

# ***USNH Adult Religious Education: Fall 2004 Offerings***

**The mission of Adult Religious Education at USNH is to create conditions for spiritual growth, foster connections and commitment to USNH and Unitarian Universalism, and develop the foundations for intentional action for justice.**

## ***Taoist Meditation and Spiritual Practice***

led by Martha Ciaburri

September 30<sup>th</sup> through November 18<sup>th</sup> (8 sessions)

Thursdays, 6:15 – 7:45 pm

There are many forms of meditation and people meditate for a variety of reasons – stress reduction and relaxation, personal growth and healing, spiritual development. This practice focuses on the “heart” as a spiritual center, utilizing the inner energies of the body to create a connection to oneself and a sense of connection outside of oneself. Feelings of greater calm, balance, and strength may result, as well as increased empathy and sensitivity to others.

This course provides instruction and practice in a form of Taoist meditation, with time for discussion and sharing. Both new and experienced meditators are welcome.

The fee is \$117 for pledging USNH members, \$135 for non-pledging individuals. Payment may be made at the first class.

Martha Ciaburri has been practicing and teaching this meditation for over 17 years. Please call Martha at 287-5656 with any questions.

## ***Soul Work: Anti-Racist Theologies in Dialogue***

led by the Journey Toward Wholeness Anti-Racism

Transformation Team (Carole Arnold, Claire Bien,

Roy Money, Bobbi Pace, John Watson)

October 4<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup> (5 sessions)

Mondays, 7 – 8:30 pm

As well-intentioned UUs, each of us seeks to interact openly, justly, and humanely with every other human being, regardless of race, color, educational attainment, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or creed. Each of us is quite successful in dealing with certain kinds of people and less successful in dealing with other kinds of people. Why, in spite of our best intentions, do we sometimes fail to respond to others as warmly, humanely, and justly as we wish and they deserve? Are we prejudiced or not? To what degree do our prejudices connote racism, classism, sexism, or whatever other “isms” give definition to the all too human tendency to isolate or ignore whole groups of people, effectively dismissing their inherent worth. To what degree do our own feelings of “otherness” (or privilege) in this imperfect society influence the ways in which we interact with the rest of humanity?

The Transformation Team will lead discussions of selected essays written by UU scholars, ministers, and theologians for a 2001 consultation on theology and racism. The collection of essays is entitled *Soul Work*.

Rev. Kathleen McTigue will lead the first class, a discussion of Rosemary Bray McNatt’s “The Problem of Theology in the Work of Anti-racism”.

The other essays selected for discussion include:

“Theology’s Great Sin” by James Cone;

“Racism and Anti-Racism in a Culture of Violence” by George Tinker;

“The Paradox of Racial Oppression” by Thandeka; and  
“Not Somewhere Else, But Here” by Rebecca Parker.

The book may be purchased for the discounted price of \$16. Look for copies at the Adult RE Registration table.

## ***Book Discussion – Moral Politics:***

### ***How Liberals and Conservatives Think***

led by Kent Bendall

October 10<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> (4 sessions)

Sundays, 9:30 – 11 am

Do liberals and conservatives simply have different beliefs regarding factual issues, or do the differences run deeper – reaching to core moral beliefs?

George Lakoff applies the methods of cognitive linguistics to uncover and characterize two divergent metaphorical frameworks underlying the typical liberal and conservative positions – each rooted in distinct but equally coherent world views. These deeply ingrained but largely unconscious mind-sets, he argues, are rooted in two conflicting models of the ideal nuclear family.

One may or may not find Lakoff’s theory convincing, but his ideas are interesting and stimulating, and considering and discussing them in the UU manner – at once receptively yet critically – should prove enlightening, and perhaps of special value during this election season.

Kent Bendall, now semi-retired, was Professor of Philosophy at Wesleyan University.

Look for a flyer on the Adult RE registration table providing a more extensive overview of Lakoff’s position and a reading outline of the course. The book may be purchased for \$15. Look for copies on the Adult RE Registration table.

**please turn over for additional offerings ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨**

# ***USNH Adult Religious Education: Fall 2004 Offerings, continued***

## ***Articulating Your UU Faith***

led by Rev. Terry Lawrence  
October 12<sup>th</sup> through November 9<sup>th</sup> (5 sessions)  
Tuesdays, 7 – 9 pm  
*limited to 12 participants*

This creative course guides participants through a series of easy and engaging exercises that equip them to discover and articulate their beliefs. Activities include personal reflection, role-play, discussion and creation of a worship event (optional). This is a wonderful next step for newcomers who have completed the History and Heritage series, as well as for long-time UUs who wish to engage in further deepening of their faith. *This class is also well-suited to our high school youth.*

Terry Lawrence is an ordained Interfaith minister and a long-time Unitarian Universalist.

## ***Contributing To A Worshipful Sunday Morning***

facilitated by Sue Frankewicz and Moira Malone  
October 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> (2 sessions)  
Sundays, 10:25 – 11:10 a.m.  
*limited to 15 participants*

Our Sunday worship service is not a performance space for skilled orators; it is this community's time for connecting our lives to something larger, through reflections, meditations, poetry, song and stories. Each one of us has something to bring to this beloved gathering and everyone is invited to take an active role.

If you've been hesitant to come up front on Sunday morning, join us for a short class that will give you courage to overcome your inhibitions and make an authentic contribution to our worship service.

## ***Weekly Drop-In Meditation Group***

Thursdays, 7:30 – 8:45 pm

The Mindfulness Meditation Sitting Group is a weekly, drop-in sitting group, free and open to the public (beginners are particularly welcome). The format usually includes a 20-30 minute period of sitting meditation followed by group discussion of issues relating to one's meditation practice or of topics taken from basic Buddhist teachings. For more information, contact Vincent Cangiano at (203) 624-1998 or email [vincent@newhavenweb.com](mailto:vincent@newhavenweb.com). Or just drop in!

Our website, [www.newhavenweb.com/insight](http://www.newhavenweb.com/insight), lists any cancellations or dates we don't meet.

If you are interested in facilitating the group once a month, please contact Vincent.

## ***Creation Spirit, Planet Mind, Nature Heart: Faith for an Ecological Age***

led by Kath Schomaker  
November 7<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> (3 sessions)  
Sundays, 9:30 – 11 am

This series will provide basic eco-spiritual background for the emerging Green Sanctuary Program at USNH. Session 1 is a brief presentation followed by discussion, focused on themes from Norman Wirzba's *The Paradise of God* as starting points to reclaim the sacredness of creation within Yahwist-Christian traditions. Session 2 is an extended meditation with both silent and guided phases, drawing on Buddhist practice of Dharma Gaia. Session 3 is an experience of the medicine wheel in the Ojibway tradition. Each session is introductory only; the thread through the sessions is exploration of truly ecological spirituality.

Kath Schomaker has been an active member of USNH since Earth Day 1995; currently she chairs the Green Sanctuary Working Group.

## ***Building Your Own Theology***

led by Michael DeMarsico  
November 8<sup>th</sup> through December 13<sup>th</sup> (6 sessions)  
Mondays, 7 – 9 pm

Come reflect on your religious experiences and knowledge in this unique course focusing on identifying and expressing your own values and beliefs about "God" or ultimate reality, human nature, ethics, and the meaning and purpose of life. The program utilizes readings, reflection, activities, and group discussion to guide you in examining and articulating your own and your community's theology. And as you determine your answers to these great religious questions, you have the opportunity to craft your own credo statement as well as discover what other Unitarian Universalists believe.

Michael DeMarsico is USNH's new Director of Religious Education and is pursuing his Masters in Divinity as part of his path toward becoming a Minister of Religious Education.

Register for classes in the USNH Social Hall or by calling the administrative offices (288-1807, ext. 201).

As a courtesy, sign up for classes only when you know that you are committed to attending. If something should happen between your registration and the start of the class, please contact the facilitator as soon as possible.

Some classes will be held only with sufficient enrollment.

Classes with assigned reading tend to function well only if everyone completes the reading (or most of it!).

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