

**Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
of Northern Westchester**

Route 172 Mount Kisco, New York 10549  
Phone (914) 241-1360 · [www.uufellowship.org](http://www.uufellowship.org)

*A place where minds can learn and hearts can share*

# January 2012



## Sunday Worship Services, 10:30 a.m.

**January 1**

*Resolutions*

**Rev. Dr. Michael Tino**

We covenant to affirm and promote a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. Where is the responsibility in the new year's resolutions we've made today? Let us make new resolutions together. Invite your friends to this special new year kick off. For this New Year's Day service, please feel free to attend worship in the most casual of clothing (including appropriate pajamas if you'd like). Rev. Michael might have to get a flannel stole just for the occasion.

**January 8**

*Who, Me?*

**Rev. Jan Carlsson-Bull**

How is it that on Sunday mornings, so many of us retreat to the back rows, whereas if we consider tickets for a concert or a play, we aspire to orchestra seating, preferably in the middle and as close to the front as possible? While the chancel isn't a stage and the congregation isn't an audience, this is a question that intrigues me. How might any and all of us, literally and metaphorically, aspire to be down front?

*The Rev. Jan Carlsson-Bull is the Interim Minister at the UU Congregation of the Catskills in Kingston, NY. She and Rev. Michael are participating in a time-honored UU tradition of the "pulpit exchange," so Rev. Michael is preaching this morning in Kingston.*

**January 15**

*Injustice Anywhere*

**Rev. Dr. Michael Tino, Frances Sink and Donna Renfro**

Towards the end of his tragically-shortened life, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. talked about a lot more than just racial justice. He preached about economic justice, opposed war and militarism, and made it clear that injustices and oppressions of all sorts are linked with each other. How does this inform our own search for justice?

**January 22**

*It's the End of the World!*

**Michelle Buhite**

It's the end of the world; everyone says so! I wonder how history will remember Unitarian Universalists? Will our legacy be one of disappointment and despair, or of hope?

*Michelle Buhite hails from Lucille Ball's hometown of Jamestown, NY. She is a candidate for UU Ministry and seminarian at Meadville Lombard Theological School.*

**January 29**

*Bad Religion*

**Rev. Dr. Michael Tino**

All theologies are not created equal. All spiritual paths are not worthy of exploring. Sometimes, people do great harm in the name of "connecting with something greater than themselves." We wrap up our look at the free and responsible search for truth and meaning by seeking ways in which we can appropriately judge our spiritual options.



*Nursery care available at all services*

# Fireside Chat



By Rev. Dr. Michael Tino, Minister

Those of you who know me know that I'm not such a fan of New Year's resolutions. I don't like the practice of dwelling on our perceived flaws, and I really don't like what happens when we fall short of overly-ambitious goals set to meet a January 1 deadline.

That having been said, I think that goals are important (as long as forgiveness is also readily available for not making them). Perhaps, then, we can set healthy goals for ourselves in 2012. I'm firmly of the opinion that the best resolutions for the New Year are ones that bring you health, happiness, and connection with others.

So this year, please allow me to suggest three resolutions you might want to consider:

**1. Prioritize your spiritual growth (and that of your family).** You wouldn't have come to a community of faith if you were not seeking some sort of connection, so why not make that connection a higher priority in your life? Start by regular attendance at Sunday morning worship. Yes, I know you expect your minister to say that, but it's the one time each week when we gather for worship as a community, and it's important for your spiritual well-being. Find a spiritual practice that centers and grounds you and do it regularly (and if you don't know how, ask me or Frances to help you). Find gratitude every day. Share what you're thankful for when you sit down for dinner as a family (and do that more often, by the way).

**2. Make time for others.** Our spirituality needs to be connected to the world around us, and not an exercise in navel-gazing. I know we're all busy people, but consider setting aside just a few hours every month to think about other people. One or two hours a month should be doable, right? Volunteer at the food pantry, or visit someone in the hospital. Call a relative or friend whom you haven't talked to in a while and reconnect. Take someone having a rough time out for coffee. I guarantee you'll get at least as much out of this time as you give.

**3. Practice self-care.** None of us are any good to anyone else if we don't take care of ourselves, and so I recommend that each of us understand what it means to practice self-care. Nourish your bodies with good, whole food. Get whatever exercise you can. Get that nasty cough looked at by a doctor (and if you don't have health insurance, ask me if there's funding left in the Minister's Discretionary Fund to help pay for a doctor's visit). Above all, learn to forgive yourself when you fall short of your lofty goals.

Try these resolutions in the New Year and let me know how they work for you. May we all be blessed with love, peace and joy throughout 2012 and afterwards.

With love,

Rev. Michael

*Michael*



## Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northern Westchester

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Phone (914) 241-1360

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Rev. Dr. Michael Tino, Minister

Donna Renfro, Director of  
Religious Exploration

Dr. Frances Sink, Intern Minister

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### Web Site

Webmaster: Vicki Borah-Bloom  
[www.uufellowship.org](http://www.uufellowship.org)

### Minister's Office Hours

Rev. Michael will be in the office most Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. Occasional meetings and off-site appointments with members and friends make it difficult to set exact hours. Please call (914) 241-1360 or email [mtino@uuma.org](mailto:mtino@uuma.org) if you'd like to stop by.

Rev. Michael is also available for appointments on Tuesday through Sunday between 9 am and 9 pm. He is always available by cell phone at (919) 949-1158 for crisis or emergency needs. His day off is Monday, and he works from home on Friday.

# Words & Deeds

## The Great IntervUU of 2012

Who is responsible for our congregation? It is so tempting to say "the ministers." But we know that while they do so much to keep us moving forward, the real answer is each of us. Our community can only be what it is because we each contribute our talents, energies, and funds. Our community can only impact the world when we join together to shape the world into our vision of love. Other religious communities are shaping hearts and minds but often not in ways that promote love and respect as we know it should be. We must get in the game, and we can only succeed together.

To this end, we need to know each other's interests, talents and needs. And thus, we shall engage in **The Great IntervUU of 2012**. During the months of January and February, you will be contacted by a member of the Board of Trustees, or the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee (NLDC) or the Committee on Ministry (COM). These people will be conducting a short interview to help us determine the direction of our congregation, as well as get to know you better. They will ask you questions in four areas: Social Action, Congregational Nurturing, Personal Growth, and Individual Talents/Interests. So that you have some time to think about this, some of the questions are below.

It is our hope that you will take time to engage in this conversation to help all of us understand where we want to place our energies both within our walls and out, and how we can give to, and receive from each other to make our community stronger. The results of the survey will be shared with the congregation and will be used to inform the Board, the NLDC, and the COM with their plans for the future. Think about:



**Social Action:** What do you think are the 2-3 most pressing problems in our world that we might have an impact on?

**Congregational Nurturing:** What about the fellowship "feeds your soul" or fulfills you the most? Where/when do you feel the most connected?

**Personal Growth:** How would you personally like to grow at UUFNW?

**Talents/Interests:** What kinds of things do you

January, 2012

Dear Friends,

We are turning the corner into a new year and also the final months of my intern ministry with you. Amazing! In June I will finish my two years of ministerial internship here at UUFNW. January is a good time for both look back and look forward. I look back and see how much I've learned from you thus far- about how to be a minister, about how to match my gifts to your needs, about how to lead worship and how to follow *your* lead in developing other programs. Mainly, I've been learning from you about how congregational life is about the relationships we grow together here, discovering anew our interdependence with each other and the world in which we live.

At UUFNW we are a covenanted community of many overlapping relationships. Perhaps those of us who were not born into Unitarian Universalism first came to a congregation seeking to meet our individual needs. But it doesn't take very long to discover that our saving message, our good news as a faith tradition, is that there is a life of meaning in our relational lives, learning to live deeply and vitally into our relationships with each other and also deepening our understanding of and relationship to that which is greater than ourselves.

James Luther Adams, our greatest 20<sup>th</sup> century theologian said that congregations are where we come to practice being human. I agree. We come here to discover the meaning of being fully alive together, to practice together, and then emboldened to take our practice out into the world. So my invitation to you is to join with me in our practice together in this new year, as often as we can, in as many ways as we can, loving as deeply as we can. There is much to learn together.

In faith,  
**Frances**  
Dr. Frances Sink, Intern Minister

love to do? Do you have any outlets for these activities at the Fellowship? Would you like to? How might that happen?

—Patricia Compton, Board President  
[PatriciaUUFNW@gmail.com](mailto:PatriciaUUFNW@gmail.com)

**“In religion, we confront and embrace issues of ultimate importance. This is where we develop and practice our values. This is where we make meaning.”** Rev. Matthew Tittle, from his book, Taking Back Faith, Heretical Thoughts for a New Century.

The topics of this collection of sermons inform me greatly — what’s the difference between faith and belief, moving from theism to pantheism, reclaiming Christmas. In this last sermon Rev. Tittle speaks of UU’s history as a liberal protestant Christian denomination, with 10% of our members currently identifying as Christians, compared to 68% in 1932. He states that we only stopped identifying as a Christian denomination in the 1960’s, gradually, church to church. And maybe there are more, if we accept my and Reverend Tittle’s calling ourselves Christians as one who embraces the prophetic words and deeds of an historic figure, whose legend is one of complete self-actualization and freedom from chains that shackle us, and want to have heretical thoughts for a new century. That includes taking back language of reverence so that for our children, we will practice and model our values, make meaning, and confront and embrace issues of

ultimate importance. In so doing, we make a commitment to our youth, our denomination and our world, because our values of religious freedom and pluralism do have a saving message to transform ourselves and the planet.



### **Mystery Friends coming in February!**

This program is a great way for all ages to get to know each other better. Each Sunday, friends bring an anonymous note or gift for each other with little clues about themselves. The fun is trying to guess who is your mystery friend, and along the way, you get to know more about your friend. Many of these friendships continue on, and the children ask their “friends” to be their mentors in COA. This program is often the first time children really get to know, and be valued by, an adult in the

congregation, other than their parent and RE Teacher. Since I am not there every Sunday, we will need a champion for this program. Please contact me if you’re willing to be that person. I will coordinate with you to post more information and sign-up sheets in the Fellowship.

**Guest at Your Table.** Remember to “feed” your guest, and bring in your boxes by January 15th.

### **RE Calendar**

Jan. 1: Community Learning Experience Day — Chinese New Year Dragon Parade. Need Volunteers to help lead this.

Jan. 8: Lesson Day

Jan.15: All Ages Worship in the Big Room

Jan.22: Lesson Day

Jan.29: Lesson Day

**Youth Group.** Thanks to everyone who made the Holiday Jewelry Sale such a success. We raised over \$500 for our trip to New Orleans! We spent the last part of December helping our local community, working in the FoodBank, and cooking dinner for, serving, and eating with our homeless neighbors who were staying at the Fellowship for a week.

### **January’s Upcoming Events**

- Sunday, Jan. 15th: Meet at Carmel Bowl, 4 pm. 23 Old Route 6, Carmel, NY. Bring \$ for bowling, shoe rental and food.
- Friday, Jan. 22nd: Jazz Vespers and Cajun Potluck, 6 pm, the fellowship.
- Sunday, Feb.12th: Meet at the fellowship, 5 pm.
- Friday, Feb.17: Midnight Run (see [midnightrun.org](http://midnightrun.org)) Hold from about 6 pm Friday night until sometime the next morning. We will sleepover at the fellowship.
- Sunday, March 11th: Meet at the fellowship, 5 pm.

**OWL:** We thank our guest panel members who helped the 8th and 9th graders learn the difference between gender identity and expression, biological sex, and sexual orientation.

*(Continued on page 5)*

# This and That



## **OWL continued**

### Sunday, Jan. 8th:

- For Senior High — 2nd Sunday (due to Near Year's Day) 10th-12th grade Senior High OWL— Danbury—time 5:30-7.
- For 8th and 9th graders, 5-7 at Danbury.

### Sunday, Jan. 22,

- For 8th and 9th graders, 5-7 at Mohegan Lake.

—Donna Renfro, Director of Religious Exploration

## **MORE CALENDAR ITEMS:**

**New UU Members - Save the Date:** New Member Lunch on **Jan. 29th.**

Immediately after the service, new members who have joined since June are invited to celebrate with Rev. Frances Sink and Diane Tully, who will answer any questions you may have about what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist, as well as what it means to make a commitment to membership. Please join us on the 29th.

**Collection for Neighbors Link Family Center:** Our local immigrant community center is opening their new FAMILY CENTER for mothers and young children. We will be collecting early childhood toys, baby-wipes and hand-sanitizer until **Jan. 15.** Please find the donation container in our Fireplace Room.



"I call that church free which enters into the covenant with the ultimate source of existence. It binds together families and generations, protecting against the idolatry of any human claim to absolute truth or authority."

- James Luther Adams

## **Stewardship Corner**

We had a terrific turn-out for our first congregational "Stewardship Conversation" on December 18th. The goal of the Stewardship Team is to foster a spirit of abundance and generosity in which our members consider their financial support and the sharing of their gifts and talents as a spiritual practice, one which strengthens their connection to the values and mission of UUFNW. We also want to help develop a common understanding of what stewardship is, and how we can all become good stewards of our UUFNW fellowship.

Some practical suggestions emerged from the conversation, highlighting the goal that improved communication is part of helping our members be good Stewards. Some newer members are unfamiliar with how to pay their annual pledge; our annual pledge is distinct from the weekly collection plate, which is shared with various community organizations. Annual pledge payments should be paid by check, made out to UUFNW, either monthly or over the course of the year, and specifically identified in the memo line as a pledge payment. You may put a check in the collection plate, but unless it is noted as a pledge payment, it will be shared.

Also, the pledge "year" should be included, for example, a payment now should say "Pledge Payment 2011/2012." We operate and budget July to July. That means we are about half-way through our current financial year, so everyone should have paid about half of their annual pledge by now to be up to date.



Annual Pledge checks can be mailed to UUFNW at Box 298, Mt. Kisco, NY 10549, attention Treasurer. *Questions about Stewardship? Contact Kelley Housman at [housmankel@aol.com](mailto:housmankel@aol.com) or George Walker at [gfwalker@verizon.net](mailto:gfwalker@verizon.net).*

# COMING UP SOON!

## Fellowship Fridays

*Weekly themed gatherings enable members of all ages to gather for meaningful connection and just plain fun.*



### January 6, 7:30-9 PM: Spirit in Practice.

All who are interested in learning more about spiritual practices and deepening spirituality through discussion with others are encouraged to come. Contact Suzi Novak [SuziN@jsgnovak.com](mailto:SuziN@jsgnovak.com) or Frances Sink [frances.sink@gmail.com](mailto:frances.sink@gmail.com) for more information.

### January 27, 6PM: Cajun Potluck and Jazz Vespers.

Bring your version of a Cajun dish—gumbo, red beans and rice, collards, cornbread, shrimp creole, remoulade sauce, catfish, dirty rice, and many more possibilities. Children, youth group, and adults all invited. *A special offering will be received to benefit the NOLA Service Trip Fund.*



## THANK YOU, DONNA!

**Donna Moriarty** has been our faithful newsletter creator, editor, artist for many years. She took us into the 21st century of e-newsletters and truly made it a work of art, always executed with tremendous flair. Donna has passed the baton and the Board of Trustees thanks her for all the time and love she put into the newsletter.



## Thank you, Donna, you are a gem!

*And welcome to Jacqueline Mooney-O'Brien, who generously takes up the newsletter baton! We so appreciate your willingness to step up! (and for all the nagging about deadlines you've already had to do!)*

## Social Action/Social Justice

This year UUFNW continues its strong relationship with Neighbors Link, the Interfaith Food Pantry and the Emergency Shelter Partnership. The Social Action/Social Justice committee would also like to hear from the fellowship if there is interest in becoming involved socially in other ways in and beyond our community. Anyone wishing to participate in our social action projects, or with ideas about expanding our reach, is welcome to contact Gayle Hudson or Arthur Grant either after service or at:



[gaylehudson@optonline.net](mailto:gaylehudson@optonline.net) or [grantac17@gmail.com](mailto:grantac17@gmail.com)

## Mid-Winter Dinner & Concert Sunday, February 5, 2012 5:30-8:00PM



We cordially invite all in our Fellowship community to join us for dinner and music at the UFNW on Sunday evening, February 5.

We will provide the food and Steffani Brandenburg, courtesy of her service auction donation, will provide the music. There will be plenty of time for conversation, visiting, eating, listening and singing. Bring yourselves, and bring the kids! Bring your friends from outside the congregation, too. A donation at the door of \$10 for persons age 10 and above will be requested -- but not required -- with 100% of all donations going to the UUFNW general fund. Please RSVP if you are planning to attend, and how many will be in your party, by Monday, January 30, 2012.



# Thinking & Feeling

## UU History Retreat

**Fri., March 23—Sat., March 24, 2012**

Reserve your place now to join the Adult Coming of Age class on a special retreat at Murray Grove, a Universalist historic site and retreat center in New Jersey. We will be focusing our time on learning Unitarian Universalist history, but there will also be social time and time for spiritual practice. We will begin at dinner on Friday and go through dinner on Saturday. The cost will be determined soon (and is partially based on who would like to attend). Children are welcome. If you'd like to know more, contact Rev. Michael (mtino@uuma.org or (919) 949-1158).



## Single Moms Support

**Sunday Jan. 8 12:00-1:00 pm**

The UUFNW Single Moms Group offers confidential sharing, support, and fun for single moms and those anticipating becoming single moms. New members are always welcome. The group meets the second Sunday of each month, 12:00-1:00 pm. Contact Lisa Baker at [lbaker67@optonline.net](mailto:lbaker67@optonline.net) for more information.



**MEET  
Steve  
Petersen**

Steve Petersen moved to Westchester seven years ago from the Philadelphia area. Steve was raised in the Unitarian Church in Trenton, New Jersey, and has lived the Seven Principles since then. After trying out a few congregations in Westchester, he found his spiritual home at the UUFNW. He credits the resonance of the content and the superb presentation of services by our Minister, Rev. Michael Tino, as well as the great people in the Fellowship for his choice of congregation.

Steve is an engineer-attorney who practiced Intellectual Property law for many years, tried his hand at teaching through New York Teaching Fellows program, and has returned to his engineering roots at an instrumentation manufacturing company in Valhalla. Steve is a dance enthusiast, particularly Israeli folk dancing and contra dancing, and performed for many years with a non-profit Vintage Dance group, Mixed Pickles, that presents American social dances from 1800 to the middle of the 20th century. Steve is also an avid tennis player. Steve has three 20-something children.

He has thrown himself into many Fellowship activities, including the Building Committee, the Greeters, and the Dance Choir. We are very excited to have Steve with us and look forward to our first evening of Contra dancing!

*By Sheila Miller Bernson*



**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR's Birthday is celebrated on January 16th this year.**

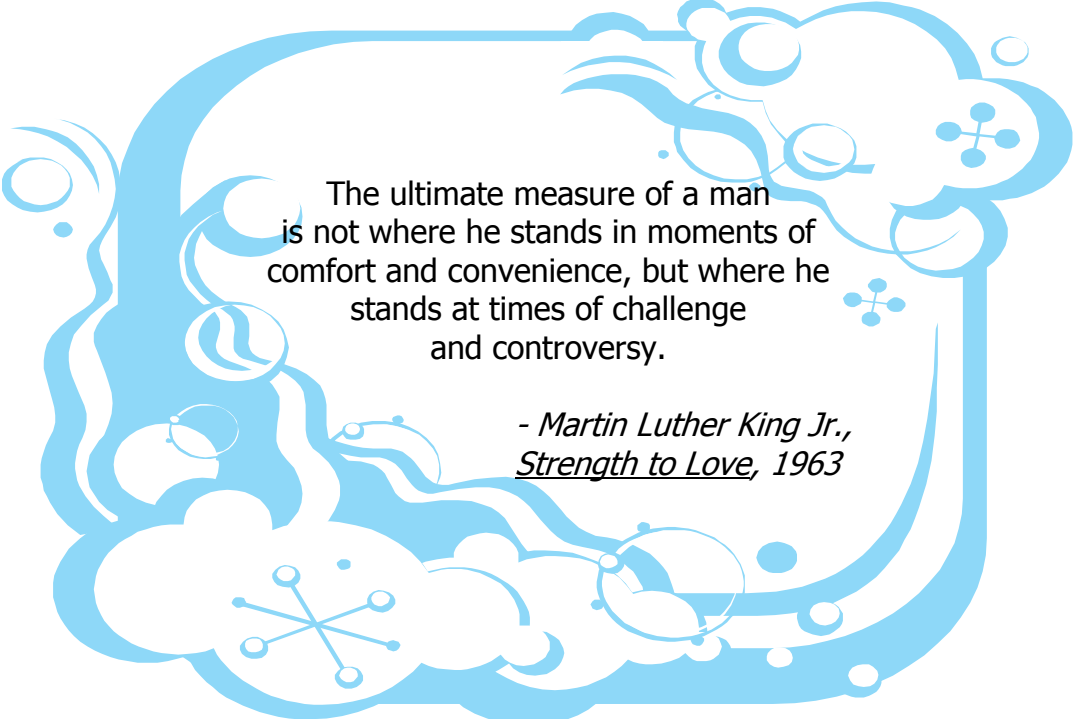




## OPEN HEARTH

*Newsletter of the*  
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The ultimate measure of a man  
is not where he stands in moments of  
comfort and convenience, but where he  
stands at times of challenge  
and controversy.

*- Martin Luther King Jr.,  
Strength to Love, 1963*

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