

First Church

FIRST
UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH
OF ESSEX
COUNTY

JANUARY
2013



Films from the 31st and 32nd

BLACK MARIA

FILM + VIDEO

FESTIVAL

8pm, SATURDAY, March 23

@ First UU of Essex County

FUELING THE INDEPENDENT

SPIRIT SINCE 1890

Inside Change

BY ANGELA RANDALL-JOHNSTON

As I pen this, the first newsletter of the new year, our congregation and our community of Orange has much on which to reflect, as the past year gives the impression of the introduction to a Charles Dickens sequel. Notwithstanding my wedding/honeymoon this past summer in Vegas, it was last quarter of 2012, however, that rocked our world. The events reminded us that change happens, and signaled that it is time for change. Indeed, the year marked the best and the worst of times.

Superstorm Sandy, and the second consecutive end of October with record-breaking weather, changed the configuration of homes,

businesses, the local environment, and all of New Jersey. I lament that while I enjoyed a sunny day in June on the beach at Seaside Heights, my friend's beach house was washed away in the storm. Then, there was November 6. The re-election of President Barak Obama was a national wake-up call to a fact our congregation has long acknowledged: the changing demographics of our area and the nation requires temporal shifts. Lastly, Darcy Hall, President, Board of Trustees announces a change in sermon Sundays to "infuse...a refreshed spirit..." here at First UU (pg. 6).

The timing of events do, indeed, shape the significance of the events

themselves. And in many cases, events shape time. itself. In all that, change is certain.

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2013

Join us for Sunday morning services and

"Do-Good Sundays" at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County.

Services identified in the schedule as "in the Sanctuary" begin at 10:30 am.



“The New Year Starts Slowly”

BY DARRELL E. BERGER

I went to college about five hundred miles from my hometown, and I was always very happy to return home for Christmas break. Unfortunately, this meant I was also home for New Year's. But since I was no longer part of any local social group, I never had anywhere to go. Sometimes the few friends I had, who also had left home, joined me looking for some action. This was in Toledo, Ohio, and thus a futile quest. Other years I admitted defeat early and stayed home with my parents. I'm sure I was not much fun.

As I moved into adulthood, occasionally there were fun times on December 31. New Year's Eve, I discovered, is the most inconsistent of holidays. If families get together for Christmas, they all have scattered by New Year's Eve.

Our mobility causes our old acquaintances not to be forgotten, but to be elsewhere. New Year's Eve parties often include a number of strangers, with whom it is awkward to ring in anything.

Indeed, New Year's is an awkward holiday. We are tired of parties by December 31. It is

from darrell's desk

the “new year” only by accident of the calendar. Little begins January 1, other than budgets. There is no turning of a season. Rather, January means the beginning of “real winter” in our part of the world—announcing a few months of frozen dreariness.

There are no works of literature illustrating the real meaning of New Year's. There are no special decorations, no gifts, only one song, and the sound most associated with it are those kazoo-like noisemakers that replicate a Bronx cheer. Bah, humbug!

In recent years, Kathleen and I have spent the day and the evening at home. We don't do much of anything. It is one of the few days of the year where you can get away with that. *This*, we have come to celebrate. There might be one or two good friends, a bottle of wine, and a DVD of “The Thin Man.” We eat and drink whatever is left from Christmas. We enjoy the tree for one last time.

We don't really look ahead. We don't really look back. As a young man I despaired that there was nothing to do on New Year's Eve. Now, I rejoice. ■

SERMON TEASERS & EVENTS PREVIEW

A glimpse of upcoming services and events at First UU of Essex which are intended to deepen our understanding and outreach to the community:

JANUARY 6, in the Sanctuary “They Call that Man ‘The Gasser.’” In 1528 a small number of Conquistadores survived a shipwreck, landing on the Gulf Coast. In their extremely deprived condition, they wandered at the mercy of the elements and the natives. Their leader, Cabeza de Vaca, survived. His report to the King of Spain is a masterpiece of spiritual writing, as it chronicles his having touched the deepest wells of healing and compassion. This is his story.

JANUARY 10 @ 7pm, Parish Hall
University of Orange program “Redlining and Recovery,” co-led by Dr. Mindy Fullilive and Rev. Darrell Berger. This session will *continued on p. 4*

January Coffee Hour

Coordinator:

Darcy Hall

January 6

January 13

January 20

January 27

Senior Ushers

Paul Axel-Lute

Greg Giacobe

Ann E. Lang

Anne Miller

Musicians

Dave Braham

Bill Stafford

Dave Braham

Bill Stafford

Guest At Your Table 2012 Call Back: Time to Hand Back Your Boxes & Envelopes

By Greg Giacobe

Starting 6 January 2013, we ask that you return your Guest At Your Table boxes and envelopes. All boxes and envelopes should be handed in by 27 January. If you still wish to make a donation before we close our Guest program for this church year, please speak with Gregory Giacobe, UUSC Local Representative, after service during coffee hour.

For those of you who took a Guest collection box, we ask that you please **DO NOT** hand in loose change or bills. Instead, count up the money you have collected and write a check for that amount payable to the "UUSC". Write "Guest At Your Table 2012" in the memo line. Also, don't forget to fill out the donation form located on the bottom of your collection box, disconnect it and hand it in with your check.

For those who took donation envelopes, simply

place your check in the envelopes, fill out the form on the flap and seal it.

If your donation is close to or above one of the membership levels, please consider joining UUSC. General membership is \$40, Dual Adult membership is \$75, Youth/Student is \$10, and Senior is \$20. All unrestricted donations (those not designated for any specific UUSC program or activity) of \$100 or more is matched by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset NY.

Donations can also be made online. Go to www.uusc.org/givetoguest. Please be sure to list the First UU Church of Essex County as your congregation. Also, please notify us of the amount and if you decided to become a UUSC member. Thank you.



january 2013 at a glance

Sunday services
begin at 10:30 am

6 Social & Earth
Action, 12 noon,
Parish Hall

10 University of
Orange Program,
"Redlining and
Recovery," Parish Hall
@ 7pm

13 Making Change:
Introduction to
"Service/Do-Good
Sundays," service in
the Sanctuary @10:30

16 Board of
Trustees Meeting @
7:30pm, Sonen Room

17 Walking Tour/
Pot Luck Dinner/Film
Viewing "What
Happened to Jackson
Ave," 2 - 7pm Parish
Hall

20 Service/Do-
Good Sunday (No
regular church
service)

27 Sermon:
"Bhutan's Gross
National Happiness,"
service in the
Sanctuary @10:30

31 UU's United for
the Valley special
preview of
"Carnaval" @ Luna
Stage, RSVP by
January 24

Sermon Teasers & Events Preview continued...

explain how intentional government policies going back to the 1930's caused underinvestment in Orange, with consequences still felt. Darrell will also share parts of a denominational field study from 1938 that stresses that Orange is a dubious setting for a progressive church.

JANUARY 13 - "Making Change": Intro to Do-Good Sundays

We are planning major changes in our Sunday morning worship on those dates when I am not preaching. The potential for major political and social changes are all around us, both nationally and locally. Yet

change doesn't just happen. There are rules and guidelines, lessons that we need to remember if we are to be the change we want to happen.

JANUARY 17, 2 - 7pm

We will gather at the Parish Hall for a walking tour of Main Streets across several towns to see how different investment policies have created different communities. Afterwards we will meet back at the Parish Hall for a potluck dinner provided by several nearby restaurants. Finally, we will view and discuss "What Happened to Jackson Ave.?" a film made by teens in Jersey City depicting their struggle to understand the decline of their neighborhood.

continued on p. 6

THE UNIVERSITY OF ORANGE attracts a number of new residents of Orange—many from the Valley—who share our church's desire for Orange to become the just and beautiful city of its potential. We encourage members, friends, family, and neighbors to attend either or both of the events presented on January 10 and 17 (check the calendar and Sermon Teasers & Event preview).

What's New at First U-U: Do-Good Field Trips

By Darcy Hall, President Board of Trustees

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County has been serving Unitarian Universalists, the Township of Orange, and Essex County for more than a century. That is an accomplishment we can all be proud of! In the last several years, however, our membership has been decreasing. Records show that attendance tends to be particularly low on Sundays when a guest speaker (as opposed to our minister) is leading the service.

Seeking to infuse our small but energetic band with a refreshed spirit and to make a positive contribution to our community, the Board of Trustees, in conversation and consultation with church members, is initiating a pilot program in which we will schedule occasional "Do-Good Field Trips" in place of Sunday Service. On a Do-Good Field Trip Sunday, members will meet **at church** and then go together to a pre-arranged volunteer activity in the community. This is an opportunity to live and act on our Seven Principles; the activity will take place during the time that we would normally be attending church, and will be in place of "regular church".

Our first Do-Good Sunday is **January 20**. Discussions have been initiated with several social service/church organizations to develop and schedule an appropriate activity where our efforts would be welcomed and

appreciated. In addition to our occasional Do-Good Field Trip Sundays, we will use our non-ministerial Sundays to invite some of the most creative and innovative individuals, currently working in Orange, to share their ideas with us in Round Table Discussions. These discussions will be held in the Parish Hall during the time that would normally be spent in the sanctuary.

Dates are currently being set for Do-Good Sundays and Round Table Discussions. I invite your comments and input at this time. I am very excited about the new activities and opportunities that await us in the New Year. I invite you to join me as we embark on this journey of active community commitment, bringing our Principles to life, and continuing the work of our church for a second century.

--Darcy Hall
President, Board of Trustees

...infuse our small but energetic band with a refreshed spirit and to make a positive contribution to our community...

The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex is a life-affirming liberal religious community that keeps an open mind to the religious questions people have struggled with at various times and places. It values personal experience, conscience and reason as the final authorities in religion; that the end religious authority lies not in a book or person or institution, but in ourselves. Sunday worship begins at 10:30 AM with liturgy, fellowship, music, and conversation.

For more information, please visit <http://essexuu.org/>, email info@essexuu.org, or phone 973-674-0010.

Mark your calendar!



Films of the 31st and 32nd Annual Black Maria Film Festival

Saturday, March 23rd
@ 8 pm, First UU of Essex
County
35 Cleveland St., Orange, NJ

Black Maria Film Festival

SATURDAY, MARCH 23 @ 8PM

The International Thomas Edison Black Maria Film Festival has been re-scheduled for Saturday evening, March 23, 2013. Director and Founder, John Columbus will present a selection of spirited and provocative award films from last year's 31st Annual Festival, as well as the upcoming 32nd Annual Festival. The Black Maria's name is taken from the world's first motion picture studio built in 1893 by Thomas Edison in West Orange, NJ. The year's program begins at 8 PM at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County, 35 Cleveland Street, Orange, NJ, just a stone's throw from the birthplace of the motion pictures. Award winning documentaries, animation, experimental and mixed genre shorts will be included in the screening. Local filmmakers' work will also be seen. Akintola Hanif, filmmaker of "Moral Panic", a Director's Choice Selection, will be on hand. This very special program's admission price is \$10, and will include refreshments served in the "afterglow" reception on site. The program will be drawn from the sampler of award films listed below.

For more information on Black Maria or this showing, contact Frank Barszcz at 973-324-9351, John Columbus at 201-200-2043, visit <http://essexuu.org/>, email info@essexuu.org, or phone 973-674-0010.

Sermon Teasers & Event Preview
continued...

JANUARY 27, "Bhutan's Gross National Happiness"

The small Asian nation of Bhutan has suggested to the United Nations that measuring happiness is a more useful gauge of national health than measuring product. I attended a UN conference about this and discovered that Bhutan is right. Now, the question remains, how to convince the rest of us?

JANUARY 31 @ LUNA

STAGE 555 Valley Road, West
Orange, NJ

Join us and "UU's United for the Valley" at Luna Stage. Members of our congregation and the UU congregation in Montclair have been invited to a special preview of Luna's new production, "Carnaval" (written by Nikkole Salter, director Cheryl Katz).

Ticket price (\$20) includes a wine and cheese get-together following the production. RSVP Darrell Berger by January 24, if you plan to attend. Note: Performance of "Carnaval" includes mature content and language.

"Moving on: Lessons from the Road" by author and UU minister, Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman (Charles B Ortman Publishing), is now available in electronic reader and in paperback versions from Amazon.com

WHERE EVERY MIND IS FREE AND EVERY SOUL IS WELCOME!

**MAKING THE
CONNECTIONS**

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
OF ESSEX COUNTY**

**Mailing Address: P. O. Box 998
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**Meeting Address: 35 Cleveland St.
Orange, NJ 07050**

**Church Phone: (973) 674-0010
Minister's Email: minister@essexuu.org**

Office Email: office@essexuu.org

**Founded in Orange in 1890 as the First
Unitarian Church of Essex County**, the
congregation has worshipped in the present sanctuary
since its construction in 1892-93. The Church continues
the ministry of the Union Universalist Society (also
known as the Church of the Redeemer), founded as the
First Universalist Society of Newark in 1834.

Darrell E. Berger, Minister
Flore Dorcely, President
Greg Giacobe, Church Administrator
Angela Randall-Johnston, Newsletter Editor

We are on the web!
www.essexuu.org

First Church
FIRST
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ESSEX COUNTY
P. O. BOX 998
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SUNDAY SERVICE
10:30 AM

