



Westminster Chimes

Volume 2010 #2

January 27, 2010

Editor: Renée Bucklin

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT 9 AM & 11 AM
Preschool through 8th Grade**

JANUARY 31 ONE SERVICE 10AM

**The World Cannot Be Saved:
What a Wonderful World!**

Rev Barbara Fast

How can we to confront the setbacks, frustrations and losses in our civic and/or personal lives and stay strong, hopeful and engaged?

Congregational Meeting to follow.

FEBRUARY 7

The Wisdom Literature of the Bible

We continue our exploration of these texts.

FEBRUARY 14

**9AM Family Service & Reflection
Love Makes A Family**

Rev. Barbara & DRE Renee Pierre

11AM with Sermon

It is Valentine's Day! Let's take a look at our family values as we celebrate our diverse Westminster families!

Rev. Barbara Fast

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

At a recent Board meeting, we voted to purchase a web-based office management system that will help us keep better track of membership, RE families, mailing lists, and even finances. Thanks to VP Larry Burgess, who took the time to investigate various options, we will soon be able to input and manage our office data and systems more accurately and even from home. One of the handy features that will eventually be put into place will be the ability of each pledging member to access and track their own pledging record. We'll be starting slowly at first, adding components as we grow more comfortable with the system; but, in the long run, it will help improve our ability to communicate with each of you, and for you to communicate with the church. What a nice way to move forward.



Speaking of moving, last Sunday, Dan Aubin, who moves building contents for a living, outlined a process for us to begin planning our move out of the Parish House. Within the next month, he will begin contacting staff for a 'walk through' of the building to itemize what goes and what stays. Although we will be using the Parsonage for storage of many boxes, we will also need to rent a trailer to store much of our furniture. The offices and church school classes for the youngest church members will be relocated to the Parsonage. In discussions with Reverend Barbara, we are considering holding Family Service at 9 and more adult worship at 11, although there are many details to be worked out. To provide flexible space in the Sanctuary, as it will be used for meetings as well as church services, we will be removing the pulpit and eventually storing the chairs so we can use the Fellowship Hall stackable chairs instead.

Lastly, Ginny Eastman, Carolin Goldman, Alice Marchant and Bob Wiseman have stepped forward to begin brainstorming how best to capture the history of our Parish House and the stories we are all anxious to tell. Thank you very much for taking on this important task.

As the Board continues to plan for this exciting step, we would like to hear from you. Any suggestions to share? We listen!

Faithfully,

Jan Searles,

President of the Board of Trustees

Dear Friends

January 25, 2010

It has been a January of travel for me. First a working trip to New Orleans to rebuild a gutted house left uninhabitable after Hurricane Katrina and now a vacation week in Los Angeles visiting our Son for his birthday. When you read this I will be back in RI and in the office.

It is good to take time away from work. Of course there are issues in the world that we do not escape. Of course the devastation in Haiti is on our minds. I watched dire medical reports from Haiti. Courageous doctors from the US working to rescue crushed limbs but having to amputate to save lives. The impulse to help, to offer charity, to bring hope when hope is hard to find, is powerful and research shows that it is hard wired within our brains. Thank you for your contributions to the UUSC/UUA Haiti Earthquake Relief fund and the others to which you gave.

We prefer to give help than to receive it. In New Orleans we were told that the world moves on after a disaster, that reconstruction is uneven, and that, as time goes by, many are left behind by the rest of the world. The concern is already being expressed about Haiti that once the TV media leave, our attentions will turn elsewhere. While we all cannot attend to each disaster that befalls humanity, it is also true that doing what one can to help is a wonderful human impulse that is good for the giver and the receiver. In New Orleans, we were repeatedly thanked by locals for coming to the city and for coming to rebuild, even though our mere two days of work is such a small gesture. Especially compared to the devotion of some.

As I told the story, our work was to scrub mold. In order to kill mold you have to "wake it up". I scrubbed mold awake on each side of each exposed wooden 2x4 I encountered. My face was covered with a mask for breathing and with eye goggles. Hour after hour passed and I was fascinated by the emotions that passed through me during this labor.

Have you even encountered a tedious task that you were required to pursue? This work was annoying, boring, sometimes tiring and painful as my hand cramped from holding the wire brush at awkward angles or my back ached from bending to the floor or reaching up to corners from a ladder. I began observing the task and my attitudes to this work and then to the person whose house we were rebuilding.

Was it important enough for my time? Did it matter? Was I doing a good enough job? Would the house pass inspection when we were done? Was the person we were helping the right person for our labors? (We did not do the screening of homeowners. The St. Bernard Project staff did that.)

We met the woman whose house we were assigned to work on. When she came to meet us she thanked us. We were told she was a social worker. It seemed shocking that a full time social worker would need charity. When she got there, she told us that she was a licensed social worker and then she offered to give the social work students in the group her study books to help them pass their future licensing exams. Later, I reflected on that meeting as I worked my wire brush up and down, side-to-side and round and round. Our homeowner turned my expectations around.

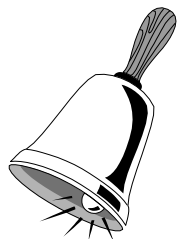
Rilke in that famous "letter to a young poet" wrote that we must keep "our ignorance" in the front of our mind. It seemed to me that I had a great "not knowing" to explore. Our homeowner was someone used to serving the needs of her clients, not receiving care. Even with a MS in Social Work and full time position with the State of Louisiana, she could not afford to pay a market rate in a very modest part of town to reconstruct a small home. She had the kind of self-regard that enabled her to present herself to us as a full human being set back by this disaster, but still competent and capable. I am sure that she brought those values to her work and attitude with her clients.

As I worked through my ignorance and not knowing, as well as fatigue, frustration, and fear about mold, I could see that the work itself had the power to be a kind of blessing. Mold remediation was a kind of laying on of hands and a preparing the house to become a home. Many hands would complete this home. With that attitude I worked with an easy effort, step by methodical step - like a working meditation with a liberated focus that was a unified kind of freedom and engagement. I began to work with kindness, for each piece of wood, for the homeowner, for the neighbors and New Orleans. When the second day was done, and we were leaving, I laid my hands on the bricks and blessed her home. I do not know if it such gestures make a difference, but it made the difference for me.

If you want to help organize a working trip to New Orleans e-mail me. So many connections are possible. It is really nice that the Saints won and are on their way to the Super bowl. See you Sunday!

In good faith and with love,

Rev. Barbara



Religious Education Program

Renee Pierre
Director of Religious Education

more about Clara Barton and we will have a visit from a speaker from this organization to share with us what the Red Cross does today.

Renee

Office Hours: Tuesday 9-4 & by appointment

UPCOMING RE CALENDAR:

January 31: Term 3 Lesson 2

Regular RE Classes for PreK through 6th grade
"Famous UU" Ginny Fox visits with the 3rd/4th grade class to make peace flags

Neighboring Faiths Class visits UU Congregation of South County

February 7: Term 3 Lesson 3

Regular RE Classes for PreK through 6th grade
Neighboring Faiths Class meets to discuss Unitarian Universalism church visit

February 14: Multigenerational Service at 9 am;
No RE Classes

11 am RE: Children PreK through grade 5 begin in the Sanctuary

KEEP UP WITH WHAT'S HAPPENING IN RE: <http://wuc-re.blogspot.com>

CHILDREN RAISE FUNDS TO HELP THOSE IN NEED:

This past Sunday the children held a used book and toy sale to raise money for those affected by the earthquake in Haiti. Their efforts raised over \$170 and will be given to the American Red Cross. Many thanks to everyone who supported this effort. A very special thank you to Ian Pett, Morgan Burgess, and Soleil Pierre for helping to set up for our sale and an extra special thank you to Nicholas Kelly for selecting several boxes of books from his home library to donate to this cause. A note of thanks to Nicholas' mom, Donna Vagshenian, for carting all the books to Westminster even when she was feeling a little under the weather! Great job everyone!

We chose the American Red Cross because of our ties to its Universalist founder, Clara Barton. This term many of the students will be learning about

Sharing Locker

Item of the Month for February

Stick Deodorant
(Men's & Women's)

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2010
11:15 AM

AGENDA:

- 1) **Building Update and vote on hiring architects and moving forward to complete design phase**
- 2) **Final decision on monopole**
- 3) **Discuss and adopt the 2010 annual budget**

Adjourn.

WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER ALL WOMEN WELCOME

We meet every Thursday evening.

Setup/Meeting: 7:00 to 7:15 PM
Announcements: 7:15 to 7:30PM
Program: 7:30 to 8:45 PM
Place: Fellowship Hall

Our Mission/Statement of Purpose is to enhance and encourage:

- * Spirituality
- * Support of each other

Jan. 28th – Bridget Celebration – at Charlann's
Feb. 4th – Closet Cleaning Party – Hedge Room
Feb. 11th – Margaret Fuller from "What Moves Us" Curriculum



CHURCH INCLEMENT WEATHER/CLOSING POLICY

Your safety is our greatest concern. When snow or other conditions make it likely that travel will be difficult and unsafe, Rev. Barbara and Janet Searles, our Board Chair will consult to decide if it is in the best interests of the congregation to cancel Sunday Services. When services are cancelled we will notify you no later than 7AM in these ways:

1. CHIMES e mail list serve.
2. Local RI Radio and TV stations.
3. On the office answering machine.



FEBRUARY'S CHARITY OF THE MONTH - GEORGE WILEY CENTER FOR HEATING ASSISTANCE

Westminster shares unrestricted cash placed in our collection basket 50/50 with a different charity each month. With approval from our minister and Board of Trustees, the Share the Plate Committee selected *George Wiley Center* for the month of February.

The George Wiley Center believes in building a community that addresses human needs and redresses injustices. *Together We Have the Power* to demand an affordable energy plan and stop utility shut-offs. No one should have to choose whether to heat or eat!

GWC is actively committed to local community organizing for the purpose of creating social and economic justice through changes in public policy. Their efforts have lead to the nation's strongest utility protections for children. Rhode Island's new law forbids utility shut-offs year-round for financial reasons in the households where children 24 months old or under reside.

Issues they are currently working on include; 1) An affordable energy plan for low-income, disabled and elderly Rhode Islanders. 2) Increasing protection from utility shut-offs to households with children under 6 years of age. 3) Defending and ensuring the right of appeal for people who have had their utilities shut off.

Guidelines for Donations:

Checks and Cash Envelopes written out to WESTMINSTER will go 100% to Westminster. If you wish to contribute directly to the charity, please write a SEPARATE check to the charity. Your contribution is tax deductible.

Unrestricted Cash will be split 50/50 between Westminster and the Charity.

For questions about sharing the plate, please contact a member of the Share the Plate Committee, Kristen Morelli, Bill Stone, Celia Humphreys, or Nathan DeSisto. To make a charitable organization suggestion, please fill out a Nomination Form located in our mailbox.

THANK YOU

“HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I would like to extend my personal thank you to all of you at Westminster Unitarian Church. Recently, in mid November, we (Indigenous People Organization) received a much-needed donation from your church. Not only was it a wonderful surprise, but also a needed boost of encouragement during these slow times. I am wishing you all many blessings with the New Year.

We are grateful,

Domingo Talldog Monroe,
President

SECOND ANNUAL BLOOD DRIVE AT WESTMINSTER

On Sunday, February 7 in the Fellowship Hall, the staff of Rhode Island Blood Bank van will be here between the hours of 9:00 - 1:00, to receive donations of your blood for Rhode Islanders in great need of blood transfusions.

It does not take a long time for you to provide life-giving blood to those in need. A short interview and about a half hour on a comfortable bed and you have bestowed a great gift. This can be done before the first Service, during the Coffee Hour, before the second Service, or after the 11:00 Service.

So: no waiting, plenty of beds, staff and volunteers making this an easy and gratifying experience!

We are looking forward to seeing you ready to donate a pint!

IMPROVING OUR STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION

WHERE ARE THE RESOURCES WE NEED?



La SALLE ACADEMY
612 Academy Ave,
Providence, RI
Thursday, February 11, 2010
4:30 pm - 9:20 pm

A conference for clergy, lay leaders, parents, educators, business people, students and other interested persons.

Informative workshops including Interfaith Community Gardens, This Old House of Worship, Climate Change Impacts and Implications for the Ocean State, A Grateful Way of Living, Permaculture for Sustainability, Environmental Education

A KEYNOTE PANEL directing you to RESOURCES and PROGRAMS to become more energy efficient, including US STIMULUS FUNDS

Panelists: *Ken Payne*, Executive Consultant, RI Office of Energy Resources; *Thomas Coughlin*, National Grid Program Manager, Energy Efficiency and Distributed Resources; *Karina Lutz*, Deputy Director, Peoples Power and Light; *Bob Chew*, President, Alteris Inc.; *Bonnie Sekeres*, Executive Director, Shalom Apartments; *Fr. John Codega*, Pastor, Christ the King Church, West Warwick

Panel Moderator: *Rabbi Amy Levin*, Temple Torat-Yisrael, Cranston.

Note: Rev Barbara will be doing a workshop entitled:

Grateful Way of Living

DANCE PARTY

Saturday, January 30:

Dance to live music by Mike Monahan and Friends

7:00-10:00 pm.

at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of South County
in the Lily Pads Professional Center
27 North Road, Suite B, Peace Dale, RI 02883

Bring your neighbors- the whole community is invited to this fun sociable night.

Coffee, cold drinks, snacks and desserts will be served.

The band plays a rousing mix of blues and rock-and-roll from the 50's, 60's and 70's, with some folk and country music thrown in for good measure. Their music is great to dance to; also great to enjoy while just sharing a brownie or two with friends.

Suggested donation: \$10.

No child care provided - parents must watch their own.



SOUP TO WARM YOUR HEART - FEBRUARY 14, 2010

We will be hosting a homemade soup/bread luncheon on Sunday, February 14th from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. This is a church fundraiser.

If anyone would like to help contribute by making soup, bread, serving, setting up or cleaning up, please contact Donna Poland. There will also be sign-up sheets posted on the Bulletin Board.



GET A WAY RENTAL

MT. DESERT ISLAND, MAINE: 3 bedroom cottage for rent by the week - July thru Sept. Access and view of ocean; near Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor. For availability and rates, call Bruce Foresman.

CHECK IT OUT

Here are some of the famous UUs and famous people with UU connections that our kids are studying about this term:

Grades 1&2: PT Barnum (entrepreneur and philanthropist), Christopher Reeve (actor and activist), Sophia Fahs (author and minister and beloved DRE), Louisa May Alcott (author), Clara Barton, Paul Revere (silversmith and secret agent) and Beatrix Potter (author).

Grades 3&4: Charles Darwin (scientist), Ginny Fox (peaceflagproject.org), Samuel Morse (inventor), Joseph Priestly (scientist), Maria Mitchell (astronomer), Fannie Farmer (teacher and author), Lewis Latimer (scientist).

Grades 5&6: Gilbert Stuart, Frank Lloyd Wright, Amy Lowell (poet), Pete Seeger (musician and activist), Rod Serling (writer and director), Robert Fulghum (minister and author).

Our students will also be having a visit from a speaker from the **American Red Cross** to learn more about the upcoming project they will be engaged in: Operation Bear Hug. This is their Children's Chapel Share-the-Plate charity.

WESTMINSTER CALENDAR

1/28 7:00 PM WOW @ Charlann's
1/29 6:00 PM COA (FH)(K)
1/31 10:00 AM Worship
1/31 10:00AM RE
1/31 11:15 AM Congregational Meeting (FH)
2/2 6:30 PM Yoga (FH)
2/3 5:30 PM Caring Circle (W)
2/3 6:15 PM Jr. Choir (CH)
2/3 6:15 PM Music Committee (RR)
2/3 7:15 PM Choir (CH)
2/4 7:00 PM Men's Group (W)
2/4 7:00 PM WOW (H)(FH)
2/6 9:00 AM Ethical Eating (W)
2/7 9/11 AM Worship
2/7 9/11 AM RE
2/7 9AM-1PM Blood Drive (FH)
2/7 6:30 PM Sr. Youth Group (FH)(W)(K)
2/8 7:00 PM SGM with Sue Bollens (W)
2/9 6:30 PM Yoga (FH)
2/9 7:00 PM Board of Trustees (H)
2/10 6:00 PM Buddhist Meditation (FH)
2/10 6:15 PM Jr. Choir (CH)
2/10 7:15 PM Choir (CH)
2/11 5:30 PM – Worship Comm. (W)
2/11 7:00 PM – WOW (FH)
2/13 9:00 AM – Ethical Eating (W)
2/14 9/11 AM Worship
2/14 9/11 AM RE
2/14 10:00 AM Soup & Bread Sale (FH)
2/16 6:30 PM Yoga (FH)
2/16 6:30 PM Green Sanctuary TF (W)
2/16 7:00 PM COM
2/17 6:00 PM Shawl Ministry (W)
2/17 6:15 PM Jr. Choir (CH)
2/17 7:15 PM Choir (CH)

The Caring Circle is Here to Help You

If you have experienced a setback that has left you or a family member ill, or in need of meals, visits, rides or other help, please contact Nancy Rieser or Rev. Barbara Fast (phone 401-884-3561).

WESTMINSTER CONTACT INFORMATION

Westminster Unitarian Church welcomes all individuals without regard to race, color, physical challenge, sexual orientation, age, or national origin.

Church Office: 401-884-5933
Fax Number: 401-885-2710
Minister: Barbara Fast
minister's study: 401-884-3561
Religious Ed Coordinator: Renee Pierre
Music Director: Nonetta Shatakhtsian
Office Administrator: Judy Brown
E-mail: westminsteruu@verizon.net
Website: www.westminsteruu.org
Office Hours: 9AM to 1 PM Monday - Friday

WESTMINSTER WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

January 31

Ushers: 10:00 AM Julia & Brent Archer
Flowers: Doug Jones
Cindy Reiser

February 7

Ushers: 9:00 AM Renee Bucklin
Al Jeffries
11:00 AM Carolyn Cure
Essjay Folkrod

Flowers: Volunteer needed

To volunteer, write your name on the schedule in Fellowship Hall, or contact Judy Brown, the Office Administrator.

If you prefer to have the Chimes e-mailed to you, please contact Judy Brown in the Church office weekdays between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.

CHIMES DEADLINES

DEADLINE: February 4th

