
M	Sept 26	Sobriety Meeting 7:30



## New MA Universalist Convention Annual Meeting Set

The New Massachusetts Universalist Convention will hold the annual meeting and conference on September 24, 2005 @ the Parish House of King's Chapel, 64 Beacon St., Boston (across the Common from King's Chapel).

Complete details and registration info are at the convention web site: <http://www.nmuc.uua.org> (click on "Annual Meeting") or by EMail to "info@nmuc.org"

## Social Action for Social Justice

As a new church year begins, I'm beginning a year as Social Justice Chair for our church community. It's not the first time I've been in this position, but it feels like something new, and I'm bringing renewed energy and openness to new ideas and challenges. We all know that there's no shortage of issues and work to be done, from the local to the global.

As I write this in August, I envision my role as a communicator about and supporter of the many kinds of social justice work happening among us. Our ongoing work includes: Welcoming Congregation and support of equal marriage rights, Partner Church work, and accessibility planning (to name just a few). There have been short-term projects, other long-term projects, and of course the work that individual members of our church community are doing on their own and with other organizations. **My first request is for you to tell me about what you already do as an activist or supporter of social justice work.** I want to compile and list and update it periodically. If you're willing to be a contact person for others who are interested in what you're doing, please tell me that, too. I can include the list in the October or November newsletter.

I'll work with Rick Dumont to keep the social justice web pages up to date throughout the year (we're just beginning to talk about that, but if you have suggestions, please contact me or Rick).

There's one particular project that I hope we'll continue, following in the footsteps of the R.E. program - making lunches for Mainspring House (a shelter for the homeless in Brockton), once a month. Besides the tangible work of contributing food to people who need it, I hope to arrange some opportunities for us to learn more about the issue of homelessness and hunger in Massachusetts.

Although there's no money in the church budget for this project, it costs about \$75 each month, and requires some volunteers: a shopper, a team of people

to make sandwiches and assemble the lunches, and someone to deliver them to Mainspring House in Brockton. We have a donor for September and I'm volunteering to shop, set up and deliver. **I invite you to join me in making lunches on Sunday, September 18th during coffee hour. Please also let me know if you'd be willing to contribute toward the costs of continuing the project through December, and/or volunteering to coordinate, shop, or deliver.** If you volunteer to coordinate, I'll work with you to identify a date and communicate with Mainspring House. Although I hope we can continue through June, later in the fall we should reassess our ability to continue.

Finally, we've **scheduled a meeting for anyone interested in being part of a Social Justice Committee on Sunday October 2nd at 11:45 a.m.** (in the vestry or a classroom). I don't anticipate holding frequent meetings, so don't hesitate to attend this one to contribute your ideas, tell us of work you're doing, or to offer to lead a project that matters to you. You're also welcome to just come and listen!

The best way to contact me is via EMail: [justice@uusharon.org](mailto:justice@uusharon.org). If that's not an option for you, call me.

## Desks Available

Need a desk? The church has two available.

One is a large tan metal office desk, the other is a sturdy wood tone laminate computer work station. Either can be yours for a small donation to the congregation (\$5-?? your choice) as long as you take it away (either would fit into a station wagon and many car trunks).

Interested? Call Louise Marcoux at 781/784-3652 to make arrangements.

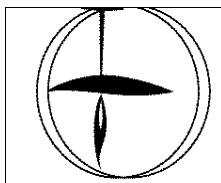


# the church

UPDATE ON  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SEPT. 25 AT NOON

BEAN SUPPER SEPT. 10  
WATER SERVICE SEPT. 11

Mailing  
Label  
Goes  
Here



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT  
WORSHIP AND ACTIVITIES  
CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE AT  
781/784-3652  
SEND AN EMAIL TO  
ADMIN@UUSHARON.ORG  
OR VISIT US ON THE WEB AT  
WWW.UUSHARON.ORG

UNITARIAN CHURCH  
OF SHARON  
4 NORTH MAIN STREET  
SHARON, MA 02067

## SEPTEMBER SERVICES (SERVICES AND CHILD CARE BEGIN AT 10:15AM) JOIN US!

Sept. 11 *Ingathering*  
Bring some water to add to our common bowl;  
join in the singing and celebration that always  
marks the beginning of the new church program  
year. This is a service for all ages; child care will  
be available for infants and toddlers. Rev. Cayer,  
worship leader.

Sept. 18 *In Principle*  
Unitarian Universalists have long been guided  
by seven general principles. After several years of  
study, a continental committee proposed the ver-  
sion that were unanimously voted into the UUA's  
bylaws in the late 1980's. What relevance is there  
in these today? Rev. Cayer, worship leader.

Sept. 25 *A Serious House on a Serious Earth*  
What difference might the church make in this

world that seems increasingly poised on the edge  
of violence? Rev. Cayer, worship leader.

During this morning's service we will recognize and  
install our newest Board of Trustees, recognize past  
board members, and "install" our new mission state-  
ment by singing it to a tune in the hymnbook.



Bring a lunch or snack at noon  
today to speak with church  
members Ben D'Avanzo, Bill  
Fox, Beth McGregor and Valerie White about  
June's General Assembly, including Actions of Im-  
mediate Witness, Engaging Our Theological Diver-  
sity, Moral Values, worship services, and painful  
evidence of our need to engage ongoing anti-racism  
work.