

February 2026

# NEWS & VIEWS

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## President's Letter

Dear Members and Friends,

I hope you are all staying safe and warm. It has been a while since we have had a stretch of winter weather such as we have just experienced. Although I remember, as do you probably, stretches of days in a row where it never got above zero. Hopefully we don't run into one of those events any time soon.

I first came to the Rutland UU in 2001. I'd gotten married and was living in Wallingford. Rutland UU was closer than Middlebury, where I had been a UU member and there was sort of a choir (The Sometimes Singers). In those days however, the congregation was difficult to connect with. Folks were not particularly good at reaching out to new people. In fact, my then wife found the congregation to be 'cliquey' and she lost interest in coming. Though it's not a happy memory I bring it up now keeping in mind the saying "Those who do not remember history are condemned to repeat it." These days our congregation has gotten much better at reaching out to new folks. We still don't have a membership/outreach committee (we keep trying) so in effect the entire congregation has become the welcoming committee. This is my encouragement to not let our guard down and keep up the good work.

I would like to thank a bunch of folks who are really pitching in and helping with congregational work. I would use names here, but I've been made aware that when things are going on the internet whole names or any associated information should not be used. So, I will speak in general terms, but I think you will know who you are. We have just recently gotten two new, very capable members on the Building and Grounds committee. Also, by the time this letter is published we will have two new members on the Sunday Service Committee. These are two of the most important committees that we have and the boost of energy is most welcome. There is also a congregation member who will be appointed to the Endowment Committee.

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## President's Letter continued...

Then there is the group of musicians who have organized to help out with music on Sundays when we don't have Marina. They are very good, and their efforts are much appreciated. I'd like to add that the Sunday Service Committee has done an outstanding job this year. The presenters have been consistently engaging and thought provoking. I was especially pleased Sunday the 25th to realize the speaker was an old friend from CVUUS in Middlebury.

As I have mentioned, I've been trying to find a way for our congregation to make connections with indigenous peoples. I have been given two possibilities and I have reached out to both. One group is Atowi an Abenaki organization based in Brattleboro. They are a candidate for our half-plate donation. The other is abenakiheritage.org. Their site is worth a read. It is their claim that the Abenaki groups recognized by the State of Vermont are not legitimate groups. I don't have enough knowledge to assess their claims, but I will continue to do research. I would suggest that both sites are worth a look.

Blessed Be,

Bruce Douglas

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IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN A COMMITTEE  
PLEASE EMAIL [UURUTLAND@GMAIL.COM](mailto:UURUTLAND@GMAIL.COM)

"YOU DON'T ALWAYS  
NEED A PLAN.  
SOMETIMES YOU JUST  
NEED TO BREATHE,  
TRUST, LET GO, AND SEE  
WHAT HAPPENS." —  
MANDY HALE

### **JOB OPENING: OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR**

Unfortunately the time has come that I must leave you all as Office Administrator. I've so enjoyed getting to know your community.

If you know someone who may be interested in the job, with a strong knowledge of Excel & organization skills, please have them reach out to [uurutlandpresident@gmail.com](mailto:uurutlandpresident@gmail.com)

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Half Plate for Feb.



NEW STORY

NewStory Center works to end the cycle of violence through support, education, prevention, and collaboration with individuals and communities throughout Rutland County.

## Banned Book Club

Meetings will be on the third Sunday  
of each month at 12-1.

Please sign up by email

Becky Eno [bequesting@gmail.com](mailto:bequesting@gmail.com)  
Jean Marie Walker [jmwinvt19@gmail.com](mailto:jmwinvt19@gmail.com)  
Nancy Weis [nweis@shoreham.net](mailto:nweis@shoreham.net)



## February Birthdays

2/6 BOAZ C.

2/16 TERRY S.

2/22 JOAN E.

2/27 LENA C.

2/28 MOLLY D.



birthday cake @  
coffee hour-  
February 15



Minister:  
Rev. Barbara

President:  
Bruce D

Vice President:  
Ann B

Moderator:  
Kevin K

Treasurer:  
Cathy T

Secretary:  
Marcia F

Trustee:  
Rosie H.

Trustee:  
Margaret F

Clerk:  
Herb O

Church Administrator:  
Karina J

Church Phone  
802-775-0850

Church Email  
[uurutalnd@gmail.com](mailto:uurutalnd@gmail.com)

# From Rev. Barbara's Couch



February, and time for another minister's column. The obvious thing is to write about the insanity that's going on in the world around us, especially in Minnesota – and Maine, and detention centers in Texas, and in the halls of Congress, as they contemplate another budget and decide what to fund or not fund, and in the courts.

Situations in Venezuela, and Greenland and Iran – the list is long. But what to do about it? No magic wands are appearing – not even sanity, or consistency, or logic. And silent acquiescence, feeling so overwhelmed that nothing seems worth doing anyhow, will likely be catastrophic. But how to speak, what to do?

Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850 – 1919) wrote:

To sin by silence then we should protest,  
Makes cowards of men. The human race  
Has climbed on protest. Had no voice been raised  
Against injustice, ignorance, and lust,  
The inquisition would yet serve the law,  
And guillotines decide our least disputes.  
The few who dare to speak, must speak and speak again  
To right the wrongs of many...

There are many, many ways to protest. There is a shop called Needle & Skein in Minneapolis which is selling patterns for red woolen hats, based on those worn in Norway in the 1940s to protest Nazi occupation. They're simple beanies with a red tassel – and they were eventually outlawed by the Germans! The shop has raised over \$400,000 with the caps (and sold out of red yarn!) They've donated most of that to local immigrant support organizations – you can find more information on-line. One employee said, "Not everybody is built for the front line. Not everybody is built to shout." Another said, "Knitting is a great way to find community, but it's also a great way of protest." The red hats are an easily identifiable and useful way of saying "I resist!" And they matter. Knitting, in this case, become an act of resistance, a way of raising a voice and breaking silence.

It is action that makes a difference, and there are many ways of breaking silence. Marching, advocating, knitting, bringing food, offering safety, raising funds, writing letters, making warm hats, remembering to sing as well as scream, unveiling injustice in many ways. Each of them matters. But silence, as Wilcox says, is a sin.

Shalom and Salaam.  
Rev. Barbara





# UPCOMING SERVICES



## February 2026

### **February 1, 10:30am - Rev. Barbara Threet**

#### **“With Love at the Center”**

We’ve probably all seen time when what seems to be at the center of someone’s life and actions is greed, or curiosity, ease or fear, or revenge. What would it look like to put love at the center?

### **February 8, 10:30 am - Bela & Margret**

#### *Intergenerational Service*

#### **“UU Values in Motion”**

In this All Ages service, we will be exploring the Seven UU Values, visiting stations around the sanctuary with chances to discover how to put them in action and build lives around ideas that support us, our families, and our community.

### **February 15, 10:30am- Dick Weis**

#### **“A Sense of Place”**

How do we, as human beings, come to identify with our place in our world? What is the connection between physical location, social connection, and our metaphysical and psychological state of mind, that makes a place special? Dick Weis will explore these ideas, while touching upon various indigenous perspectives, Calvin and Hobbes, Thomas Wolf, Kurt Vonnegut, and others.

### **February 22, 10:30 am- Prof. Jane Chaplin**

#### **“Philosophy of Friendship”**

Cicero’s essay on friendship addresses aspects of friendship that resonate today: the difference between friends and family, old friends vs. new friends, whether friendship can endure over a lifetime, how to choose friends, how far to go for a friend.

### **March 1, 10:30am - Rev Barbara**

#### **“A Radical Map”**

Each of us follows a map in life (kindergarten, learning to ride a bike, 7th grade, first love, etc.) There’s an expected map for American adulthood - college, marriage, kids, graying hair, creaking knees and so on. We each try to create maps too - if I do this, it should lead to that. How do internal and external maps inform us? How do they constrain us? How do our ‘maps’ shape our lives and how do our lives shape our ‘maps’?

# Board Minutes

## UU DECEMBER BOARD MEETING SYNOPSIS

The Board discussed the Church Administrator's job description and what the priorities should be in that position.

The Elders group is going well with 10 people attending.

We are working out the church key situation, figuring out which keys should go with which lock.

The Stained Glass project is going very smoothly. We have two new members of the Building and Grounds Committee, Dave Darton and Jamie Corbett.

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## The Spring Auction is almost here!

**Mark your calendars now and plan to attend** the Annual Goods & Service Auction on Sunday, March 22, at 4 pm. The auction financially supports the congregation AND offers an opportunity for us to explore new hobbies, have new experiences, and make new friends. Plus, it is fun!

**Please donate to the annual goods & services auction.** Some of the best auction items are social events and experiences such as hikes, game nights, and suppers. In the past, offers of pet sitting, yard work, and odd jobs have also garnered high interest. New or gently used items that are ready for new homes work well in the silent auction.

**Donation Forms** are available online: <https://forms.gle/DSgH2xDwSnwvtmFM6> If you are unable to access the online form, please email or call Kimberly directly. We ask that you describe the service or goods and suggest a value and/or opening bid. It is nice to include your "qualifications" if you are offering a service.

**Donation forms are due by Tuesday, February 24!** Please ask any questions you might have to help formulate your donations or to understand better how the auction works. ALL DONATIONS must be registered in advance. Adding in items the night of the auction is difficult and stressful for the auction organizers. Late donations may be held until next year's auction at our discretion.

**Sweet & Savory Snacks:** We are also looking for folks to provide decadent finger food to serve at the auction, both sweet & savory. It is proven that a well-fed bidder is a happy bidder! Marcia Foley is coordinating the food this year, so if you have questions, reach out to her at (802) 558-5833 or [marcia12455@gmail.com](mailto:marcia12455@gmail.com).

**Questions:** contact Kimberly at 802-287-0168 or [kimberly.bushnell@icloud.com](mailto:kimberly.bushnell@icloud.com). All proceeds benefit the UU Church of Rutland. Thank you in advance for your participation in this fun & fruitful fundraiser in support of this liberal religious community.



# Curious about Membership at UUCR

Whether you're curious about joining our congregation, or you just want to learn more about what Unitarian Universalism is, please join Rev. Barbara after the service on Sunday, March 1 for a discussion about what Unitarian Universalism and where it came from. In April there will be another gathering to learn more about our own congregation, and about what membership involves. If you're pretty sure you want to join our congregation but you've been a UU somewhere else, you may want to attend just the April gathering (although you'd be welcome in March too).

Either way - we'll be holding a New Member Welcoming ceremony during the service on May 3. To learn more about membership, please contact Rev. Barbara at [brthreet@gmail.com](mailto:brthreet@gmail.com), or speak to our Board President Bruce Douglas or our Treasurer Cathy Thomas after a service.

