

## Sunday, January 1

### NEW YEAR'S DAY

Rev. Jan K. Nielsen, leading a  
Celebration of the New Year  
One Intergenerational Service  
at 11 AM

No childcare or Church School

## Sunday, January 8

Rev. Jan K. Nielsen, preaching  
Services at 9 & 11 AM

## Sunday, January 15

Rev. Sarah K. Person, preaching  
Services at 9 & 11 AM

## Sunday, January 22

Rev. Sarah K. Person, preaching  
Services at 9 & 11 AM

## Sunday, January 29

Megan Lloyd Joiner, preaching  
Services at 9 & 11 AM

## Highlights!

- GUESS THE GAY: SUNDAY, JANUARY 15
- TOGETHER WE CARE FOR EACH OTHER
- WOMEN'S RETREAT IN FEBRUARY
- MEN'S RETREAT IN APRIL
- WHAT WE'RE LEARNING
- UPCOMING EVENTS

## *Ministers' Meditations . . .*

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
the year is going, let it go;  
ring out he false, ring in the true.

*(Hymn #58 Singing the Living Tradition, "Ring Out, Wild Bells")*

The words of Alfred Lord Tennyson bear special meaning for us all this season. This past year has left its mark. As I write this, we have said a final goodbye to a long-time friend. There will be more farewells in the coming weeks. In the same space of time, we have welcomed new life and new families. We have kept old promises and made new ones. The triumphs and the disappointments have accumulated as they always do. Times of celebration and accomplishment have marched side by side with times of powerlessness and vulnerability; especially during storms and financial losses. There have been momentous changes in the world around us. The changing political and economic landscape in which we live will affect us for years to



come. We have a lot to let go. I invite you to take the time, in this first of the winter months, to reflect on what, if anything, you would ring in and carry forward into the new year from the old. And, what would you ring out as false and leave behind?

Through it all we have come to a new understanding of the ties that bind us when we let them – ties of new memories we made together and new hopes we expressed for our future. There is a whole world of possibilities waiting for us in the coming year; of healing, of service, and of enlightenment. Rev. Jan and Megan and I wish you peace and hope as we make this journey together.

Blessings,

Rev. Sarah

# Social Action



## Guess The Gay!

Come join True Colors for this fun, funny and interactive game of “Guess the Gay.” We will bring a panel of people of differing orientations and genders. You bring your curiosity and questions. Together, we will explore (and explode!) the myths and stereotypes we grew up with. We’ll identify ways that individuals can ally for each other and advance a social justice agenda.

Guess the Gay is **Sunday, January 15 at 12:15PM** in the Brown Program Center. Lunch will be served! There is no need to sign up. This event is sponsored by the Welcoming Congregation Committee. For information, please contact **Gus Keach-Longo**: KeachG@crtct.org or 860-313-0570

**Next Fern Street Film Series:** Dead Man Walking-Friday, **January 6, 2012**. Please join us as we revisit this powerful 1995 film directed by **Tim Robbins**, starring **Susan Sarandon** and **Sean Penn**. This film runs 2 hrs, so please plan to arrive around **6:15 pm**. **The film will begin promptly at 6:30pm**. A discussion period will follow. Popcorn, snacks, beverages will be provided. Please feel free to sign up on the bulletin board outside the program center or email Susan Raggio at [sueraggio@gmail.com](mailto:sueraggio@gmail.com). We hope to see you there!



## Together We Care for Each Other

As the Policy Board thought about what we wanted to share with you at this time of year, the word “Gratitude” kept coming to mind. Together we are so very thankful to be part of this community and feel honored by your trust and support each year.

We want to remind each of you that we are here to listen to your thoughts, ideas and concerns. Often during our meetings on the first Mondays of the month, we invite our members to share some time with us to “touch base” and let us know how things are going. If you haven’t joined us in the past, please know that we would like to hear (and see) you for a few minutes at one of our meetings. Our doors are open!

The Policy Board is very excited by the forward thinking work of our Strategic Planning group. As many of you know, the group has been collecting feedback from our members on several initiatives outlined in our 2017 Strategic Plan. They used the poster boards and red dots over the past month to “get a pulse” and see what people might be thinking. In the next few months they will be gathering what we have learned and start sharing it with you. If you have some thoughts you would like to share, please take a moment and let them know.

As you celebrate the traditions of Christmas, Hanukah, Winter Solstice, Kwanzaa or Three Kings Day this year, we would like to invite you to take a moment to reflect on what our community means to you. We often rush through our busy lives, especially this time of year, and forget that Fern Street is here for us. We are a community together and together we care for each other. As you reflect, please consider how you can be there for others. Consider extending a helping hand in our new church year, join a group and maybe make a connection with a visitor on Sunday. It takes all of us being there for each other to create this community we cherish.

With the holiday season upon us, we would like to extend our sincere wishes for joy, peace, and the very best of health to you and all our friends on Fern Street in the New Year.

### Policy Board Members:

David Arnott  
Mary Fournier  
Sarah Ivans  
Scott Kaslusky

Gus Keach-Longo  
Jan Nielsen (ex-officio)  
Michael Shelby (Moderator)  
Kent Smith

# Church School News

To contact Sally: [soxman@westhartforduu.org](mailto:soxman@westhartforduu.org)  
or 233-3669, Ext. 111

## Classes Resume

Regular Church School Classes resume on **Sunday, January 8.**

## The Connections Team Thanks You!

Our Holiday Book Drive benefiting Sanchez and Kennelly Schools in Hartford was a resounding success. Our Mitten Tree collection for Interval House made the holidays a little warmer for those who received new hats, scarves, gloves, and mittens. And finally thanks to those who helped pack family boxes for the hawkwing December give-away.

**We welcome Jody Gray-Linden to our staff.** Jody is joining **Lauren Kellnhauser** as co-Church School Administrator. It is especially exciting to have Jody be a part of the Church School staff as she grew up in this Church.



From the Staff of The Universalist Church

## *What We're Learning: Notes from Your Intern Minister*

Some of the buzz words in the preparation for ministry are “ministerial authority” and “congregational polity.” In fact, this was the topic of one of the questions asked of me by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association during my interview in Boston on December 1. Though these phrases may sound dry, inaccessible and, frankly, boring, they are in fact, crucial to how we – Unitarian Universalists – understand the role of a minister and the role of the congregation.



Like many other denominations, we are “congregational” in terms of our polity. This means that our local congregations have complete authority to determine their own policies, make their own decisions, and ordain their own ministers. While the committee I saw granted me “fellowship” in our Association, meaning I am eligible for ministry and can be a minister to any congregation, they did not ordain me. That comes later. We are conferred spiritual and pastoral authority as ministers by the people of the congregation(s) we serve. You, the people, choose those you see as ministers and confer that honor upon them.

I believe one is called to ministry by God, or the Divine, and we respond to that call through our internal spirit. But we are also called by the people of our communities. Our call is confirmed and the role of minister conferred by those who have nurtured our formation and those whom we serve. While some receive official sanction and are identified *as ministers*, we believe in shared ministry – we *all* minister to one another. We minister when we serve others with open hearts and generous spirits. When, as a congregation, we pledge to help one another, to serve, to love, and to dwell together in peace on Sunday mornings, we are all ordained.

Blessings,  
*Megan*

# Our Caring Church

Our thoughts and prayers are with **Richard Guffy** and his wife **Ellen** who is hospitalized with a serious illness.

It is with deep sadness that we announce the death of **Bill Sullivan**, husband of **Mary Jane Sullivan and father of Jeff and Betsy and Ryan and Jenn**. Bill passed away on Sunday, December 11, due to complications from cancer. A Service in Celebration of the Life of William Sullivan was held in our Sanctuary on Wednesday, December 14, 2011 with Rev. Jan officiating and Megan Lloyd Joiner assisting. We hold Mary Jane, Jeff and Betsy and Ryan and Jenn in our prayers and send them our deepest sympathies.

Little **Christina Burrell** has broken her leg. We wish her a speedy recovery.

**Joe Bulba** is doing well and continues to receive visitors at the Rehabilitation Center on Loomis Drive.

**Lonnie Lyon** continues her recovery from surgery and pneumonia at the Hebrew Home Rehabilitation Center. Lonnie welcomes your cards and visits.

We rejoice with **Amanda Theriault and Mark Zommer and their children Cole and Grace**, who welcomed a brand new baby brother, **Luke Alan**, on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Sally Oxman's** mother, **Alice Carson**, has returned home after a hospital stay. She appreciates everyone's well-wishes.

With deep sadness, we announce the death of **Carmela Glead**, a long-time friend of this congregation, who passed away on Tuesday, November 15th.

We send our sympathies to **Hera Cohn-Haft and David Johnston** after the death of Hera's father, **Louis Cohn-Haft** in Tuscany in November.

We hold in our prayers **Alissa Lester**, niece of **Doris and David Lester**, who underwent cancer surgery on November 21st. And we send our prayers to **Beth Thompson**, daughter of dear friends of the Lesters, as Beth continues treatment for lung cancer.

We are thinking, too, of **Zak Morgan**, the President of our Youth Group. Zak is recovering from shoulder surgery and already back at school.

We are thankful for the energy and spirit of **Rachel Leibin** who fractured her big toe and was still volunteering at our church on November 20th. Rachel is a high energy young lady who helped in a big way with the pancake breakfast, and meals during the power outages.

We are thinking of our Youth Group directors, **Dan and Marissa Bouchard**. In November, Dan's father, **John Bouchard**, suffered a heart attack. John is now awaiting a heart transplant. Our hopes and prayers go out to him and to their family.

We hold in our hearts **Cheryl Lawless** and her family. Cheryl's aunt, **Annabelle McCarthy**, died on October 28th in Florida. Rev. Jan officiated at a Memorial Service celebrating Annabelle's life, followed by a burial at Mount St. Benedict's cemetery in Bloomfield. We send our sympathies to Cheryl and to her family.



## Attention Members and Friends in your 20s and 30s!

Have you been looking for opportunities to connect with other young adults? The Universalist Church is forming a **Young Adult Group!** You are invited to a kick-off potluck lunch on **January 29<sup>th</sup> at 12:45pm** in the Brown Program Center. We will share food and fellowship, get to know each other and talk about how a Young Adult group might best serve **you!** Singles and couples welcome. Child care will be provided with advance request.



## UU Men's Retreat in April

Attention all UU Men: the 2012 UU Men's Retreat will be held in The Colonial Farmhouse at The Wisdom House Retreat and Conference Center in Litchfield, Connecticut, the weekend of **April 13-15**. This is a beautiful, clean and user-friendly facility. We are presenting a brand new Build Your Own Theology (BYOT) program designed for both the men who attended last year's very successful retreat and all newcomers. Craig Nowak will be our retreat facilitator.

The cost of the weekend is \$232 including room and meals from Friday evening through Sunday lunch. Day trippers for just the Saturday main program, including meals, will be offered a special reduced rate. Please get your \$100 deposit in as quickly as possible. Make checks payable to "The Universalist Church" with "men's retreat" in the memo block; send your deposit to retreat treasurer, **David S. Wadstrup**, 43 Wynding Brook Drive, Rocky Hill, CT, 06067-2911, wadstds2@cox.net. 860-563-3484. **New comers especially welcome**. Reserve early! Don't miss out!

Your Retreat Committee,  
David S. Wadstrup, Treasurer



The Sounding board Coffeehouse will be closed until **January 7, 2012**. If you have any questions, please email **Janet** at folkie43@sbcglobal.net.

## Women's Retreat February 10,11,12<sup>th</sup> Senexet House, Woodstock CT

Listen deeply within to discern what desires, hopes, dreams, gifts seek expression. Receive support for expressing them in the world. Deepen your connection with other women of the church in a relaxed atmosphere.

Senexet House is a quaint Victorian "cottage" surrounded by 11 acres of pine forest. There are quiet walks and inspirational views. The living room has a lovely fireplace, adjoined by a cozy library. There is a chapel, bright dining room and screened porch with a view of Roseland Lake. (See photos on their website at [www.senexethouse.org](http://www.senexethouse.org).)

Meals and Accommodations: Delicious food! Vegetarian meals available upon advance request. There are 11 bedrooms which vary in size. They contain two to five beds each. There are ample toilet, shower and bathing facilities. Linens included. Bring soap and toiletries. *Senexet is partially handicapped accessible.*

Cost: Rates are per person, \$195 for both nights or \$105 for one night. Limited to 24 women. Sign up deadline: January 22, 2012. To sign up or for more information contact **Martha Winslow** at 80.233.3669 X109 or [mwinslow@westhartforduu.org](mailto:mwinslow@westhartforduu.org).



*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>
January 11	January 20

Email newsletter items, as an attachment, to Julia Giolitto at [gjolitto@gjolitto.net](mailto:gjolitto@gjolitto.net) Editorial note: at the discretion of the staff, the content of all insertions may be subject to editing.

Universalist Church  
433 Fern Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107  
Phone (860) 233-3669  
Fax (860) 570-1205  
Web Site: [www.westhartforduu.org](http://www.westhartforduu.org)  
E-mail: [admin@westhartforduu.org](mailto:admin@westhartforduu.org)

Return Service Requested

**DATED MATERIAL – DELIVER BEFORE 12/26/11**

Jan K. Nielsen, Senior Minister, Ext. 104, [jnielsen@westhartforduu.org](mailto:jnielsen@westhartforduu.org)  
Sarah Person, Associate Minister, Ext. 105, [sperson@westhartforduu.org](mailto:sperson@westhartforduu.org)  
Megan Lloyd Joiner, Intern Minister, Ext. 101, [mljoiner@westhartforduu.org](mailto:mljoiner@westhartforduu.org)  
Patty Lee, Executive Director, Ext. 106, [plee@westhartforduu.org](mailto:plee@westhartforduu.org)  
Sally Oxman Director of Religious Education, Ext. 111, [soxman@westhartforduu.org](mailto:soxman@westhartforduu.org)  
Lauren Kellnhauser, Co-Church School Administrator, Ext. 108, [lkellnhauser@westhartforduu.org](mailto:lkellnhauser@westhartforduu.org)  
Jody Gray-Linden, Co-Church School Administrator, Ext. 108, [jgraylinden@westhartforduu.org](mailto:jgraylinden@westhartforduu.org)  
Martha Winslow, Member Services Coordinator, Ext. 109, [mwinslow@westhartforduu.org](mailto:mwinslow@westhartforduu.org)  
Lori Bortolussi, Financial Manager, Ext. 103, [lbortolussi@westhartforduu.org](mailto:lbortolussi@westhartforduu.org)  
Ted Hine, Music Director, Ext. 107, [thine@westhartforduu.org](mailto:thine@westhartforduu.org)  
Michele Begley, Children's Choir Director  
Lambert Laing, Custodian  
Yvonne Laing, Custodian  
Kathy Anderson, Sexton  
Tom Oxman, Jr. High Youth Advisor  
Susan Giniso, Jr. High Youth Advisor  
Sam Lanza, Jr. High Youth Advisor  
Marissa Bouchard, Sr. High Youth Advisor  
Dan Bouchard, Sr. High Youth Advisor  
Jackie Majerus-Collins, Youth-Mentor Coordinator  
Linda Scacco, Coming of Age Parent Consultant  
Julia Giolitto, Newsletter Editor  
Orlene Spinney, Library Collections Manager

## Our Monthly Newsletter

As you may know, our monthly newsletter, "The Universalist," appears on our church website, and we send a link by email when each new edition is posted. Publishing our newsletter electronically allows us to honor our Green Sanctuary commitment to be kinder to our planet and also greatly reduce our postage costs. However, several of our members and friends prefer to receive a paper copy of "The Universalist" by mail. The choice is yours! If you would like us to mail one to your home, we ask that you let us know by contacting **Patty Lee** at 860.233.3669, Ext. 106 or [plee@westhartforduu.org](mailto:plee@westhartforduu.org).

## Universalist Church Snow Cancellation Policy

If the decision is made to cancel or postpone any meetings, events, Sunday religious education or Sunday worship, this information will be promptly communicated to the congregation **on the church website ([www.westhartforduu.org](http://www.westhartforduu.org)) and by television announcements on NBC Channel 30 and WFSB Channel 3 and their websites [www.NBC30.com](http://www.NBC30.com) and [www.WFSB.com](http://www.WFSB.com), respectively. In the event of a weekend storm, a cancellation decision will be made as early as possible, preferably by early Saturday evening.**

Church cancellations are rare, but have occurred twice over the past few years. Cancellation decisions are dictated both by the timing and the severity of weather conditions. Most often, the church will be open for services as planned, regardless of weather. We encourage you to be safe and to use your best judgment when deciding whether or not to come to church services during extreme weather conditions.