



## SUMMER WORSHIP ONE SERVICE AT 10 AM

Join us for Summer Worship when our Sunday services will be a bit more relaxed, a little less formal from now through September 5.

Please come!

### Sunday, August 1

Rev. Sarah Person

### Sunday, August 8

Rev. W. Frederick Wooden

### Sunday, August 15

Rev. Sarah K. Person

### Sunday, August 22

To be announced

### Sunday, August 29

Rev. Darrick Jackson

Please plan to join us for **Homecoming Sunday** on **September 12** here at **The Universalist Church** with services at **9 and 11 AM** when we will observe our **Water Communion** ceremony. Please save a small amount of water either from your summer travels or some place that is special to you.

## Highlights!

- A MESSAGE FROM REVEREND JEAN BROWN
- JAZZ CABARET RAISED \$2,000

## *Ministers' Meditations . . .*

Though we know that we live in changing times, some of the statistics can be surprising. According to a recent Newsweek "Backstory," since the year 2000 daily Google searches have increased from 100 million to 2 billion, daily emails from 12 billion to 247 billion, text messages from 400,000 to 4.5 billion and our time spent on line has increased from 2.7 to 18 hours a week. "What did we do" asks Barbara Brown Taylor, "with the hours we now spend online?"

I rely on my laptop and cell phone; I text, email and Google and would not want to be without any of these tools for very long. The digital revolution of the past ten years has enabled us to connect with one another more often and in ways we could not have imagined just a few decades ago, and this is mostly a blessing. There are times, however, when we all need to unplug, go offline, and let ourselves connect in other ways and experience again some of the other "non digital" blessings of life.

Summer, whether we are away for some vacation time or staying at home, can be a time to take at least a few hours a week off-line. You might choose to sit with someone over a pitcher of tea and let your conversation wander where it will. Or you might go for a long walk. Or maybe spend a chunk of time with a book. (Yes, it's okay to read the electronic version, if that has become your preferred way to read. The important thing is to read for even a small chunk of time rather than scan bits of information as we so often do online.)

My own reading tends toward non-fiction, so I have tried lately to put more fiction into my reading stack. Here are some of the books I have been reading and some I will be reading into the fall:

**Fiction:** Apparition & Late Fictions: A Novella and Stories by Thomas Lynch; My Antonia by Willa Cather; Where the God of Love Hangs Out by Amy Bloom; and, The Elegance of the Hedgehog by Muriel Barbery.

**Memoir and Biography:** Wake Up Laughing: A Spiritual Autobiography by Pat Schneider; Marriage and Other Acts of Charity: A Memoir by Kate Braestrup; and, Johnny Cash: The Biography by Michael Streissguth.

**Poetry:** Another River: New and Selected Poems by Pat Schneider; The Best of It: New and Selected Poems by Kay Ryan; The Apple Trees at Olema: New and Selected Poems by Robert Hass; the god of loneliness: Selected and New Poems by Philip Schultz; and, What Love Comes To: New & Selected Poems by Ruth Stone.

When we gather on **Homecoming Sunday**, I will mention in my sermon the novel I invited each of you to read with me over the summer, **The Elegance of the Hedgehog**. I hope you will include this story in your reading time, and let me know what you think of it. I am just beginning to get to know Renee and Palma. I wonder what we can learn from their stories?

Summertime blessings,

Rev. Jan

# Our Caring Church

We give thanks along with **Amy and Ken Distel** for the blessings of family as they celebrate the birth of **Levi Matthew Distel**. Levi was born July 5. He weighed 9 lbs. 4 oz. and measured 21 ½ inches long. He joins big brothers **Braden, Caleb and Gavin**. All four of the Distel brothers were dedicated in the worship service on July 18<sup>th</sup>. **Rev. Jan Nielsen** officiated.

We hold in our hearts **Donna Leibin**, her husband **Steve**, and their children, **Rachel, Isaiah and Sadie** on the death of Donna's mother, **Mary Owens**. A beautiful obituary about Mary was published in the Hartford Courant on July 9, 2010. We send Donna and her family our prayers and our love.

**Rev. Jean Brown** will be staying at the sub-acute unit at Avery Heights. Jean's room is cheerfully colorful with her "Wall of Love": photos from friends, family and members of our congregation. See the article and photo in the July 18 Hartford Courant.

<http://www.courant.com/community/hartford/hc-hartford-minister-view-0718-20100718,0,1387616.story>

Our congregation has given Jean a laptop to help her stay connected with loved ones and also an iPod loaded with some of her favorite music. Jean's husband Jim and son Roger would welcome help with meals. If you would like to support the Brown family, please contact Edie Thompson at [eat0617@comcast.net](mailto:eat0617@comcast.net) or 860.206.3312 of our Care Team to schedule a meal delivery. We hold Jean and her family in our prayers and send our love.

**Ross Harmon**, son of **Joyce and John Harmon**, is recovering at home from an illness and an operation. We wish Ross a quick recovery.

We are thinking of **Jen Curry**, a good friend of **Toben Callnan**, as Jen recovers from an illness.

We remember in our prayers **Rev. Sarah Person** and her family. Sarah's father in law, **Louis Melchior**, suffered a stroke last week.

## A Message from Reverend Jean Brown

Dear friends,

As I write this I am surrounded by many of you as contributors to this beautiful display of photographs, drawings, music and cards that my daughter Bettina has assembled in a "Wall of Love." It is the last thing I see at night, and it greets me in the morning. The wall lifts my spirits and has helped me to cherish the wonderful memories of ministering to you and your families. I am still ministering to you as I prepare for my next step in this great journey of life. I thank you for reaching out to me with your emails, telephone calls and visits. But most of all, thank you for allowing me to be part of your lives.

I love you all,

Reverend Jean

## Life Long Learning

### Tuesday Evening Book Group

The Tuesday Evening Book Discussion Group will be meeting at Elizabeth Park (the pagoda in the middle of the Rose Garden) on **August 3 at 7 PM**. There will be a lively discussion of *Commencement* by J. Courtney Sullivan. It is a good beach read that was recently featured on the NBC Morning News Program. If the weather is not conducive to meeting at Elizabeth Park, please contact Orlene Spinney at 860-719-8433 or [msorlene@gmail.com](mailto:msorlene@gmail.com).

There are now National Geographic, Railroad, Ellery Queen mystery books, and Reader's Digest books available for free in the church portico. Please enjoy!

## Jazz Cabaret Raised \$2,000

The spring Jazz Cabaret raised \$2000 to send to our partner church, Community Church Unitarian Universalist of New Orleans (CCUU). The check was delivered in New Orleans by Joyce Harmon. Many thanks to our organizers, performers and donors. It was a great evening of music, food and wine. The proceeds, along with many other fundraisers, will go toward the \$1,125,000 cost of their new building. Cindy Scott, our headliner, is a member of CCUU and donated her talent to the effort as did members of our choir, Rev. Sarah Person, and Ted Paulsen and Atticus Kelley's bands.

We became a partner church soon after the disaster of Hurricane Katrina in September 2005. CCUU's building was only 3 blocks from the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal that breached and flooded the Lakeview neighborhood. The church had over 8 feet of water in their building, destroying all its contents and leaving the dreaded mold all over the interior.

After gutting the building, the intrepid members of CCUU began their plans to rebuild using the shell of the building. Architectural drawings were prepared, but 3 years after the storm, they were told by the Army Corps of Engineers that they would have to demolish the building and begin again.

Last month they sunk pilings and are now ready to begin construction. They lost half of their congregation because they never returned after the storm, considerably diminishing their resources. But despite all the obstacles, this little congregation continues to generously serve. They are a strong voice in New Orleans for community and inclusiveness in the city's planning and response to human needs. Our West Hartford church has sent volunteers, money and lots of good wishes in the past 4½ years to CCUU. They are an inspiration and we are glad to call them our friends.



We received the following letter from the Community Church Unitarian Universalist in New Orleans last week:

To Our Dear Friends at West Hartford:

Thank you for your very generous gift of \$2,000 for the Community Church Building fund, received on June 1, 2010. Cindy Scott gave us a glowing report of your fun filled cabaret in May which raised the funds. Your long-term support of our church community has meant so much to us over the years. We are very near to our goal of rebuilding – we have the plans in place, most of the funding, and a huge pile of sand at the site. Our building will be

elevated to a safe level against any future flooding, and we have confidence in the flood protection that has been put in place in New Orleans since 2005.

Please share with your congregation how much we appreciate your fiscal as well as moral support and your longstanding commitment to us.

With kindest regards,

May An Goodshall  
Assistant Treasurer and Pledge Secretary



*The Universalist*, the newsletter of the Universalist Church of West Hartford, provides parishioners and friends with information about our congregation and our larger community. Please send changes to any of your contact information to: Martha Winslow, Member Services Coordinator, The Universalist Church, 433 Fern Street West Hartford, CT 06107 [mwinslow@westhartforduu.org](mailto:mwinslow@westhartforduu.org)

<b>Next Newsletter Submission Deadline</b>	<b>Newsletter Mailing Date</b>
August 18	August 27

Email newsletter items, as an attachment, to Julia Giolitto at [giolitto@giolitto.net](mailto:giolitto@giolitto.net)

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Return Service Requested

**DATED MATERIAL – DELIVER BEFORE 08/02/10**

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