



# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bennington February 2010 Newsletter

## February Programs

**Feb. 7**—Rev. Erica Baron, on “A Small Group of Thoughtful, Committed Citizens: Transcendentalism and Unitarianism”

**Feb. 15**—Rev. Bill Baughan " on “Pure Love At True North.”

**Feb. 21**—Rev. Bruce Lee-Clark

**Feb. 28**—Afghan exchange student Zia on Islam and Afghanistan.

## Haitian Relief Dinner

### Feb. 6

The UUFB will host a "Haitian Cuisine Dinner" on Saturday, Feb. 6 from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15. All members and friends are encouraged to volunteer for this meal fundraiser, if at all possible.

We plan to serve 200 people. We need cooks (we'll supply recipes and some of the ingredients), servers, clean-up crew and ticket sellers. Sign up sheets are available at the welcome table, or talk to Julie Menard at

## Calendar

Feb. 5—Jeremiah McLane and David Surette—Concert

Feb. 6—Haitian Relief Dinner

Feb. 7—New Member Orientation

Feb. 7 & 21—“Aging and Sage-ing” Workshops

Feb. 10—UUFB Board Meeting

Feb. 12—Word of Mouth Movie Series

Feb 13—Valentine’s Day Workshop

413-664-9726 or [jjmenard@williams.edu](mailto:jjmenard@williams.edu), or Sue Andrews at 442 5719 with any questions. All proceeds will benefit the people of Haiti.

## Haitian PeaceQuilt Raffle

We will be raffling off a quilt made by the Haiti Peace Project as a joint fundraiser for the people of Haiti and the UUFB. Tickets are \$5 and will be on sale until June 15 when the winner will be chosen

randomly. We need UUFB members and friends to help sell tickets. Please volunteer!. See Sue Andrews for more information.

## Jeremiah McLane and David Surette in Concert

Jeremiah McLane and David Surette will present a concert of traditional New England and French-Canadian music at the Meetinghouse Café on Friday, February 5 at 8 p.m. Admission is \$15.

McLane, on accordion, will perform with guitarist and mandolinist Surette. McLane and Surette are two of New England's finest traditional players. They bring a fresh, inventive and playful approach to their repertoire of Celtic music from the British Isles, Brittany, New England and Quebec. Jeremiah and David have spent extensive time performing, studying and teaching music in these areas. As a duo they have assimilated these musical traditions into a new brand of New England music with a con-

temporary take on an ancient repertoire.

### **Orientation for Potential Members**

The next newcomer orientation will be held on Sunday, Feb. 7, at 11:30 a.m. This segment of newcomer orientation will feature Rev. Erica Baron speaking about Unitarian Universalism, its history, its theology, and the UUA. All newcomers are welcome regardless whether you are interested in membership. Persons considering membership need to attend both this session and Session II which focuses on this Fellowship and what it means to be a member.

### **Aging to Sage-ing Series**

"Aging to Sage-ing," a six-session program exploring the meaning of the second half of life, continues on Sunday, Jan. 31 from 6:30 to 8:30pm at the Meetinghouse. Through information, discussion, journaling, and sharing, we will examine attitudes about aging and dying, the tasks of midlife, and the ways that the elderly can improve the quality of life of their families and communities. The program will continue on Feb. 7 and 21, and Mar. 7 and 21. This workshop is based

on the book, "From Age-ing to Sage-ing" by Zalman Schechter-Shalomi. It is helpful but not necessary to read the book. There is no charge. The series is open to the Fellowship and the community. For more information, contact Sheila Mullineaux at 442-5594.

### **Film on Liberian Women and Peace on Feb. 12**

The Fellowship and the Peace Resource Center will present "*Pray the Devil Back to Hell*," a documentary about the truly remarkable Liberian women (both Christian and Muslim) who came together to help end a bloody, decades-old civil war, on Friday, Feb. 12, at 7 p.m. Nobel Peace Prize Winner Demond Tuto says of this film that it "Eloquently captures the power each of us innately has within our souls to make this world a far better, safer, more peaceful place"

It is "Uplifting, disheartening, inspiring, enraging — the mind reels while watching the documentary *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, even as the eyes water, the temples pound and the body trembles" (Manohla Dargis, *The New York Times*).

### **Sermonizing for Amateurs**

Have you ever wanted to give a sermon or a "talk" on Sunday morning? Do you have a sermon in you but no idea how to go about writing it down? Or are you just curious about the process of writing and delivering a sermon or talk in the congregation?

Come to Sermonizing for Amateurs, a five-part class led by Rev. Erica Baron. The class will meet two Wednesdays a month this spring, from **7-9 pm**. The dates are: **March 3, March 17, April 7, April 21, and May 5**

During the class, we'll talk about what makes a sermon different from other kinds of public speaking, we'll explore ways and places to get ideas, and talk a bit about the structure of a sermon. Then we'll get lots of time to practice with each other. (Taking this class does *not* obligate you to give a sermon to the congregation, but we *will* be preaching to each other in class.)

Interested? Please register with Erica by March 1. 802-855-8125 or ebaron@uuma.org.

## From Erica Baron

This summer, at General Assembly, I was elected to the Unitarian Universalist Commission on Appraisal. The Commission is charged to "review any function or activity of the Association which in its judgment will benefit from an independent review and report its conclusions to a regular General Assembly." What this means in practice is that the Commission chooses a topic of study every 2-4 years, and presents their findings in a report to congregations and the General Assembly.

The Commission has studied such aspects of our collective life as the meaning of membership, the joys and challenges of our theological diversity, our anti-racism efforts, the way our congregations are structured and their relationships to each other, and our Principles and Purposes. I have found past work to be very well done – thorough and thoughtful.

I have just returned from my second Commission meeting. We meet four times a year for 4 days to do our work together, with much more work happening between our meetings. My work on the Commission means several things for the congregation. Most importantly, my work on the Commission creates one more tie between our congregation and

the larger Unitarian Universalist movement. My work with the Commission will most likely help to inform my understanding of Unitarian Universalism, and I am looking forward to the ways that I will be able to bring that home. By talking together about this work, we can become even more a part of this larger world.

At this last meeting, the Commission chose Ministry as our next topic of study. While we are still defining what that means, and which of the many, many subtopics we are most interested in including, it is clear to us that we mean something larger than ordained professional ministry. We are interested in lay ministry as well, and this nebulous thing called shared ministry about which UUs talk so often. In April, we'll be hopefully coming to much more clarity about our subtopics, the length of this study, etc.

As we go, we'll be looking to talk to Unitarian Universalists about this important topic, so stay tuned for ways to get involved!

In Faith,

Erica