

# The PowerLine

The Newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara



November 2006

Issue 3 Volume 8

## November's Sunday Services

**5** Rev. Frances Manly - *Reaching Out to the World*  
The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee works with local partner organizations around the world to promote justice and improve living conditions. We'll celebrate its work as we kick off the annual Guest At Your Table campaign to support the UUSC.

Usher(s): Lori Zaremski

Coffee Hour Hosts: Ed McGreevy & Ed Tormay

**12** Richard Gilbert - *Breathing Together* - a UU Conspiracy to change the world? In the wake of the national elections on November 7, how shall UUs work for social justice?

Usher(s): Bill Soley

Coffee Hour Hosts: Karen Labosky & Jen Speck

**19** Frances Manly - *For All That Is Our Life*

This is our traditional Thanksgiving Bread Communion Service. If you can, bring a loaf of bread that represents your ethnic heritage or a special family tradition. We'll come to the welcome table and break bread together as we give thanks for all that is our life. The bread left from the service will grace the coffee hour table.

Usher(s): Ed Tormay

Coffee Hour Hosts: Teresa Labuszewski & Elaine Pethybridge

**26** Don Reidell - *An Area of Need*

Usher(s): Betsy Diachun

Coffee Hour Hosts: Norm & Joy Rowlinson



NOAH  
Community Meeting  
"JOBS"  
Sunday, November 12  
4 PM  
Potter's House  
7th Street (behind City Hall)

## President's perspective

Betsy Diachun, President  
Board of Trustees

### *Who me, worry??*

You bet I do! And I'm sure many of you do too. We can worry on various levels: for global problems, for national issues, for local troubles and for personal misfortunes. It is enough to cause one to jump into bed and pull the blankets up at least that's what I feel like doing on some days.

Can we be productive in our worries? Well, most of today's calamities require money, brains and commitment from us. It's very easy to say "I'm too old." "I'm too poor." and excuse ourselves from any responsibility. Worrying without doing anything about it just leads to

## Tribute to Tom Bateson

Peter Diachun

Our Church owes a great tribute to Tom Bateson. So, it is an appropriate time to recognize his substantial contribution to the Church on the eve of his turning over the management of our website.

Years ago, single handedly, and over our kicking and screaming, Tom led us into the high tech era. I recall when he proposed that we establish a web site. Everyone else, including me, was very reluctant and non-supportive. Tom persisted, and fortunately for all of us, ultimately prevailed.

He then set about the task of creating our web site with much skepticism and little help from everyone else. People were heard to remark: "What would we want with a web site?" "This new fangled Internet will soon play out its course and go away." "No one will look up a Church on the Internet." "This is a waste of money and effort." But Tom persevered without much encouragement from the rest of us, doing all the work himself. He even paid the costs out of his own pocket. He led the way, even pushing when needed.

We began to see that new friends and members had found the Church through our web site. It became our introduction to the world. Churches were expected to have web sites.

I recall years after he set up the Church web site going to him when we were fumbling around trying to start UUNEX. We knew we needed Internet exposure since it would be our only way of selling it. Finally, with some help I prepared a single document I hoped could be published on the Internet. I had no idea how to do this. I brought it to Tom one night. To my astonishment he had it published as a page on our web site the next morning.

more worrying. If we're going to become the people the world needs then we have to do something. That "something" may just be a matter of keeping ourselves informed or cheerleading and voting for those we think best reflect our point of view. But it is something!

If you have a cause in which you think people of the church might help, let us know.

Now that I have the worry of writing this column behind me for the month I can go back to worrying about my grandchildren's schooling, the future of the City of Niagara Falls, Dafur, the local senate race and much, much more.

But remember, We believe in UU and You!

***Betsy***

This inspired me to continue to pursue the Internet as the media for selling UUNEX. Ultimately it led me to establish a new website for UUNEX. Without the inspiration of Tom, I know I would never have done this.

Now, as the Church web site is being taken over by new people, we need to pause and recognize the role its founder played.

Tom led us when we needed to be led. Thank You, Tom!!!

## Presidents' Meeting

Bonnie Soley and Betsy Diachun attended a workshop for UU presidents in Syracuse. It was a good day of exchanging ideas with people from UU churches in the St. Lawrence District and working on problems which all our churches, large and small, have to face. In dealing with change we were reminded, even if it isn't politically correct in today's world, that one must "light a fire to melt icebergs".

## Albany & Transylvania

What do they have in common? Well the UU Church of Albany where Sam Trumbore is the minister, has partnered with a UU church in Transylvania. Two people from that church visited the U.S. during the month of October. We were asked to tour them around the Falls and then entertain them for dinner. It was much fun for those of us who could take part. We invited John Mayer, Chaplain in St. Catharines, to dinner because he speaks Hungarian. The minister of the Transylvanian church and one parishioner were here as well as Sam and one of his church members. Good food, good talk and fun were had by all.

## Walking Together...

By the time you read this, the storm dubbed “October Surprise” will be rapidly dropping back into history, a story that will be read for years to come in the broken-off tops of the stately trees our area is known for. As I write, the storm is over, but well over a hundred thousand people are still without power and are living a kind of pseudo-pioneer life in the middle of the city. I am one of them.

Yesterday I spent about three hours clearing downed branches out of my back yard. As I worked I thought about how an experience like this can take you right out of your normal life and normal way of thinking. If you pay attention, you see things you never really saw before, or had forgotten. Take gratitude for modern miracles such as electricity, for example: We take light so much for granted that it can take days to extinguish the habit of flipping the light switch when we walk into a dark room, even though we know perfectly well that nothing will happen.

Though it is inconvenient to be in the dark and cold, especially when it goes on for days, it is also a vivid reminder of what a gift it is that most of the time we *can* take light and heat for granted. I hope, when the lights come back on, that I can hold on to that gratitude for longer than I’m holding onto the habit of flipping switches in the dark. Indeed, there is much to be grateful for even as I find myself getting tired of coping. Some of my gratitude is for things: a gas stove and hot water heater, a working fireplace and plenty of firewood, an intact phone line and a

land-line phone, even a faux-fur-covered hot water bottle I received for Christmas several years ago, to keep my feet warm through the cold nights. Some of it has to do with the oddness of the storm, which hit some areas hard and spared others entirely.

While it would be easy to feel just a little bit resentful (or at least envious) of those who got off easy, in fact I am mostly grateful that there are places nearby where I can find light and warmth and can buy whatever supplies I need. More of my gratitude, though, is for people: friends and family near and far who are there on the other end of the phone to offer help or just to talk on a long, chilly evening; the neighbors who cleared fallen branches out of my front yard while I was at church working on a sermon one afternoon; the people who opened up a nearby Walgreen’s the day after the storm, with no power.

When this Thanksgiving comes, I may name many of the same things I always do, but my gratitude for them will be more deep and vivid than usual. Wherever you are, whether in the middle of the storm zone or safely outside, I invite you to take a little extra time this Thanksgiving season to think past the clichés of gratitude and let yourself feel deeply grateful, in the words of one my favorite hymns, “for all that is our life.”

Blessings,

**Frances**

*The minister is available at the church office by appointment and to visit members, especially those who are ill or unable to travel easily, in their homes. If you would like to speak with her, or you know of someone who would like a call or a visit, please call her at home, at 837-9230, or e-mail [franly@mac.com](mailto:franly@mac.com). She is usually available at church on Thursdays, 10 am – 2 pm, but it’s a good idea to call ahead and make sure.*

## NOAH Note

I recently put out a new, spiffed-up signup sheet for the NOAH Public Meeting, November 12, at 4 PM, St. James United Methodist. We need to start working hard at encouraging people to go and getting them to make the commitment by signing up. Our goal should be to have at least as many people at the meeting as we have on a good Sunday morning, since

(1) this is clearly an occasion where numbers count, and

(2) going to the meeting will be likely to increase people’s enthusiasm about and support for NOAH.

So, first of all, would you all please be sure to sign the sheet the next time you’re at church (unless you really, truly, absolutely can’t go).

## Dedicated Offering

Once each month a not-for-profit agency or organization is selected to receive the dedicated offering. Our offering on November 19 will be donated to the Niagara Arts and Cultural Center, NACC. This will help them to meet the match requirement so that they can access funds from NYS for a critically needed new roof on the building.

Most of our collections are given to help social agencies but once a year we also like to help a cultural organization

that works to improve the quality of life in the Niagara Falls area.

Please give generously. It is one way in which we, as UU’s, can help to make a difference in our community. Last month we collected \$240 for Niagara Hospice.

If you have suggestions for local groups or agencies you’d like considered for next year, please contact Skeeter Tower, Betsy Diachun, or Rev. Frances Manly.

## *This Month at a Glance*

***Tuesday, November 7 - All Day - Election Day - Don't forget to vote!***

***Sunday, November 12 - 4 PM - NOAH - Community Meeting*** on jobs at Potter's House, 7th Street, behind City Hall. All members and friends are urged to attend.

***Friday, November 17 - 4 - 9PM - NACC - Open Studios*** - Many artists studios will be open: 7-9 PM Gallery Exhibit, 2006 Resident and Friends Exhibition Opening, refreshments

***Sunday, November 19 - Dedicated Offering*** - This month's offering will go to the Niagara Arts and Cultural Center, NACC

### ***Future events:***

***Saturday, December 2 - 7 PM Holiday Concert - presented by the Rainbow Singers***

***Sunday, December 3 - Noon - Mini Holiday Bazaar*** - Unity Hall during Coffee Hour - Here's your chance to pick up handcrafted gifts and fresh greens for the season

## **NOAH**

Ed McGreevy

NOAH (Niagara Organizing Alliance for Hope) is a congregation-based community organization in Niagara County, coming together to extend the quality of life in our communities. In its first year NOAH identified jobs as its focus. The primary goal of this effort is to encourage more local hiring, especially from areas of Niagara County with the highest unemployment rates.

Over the past few months NOAH representatives and the task force met with public officials, representatives of private enterprise and employers to identify allies who will work with NOAH on this issue. A public meeting is scheduled for Sunday, November 12, at 4:30 P.M. at St. James United Methodist Church on Porter Road (next to and just east of the new Niagara Falls High School). We urge all members and friends of our church to attend this very important meeting. **NUMBERS ARE IMPORTANT!!** We would like at least 25 people representing our congregation to attend and publically support this effort. We will sit together and be recognized.

I attended the NOAH meeting on October 12 to plan the public meeting. Bill O'Brien and Pete DeDilva from the Gamaliel Foundation were present at this meeting as well as Bruce McKay. Pete is a consultant who has been working with NOAH. Bruce is with Voice Buffalo and has also been helping NOAH to build its constituency.

I am encouraged by the progress the task force has made and the planning that has been done for the public meeting. Handouts including a draft agenda for the public meeting with information on the part each church will play-church banner, announcement of name of church, name of pastor and the number present will be available in the narthex.

Attending task force meetings has raised a number of questions in my mind about such things as the organization of NOAH, its future after the public meeting, and its budget. Perhaps other UU members can answer some of these questions. One question I think is worthy of our congregation's attention is "What kind of a commitment has our church made to NOAH up to now and what kind of commitment do we as a church and as individuals want to make in the future?"

Several future meetings, prior to the November 12 meeting were discussed. More information should be forthcoming about future meetings November 2, and 9. In addition a press conference is being arranged prior to the public meeting.

Please contact me or Bonnie Soley if you have any general questions about NOAH or specific questions regarding the upcoming November 12 public meeting.

## **MINI BAZAAR**

On Sunday, Dec. 3rd there will be a mini bazaar during coffee hour. We will have greens for sale from the Opportunity Unlimited Greenhouse as well as handcrafted items from our members and others. We'll give you more information as the day approaches but we just wanted you to know this was coming up.

If you, or someone you know, wishes to participate, please contact Betsy, 791-3416.

**November Birthdays**

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# CRE Corner

Introducing Our New Child Care and Teaching Assistants! Isabella Dixon and Alex Nicosias-Kopp

The CRE program is pleased to announce that two of “our own” are providing child care and teaching assistance this year. I know that many of you might think that Isabella and Alex need no introduction but for those who would like to know them better--read on.

My name is Isabella. I am 12 years old, and a seventh grader at St. Mark School in Buffalo. I live in Niagara Falls with my parents, Kirstin and Alfred, my sister, Lily, and our three cats, Martin, Natalie and Noelle. I’ve been coming to the UU Church since I was six, and I’m interested in learning more about earth-centered Unitarian Universalism. I want to be an ER doctor, a fantasy-novel writer, or a District Attorney when I grow up.

*My favorites:*

Subject - Literature

Hobbies - Reading & Writing, Sewing, Knitting, Drawing

Book - Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone

Movie - The Labyrinth

TV Show - Gilmore Girls (early years)

Music - Lord of the Rings Soundtrack

Celebrity - Johnny Depp

Hero - Anne Frank

Food - Cheeseburger, fries, and chocolate

Possession - my stuffed animal, Millie

Place - Keuka Lake

Dream travel spots - England, Italy, and Greece

Dream Car - Silver Prius

My name is Alexandra Nicosias-Kopp. But I usually go by Alex. I enjoy playing soccer in the summer and snowboarding in the winter. I’m in 8th grade at LMS. My favorite subjects in school are math and science. After high school, I want to travel to Europe and to see the many sites it has to offer.

## November Highlights

05 - AJ McCabe will launch the first session of a very special CRE year long project.

12 - Gary McCunn and Tereda Labuszewski continue their yoga series

19 - Skeeter Tower will coordinate our 2nd Annual Stone Soup Sunday

26 - Ed Tormay will begin planning for the special intergenerational holiday story.

## Adult Sunday Discussion

### Group. . .

resumed its wit and wisdom sharing on Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 in the Founder’s Room. It continues to meet every Sunday - “same time, same station.”

We usually discuss articles from the UU World. It is not necessary to have read the article to join in the discussion. Come one, come all.

## Book Discussion Group. . .

continues its lively exchanges. On Tuesday, November 14, at 7pm we will be talking about *The Road to Gondolfo* (fiction) by Robert Ludlum.

We meet the second Tuesday of each month in Unity Hall to discuss a book most or at least some of us have read. The discussion tends to be on issues raised by the book rather than the book alone. We alternate between fiction and non-fiction. Everyone is welcome.

## Will does the Hokey Pokey



The Washington Post Style Invitational contest asked readers to submit “instructions” for something (anything), written in the style of a famous person. The winning entry was The Hokey Pokey as written by W. Shakespeare:

O proud left foot, that ventures quick within  
Then soon upon a backward journey lithe.  
Anon, once more the gesture, then begin:  
Command sinistral pedestal to writhe.  
Commence thou then the fervid Hokey-Poke,  
A mad gyration, hips in wanton swirl.  
To spin! A wilde release from Heaven’s yoke.  
Blessed dervish! Surely canst go, girl.  
The Hoke, the poke -- banish now thy doubt;  
Verily, I say, ‘tis what it’s all about.

## Stone Soup

Isabella Dixon

November 19, the Sunday before Thanksgiving, the Children's RE, Ms. Kathy, and Ms. Skeeter will be making Stone Soup. We are asking everyone to please bring one ingredient - any sort of vegetable, or meat. For example: potatoes, beef, chicken, peppers, celery, carrots, beans, onions, and anything else you can think of.

Thank you in anticipation of your contribution.

## ***PLEASE NOTE:***

If you haven't notified us how you would like to receive your PowerLine in the future, (snail-mail via 1st Class Mail or e-mail) please do so ASAP. For non-members we are asking for a contribution of \$10 to cover the cost of printing and mailing.) This will be the last bulk mailing of the PowerLine.

## Invitation to Membership

If you are looking for a religious community in which to seek spiritual growth...

If you are eager to consider religious questions with others who are not always certain they have all the answers but who are determined to keep searching with an open mind...

If you would like the fellowship of others for celebration and worship, discussion and education, friendship and mutual support

If you want children to be helped to develop their own religious beliefs...

If you wish to preserve and extend the traditions of personal freedom and human dignity against the dangers they face today...

You may find that this church fills your spiritual and human needs.

If you wish to know more about us as you consider membership, please speak with our minister.

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**PowerLine**  
*Editor:*  
Bonnie Soley  
*Photographs:*  
Bonnie Soley  
To submit an article for the PowerLine, please e-mail it to: [bonnie.soley@verizon.net](mailto:bonnie.soley@verizon.net) or call 316-5863.  
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The PowerLine  
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara  
639 Main Street  
P.O. Box 2566  
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