



**THE UNITARIAN CHURCH IN  
FALL RIVER**

309 North Main Street

Fall River, Massachusetts 02720

508 678-9700 • unitarianchurchfr.org

We are a welcoming congregation,  
dedicated to providing a venue for inclusion  
of all.

**November 2017**

We all remember our parents instructing us on how important it is to say “thank you” when someone has done something we appreciate, or to say it even if we didn’t always appreciate whatever it was, or even understand what it meant to appreciate something. Today, we trust, we don’t have to be reminded to express our thankfulness for the special things that others do for us, for the kindness we are shown, for the love we receive, for the gift of life itself, for that matter.

Sometimes we might wonder why the need for a single day in the year dedicated to the art or skill of saying “thank you,” especially when it is something that ought to cross our minds and our lips considerably more often. Perhaps we need more than one day. Or just perhaps we celebrate our thanks on this day, while remembering to be thankful on all the other days. Or most of them.

But of course Thanksgiving Day has many other meanings, and different levels

of meaning. For one, it is a time when families and perhaps friends get together to celebrate their relationships, their history, their values, and to remember the good times and perhaps the difficult ones.

The deeper meaning of Thanksgiving is more of a reminder to be appreciative of the broad spectrum of our being, the good times, of course, and the fun and humor of it at times, but also for the strength and the wisdom and the patience and the understanding, and all the other values and skills that help us turn what life presents into our own lives and for the better.

With luck, patience, and insight, we will see our lives in a much more positive light, and we will gain the strength and the abilities to help others do the same. So let’s prepare our Thanksgiving dinners, and prepare ourselves in whatever ways we can discover or develop to find and celebrate the varied meanings of our lives’ different moments, and to find the strength to live life to its fullest.

*CFFlagg, Minister Emeritas*

**Words alone will not  
convey our gratitude  
for life or its gifts.**

*— Anonymous*



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## **Our Service Leaders for November:**

### **November 5: Rev. Richard Trudeau**

**November 12: Rev. John Burciaga** has served UU congregations throughout the USA, and lives now in Newburyport, MA with his wife, Linda Lu. John's other career is in journalism and he continues to write editorial-page columns for daily and weekly newspapers.

**November 19: Cheryl Gardner** has been a Unitarian Universalist lay preacher for over 15 years. She is also a freelance writer, whose work has been published in the UU World Magazine. On weekdays, she works as a tutor at The Fluency Factory in Cohasset. She resides in Plympton, MA, where she is a long-time member of Channing Unitarian Universalist Church of Rockland.

**November 26: Rev. Paul Langston-Daley** - Ordained in 1997, he is a graduate of Andover Newton Theological School and the International Institute for Restorative Practices. He is passionate about social justice and human rights, and he has been involved in LGBT rights, reproductive rights, immigration issues, restorative justice projects, and Black Lives Matter. As UUSC's senior program leader for justice building, Rev. Langston-Daley grows the capacity of UU congregations to pursue sustained, systemic social change work.

*James Russell Lowell*

*"Not what we give,*

*But what we share,*

*For the gift*

*without the giver*

*Is bare."*

## **Fall Work Out**

Follow these 10 tips, and the job will not only get done quicker, but you might even feel less pain afterward.

### 1. Rake with the wind

The wind can work either for you or against you when you're raking leaves, so why not let Mother Nature pitch in?

### 2. Don't rake, mow

Early in the fall when the leaves have not yet blanketed the ground and the grass still needs mowing, you can save yourself time and effort by simply running a mulching lawn mower over the leaves instead of raking first and mowing second.

### 3. Use the right rake

Posture is important when raking. When you rake with bad posture, your back is going to hurt afterward.

### 4. Mulch what you can

Many leaf blowers also feature a vacuum/mulch setting, so if you have an ongoing compost project, mulch as many leaves as you can for your compost.

### 5. Wear gloves

If you're not used to this type of labor, raking can cause painful blisters on your hands. Always wear gloves, which should fit snugly but not too tight.

### 6. Wear a dust mask

Fallen leaves are dry and dusty, and they can produce a lot of airborne particles when you mow, mulch or rake them.



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#### 7. Use a tarp

Leaves are light, so you can transport quite a bundle of them when you use the right strategy. Rake the leaves onto a tarp, then pull the tarp to take the leaves where you need them to be.

#### 8. Stomp on the piles

You used to enjoy stomping on leaf piles when you were a kid, but as an adult this activity pays off. If you just raked a pile of leaves and you get called away before you can finish picking them up, stomp on the pile before you go. This will help prevent the wind from blowing (most of) the pile away before you get back to finishing the job.

#### 9. Rake downhill when possible

Leaves might be light, but they do follow gravitational pull. When you're raking on a slant, rake downhill whenever possible and the job will go much more quickly and easily.

#### 10. Know your limits

Leaf season lasts several weeks, so there's no rush to finish the job, especially when leaves are still on the trees. Know your limitations and don't overexert yourself.

### WHAT IS A GRATITUDE JOURNAL?

A gratitude journal is, quite simply, a tool to keep track of the good things in life. No matter how difficult and defeating life can sometimes feel, there is always something to feel grateful about.

*While it can be tough to find something to be grateful about in a rough patch, it's not just another "easy to say, but hard to do" action – it can actually help pull you out of your funk.*

Even more than that, regularly journaling about the good things in your life can help prepare and

strengthen you to deal with the rough patches when they pop up.

It's extremely simple to start: simply write down (or type) the things you are grateful for on a **daily basis**. You can use a journal, diary, notebook, or just a piece of paper. If you're committed to being green or just find it easier to do things digitally, you can use one of the many gratitude apps or even a simple Word document to tally the good things! Once you have your journal or app ready, simply start noting the things you are grateful for.

Got a promotion? Journal it!

Mastered a new yoga move? Journal it!

Received good news about a potential health problem? You guessed it – journal it!

It really is that easy.

In case you're wondering "What, exactly, will this practice do for me?" – read on to learn about the potential benefits of this simple practice.

### Benefits of a Gratitude Journal

We wrote about the benefits of a regular gratitude practice [here](#), but here are a few benefits people have noticed when practicing gratitude journaling in particular:

- Gratitude journaling, like many gratitude practices, can lower your **stress levels**.
- It can help you feel calmer, especially at night.
- Journaling can give you a new perspective on what is important to you and what you truly appreciate in your life.
- By noting what you are grateful for, you can gain clarity on what you want to have more of in your life, and what you can do without.



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- Gratitude journaling can help you find out and focus on what really matters to you.
- Keeping a gratitude journal helps you learn more about yourself and become more self-aware.
- Your gratitude journal is for your eyes only, so you can write anything you feel without worrying about judgment from others.
- On days when you feel blue, you can read through your gratitude journal to readjust your attitude and remember all the **good things in your life**. (Jessen, 2015)

## Church Events

### **Sine Nomine meets in Church every Monday evening.**

\*Sine Nomine is an auditioned chamber choir based in Fall River, MA. Now entering its 20th season, this community ensemble currently consists of eighteen voices, and performs music from the Middle Ages through the 21st-century, with a special emphasis on a cappella repertoire. Sine Nomine has collaborated with the Boston Camerata, Newport Baroque, Providence College, New Bedford Symphony Orchestra, and was featured at the 2005 Organ Historical Society National Convention. The group draws its members from across southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

**The Lower Highlands Historic Downtown Neighborhood Association** meets monthly on the first Wednesday in our function room at 6:30 pm. Their agenda includes: A police crime report, treasurer's report, and updates on neighborhood concerns. Newly defined boundaries are; the Taunton River on the west; bicentennial Park and President Avenue to the north; Highland Avenue, High Street, and Troy Street on the east; and Pleasant Street, Sullivan Drive, Pocasset Street, the lower part of

Anawan Street, and along the side of the State Pier back to the Taunton River on the south. All who live, work, or in any way support improving this area are invited to attend with their concerns. For more information, contact co-chairmen James Bartley at [bartleyw@juno.com](mailto:bartleyw@juno.com) or 508-679-8871 or Steven Camara at [steve@stevencamara.com](mailto:steve@stevencamara.com) or 508-678-1463.

### **More Events:**

Friday mornings - 9:30 to 11:00 - Course in Miracles - meets in community room (open to the general public)

Friday mornings - 11:00 to 12:00 - Dream Study - meets in community room (open to the general public)

These are happening each month:

On the second Sunday of each month the Standing Committee will meet at 12 noon. (open to members only)

A Meditation Group meets every 3rd Sunday in the Community Room at the Church from 3pm to 7pm. All are welcome.

### **Volunteer Opportunities:**

We are still looking for volunteers to help clean out the over and under growth in the Play yard and the other area in the back. If you care about the look of our house, perhaps you can come down and help us take care of the grounds. This is a request that can be accomplished without checking in with anyone. You can do it anytime you want and just bring your own yard tools. Yard waste bags can be picked up just about anywhere and they are



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really inexpensive. How about it? Make yourself feel good and others too!!

“If the only prayer you ever say in your life is thank you, it will be enough.” – *Meister Eckhart*

“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” – *John F Kennedy*

“This food is the gift of the whole universe – the sky, and much hard work. May we eat it in the mindfulness, so as to be worthy to receive it. We accept this food so that we may practice the path of understanding and love.” – *Thich Nhat Hanh*

“O Lord that lends me life, Lend me a heart replete with thankfulness.” – *William Shakespeare*

#### **Book Reviewer:**

David H. Reinke, Dave as some call him, is the 7<sup>th</sup> generation pastor in his family comprised mostly of a relatively unknown denomination, the Unitas Fratrum, or the Moravian Church. A graduate of Oberlin College, (A.B.); Andover Newton Theological School, (M.Div., D.Min.), and William James College (MS).

David has been pastor and interim pastor of many churches in the Massachusetts area, including the North Christian Church in the Steep Brook section of Fall River (where the congregation of 1st Unitarian camped out at his invitation after the predecessor building of the current building burned to the ground and the new edifice was being built.)

Despite the advanced age of 75, David maintains a busy psychotherapy practice in the Fall River, New Bedford, Cape Cod and surrounding towns. He serves mostly those afflicted with substance abuse issues, but there is the occasional person who has the need for his version of Jungian (Analytical Psychology) Analysis. He co-leads the Course in Miracles Group as well as the Dream Study Group

and Meditation Group here at The Unitarian Church.

He is the father of four sons, Jim, a contractor; Scott, a securities attorney; Josh, an engineer; and Matt, a free lance video game contractor. He has 7 or more grandchildren and two great-grandchildren so far.

Dave has four years of voice training under Jono Babbitt; 7 years of classic guitar under Dr. Keith Carreiro, as well as five or six years of violin under various instructors, not to mention 3-4 years of piano instruction.

Dave is married to the lovely and perspicacious Katherine M. Fitzpatrick, RN. BA (it would take an RN who is a psych nurse to keep such a wild individual in line.)

#### **The Book Reviewed**

#### **MAKING ROOM FOR RUMI**

By David H. Reinke, D.Min., MS

Unitarians are often refugees from other religious organizations or churches or are free spirits who like their religion without the doctrinal restrictions, admonishments or *shibboleths* that require adherence to certain tenets of belief and practice.

Sometimes this provides a certain freedom from doctrinal and authoritarian practices. But it can also cast a person adrift on the ocean of indifference to the intent and purpose that organized religion may provide.

The result is that our education in spiritual matters is left largely to us, to you, to me, moi-meme. Which means that it doesn't happen all that often.

This little piece on Rumi and the practices of the Sufi's may help redress the imbalance such a



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paucity of practice entails in our spiritual growth. This little piece on Rumi may open your eyes and heart to another way to proceed.

I think it fair to say that most of us have never heard of Rumi (*aka* Jalal al-Din Muhammed Rumi or Jalal al-Din Muhammed Balkhi, Mevlana/Maulana, Mavlev/Maulawni) was a 13<sup>th</sup> century (in the present era) Persian Sunni Muslim poet, jurist, Islamic scholar, theologian and Sufi mystic. In the Muslim religion (*aka* Moslem or Mohammedan), there are three main divisions or groupings. Most of us have heard of the *Shi'ite* and the *Sunni* Muslims, but it is less likely that we are familiar with the *Sufi*. The first two have been heard of for their militant stances on various subjects. The Sufi, however, represent the mystical aspect of the Muslim religion, and so are less well known than the other two.

Rumi (*aka* "Jeladluddin Balki") was born September 30, 1207, in Balkh, Afghanistan, which was then part of the Persian region. The name RUMI means "from Roman Anatolia." His father, Bahauddin Walad, was a theologian, jurist and mystic. At his father's death Rumi took over the position of sheikh in the dervish learning community of Konya.

In 1244 he met a stranger, the wandering dervish *Shams of Tabriz*, who had traveled throughout the Middle East searching and praying for someone who could "endure my company." A voice came, "what will you give in return?" "My head!" Then..... "The one you seek is Jelaluddin of Konya."

Shams spoke of a great question which made the learned Rumi faint. We can't be entirely certain of the question, but according to the most reliable account Shams asked who was greater, Muhammed or Bastami (the noted founder of the storied "drunken" or ecstatic school of Sufism, who

died in 874 of the current era), for Bastami had asked, "How great is my (God's) glory?" whereas Muhammed had acknowledged in his prayer to God- "we do not know you as we should."

Rumi heard the depth out of which the question came and fell to the ground. He was finally able to answer that Muhammed was greater, because, he said, Bastami had taken one gulp of the divine and stopped there, whereas for Muhammed the Way was always unfolding.

Shams and Rumi became inseparable until, after months of endless conversation, Shams disappeared. Then Rumi began the transformation into a mystical activist. He began to listen to music and sang, whirling around, and writing poems.

Here is one of those poems, entitled THE NIGHT AIR. Rumi wrote this and called it, including many of his other writings, the Works of Shams of Tabriz, because he realized that in searching for the man Shams, he was searching for himself, "because his essence speaks through me." I have been looking for *myself*."

So Rumi's writings, in his way of thinking, were really "The Works of Shams of Tabriz".

### The Night Air

*A man on his deathbed left instructions for dividing up his goods among his three sons. He had devoted his entire spirit to those sons. They stood like cypress trees around him, quiet and strong.*

*He told the town judge, "Whichever of my sons is laziest, give him all the inheritance."*

*Then he died, and the judge turned to the three,*



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“Each of you must give some account of your laziness, so I *can understand just how you are lazy.*”  
*Mystics* are experts in laziness. They rely on it, because they continuously see God working all around them. The harvest keeps coming in, yet they never even did the plowing!

“Come on, Say *something* about the ways you are lazy.”

Every spoken word is a covering for the *inner self*. A little curtain-flick no wider than a slice of roast meat can reveal hundreds of exploding suns. Even if what is being said is trivial and wrong, The listener hears the source. One breeze *Comes* from across a garden. Another from across the ash-heap.

Think how different the voices of the fox and the lion, and what they tell you!

Hearing someone is lifting the lid off the cooking pot. You learn what’s for supper. Though some people can know just by the smell, a sweet stew from a sour soup *cooked* with vinegar.

A man taps a clay pot before he buys it to know by the sound if it has a crack.

The eldest of the three brothers told the judge, “I can know a man by his voice, and if he won’t speak, I wait three days, and then I know him *intuitively.*”

The second brother, “I know him when he speaks, and if he won’t talk, I strike up a *conversation.*”

“But what if he knows that trick?” asked the judge.

Which reminds me of the mother who tells her

child, “When you’re walking through the graveyard at night and you see a boogeyman, run *at it*, and it will *go away.*”

“But what,” replies the child, “if the boogeyman’s mother has told it to do the same thing? Boogeymen have mothers too.”

The second brother had no answer.

The judge then asked the youngest brother, “*What if a man cannot be made to say anything? “I sit in front of him in silence, and set up a ladder made of patience”* “and if in his presence a language from beyond *joy* and beyond *grief* begins to pour from *my* chest, I know that his soul is as deep and bright as the star Canopus rising over Yemen. And so when I start speaking a powerful right arm of words sweeping down, I know *him* from what *I* say, and how I say it, because there’s a window open between us, mixing the *night air* of our beings.”

The youngest was, obviously, the laziest. He won.

If you have read this little story about the distribution of a man’s fortune to his sons as if it were a real discussion about finances, then you have missed the point of the story entirely.

It *is* discussing three approaches to the spiritual realm and their efficacy in integrating with the earthly realm.

### **First, the Intuitive Approach:**

Jungian Analyst James Hillman, author of many books, including [The Soul’s Code in Search of Character and Calling](#), writes “intuition is clear, quick and full. Like a revelation it comes all at once, and fast. It is quite independent of time- just as myths are timeless, and fall apart when we ask of



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them temporal questions such as “when did this occur?” “What is the origin?” Because intuitions are clear, quick and full, and therefore so convincing, they can be wholly wrong, missing the mark just as quickly and completely as they can get it right.” “Jung, who placed intuition among the four functions of consciousness, made a major point of intuition’s need for its brother and sister functions.”

Hillman notes “intuition may propose a way, but does not assure right action or even accurate perception.”

This despite Ralph Waldo Emerson’s statement that intuition “is primary wisdom.”

### **The Second Approach:**

Which is that of the Second Brother, who must have been a psychotherapist, because he spoke of a verbal intervention, which is the psychotherapist’s stock in trade: “I know him when he speaks, and if he won’t talk, I strike up a conversation.”

But this approach often doesn’t work, especially if the interviewee can’t or won’t speak. The judge blew this approach out of the water with a story about a boogeyman’s mother.

### **The Third Approach:**

The third brother had the solution: “I sit in front of him in silence, and set up a ladder made of patience.”

The key is to favor silence over conversation, contemplation over intuition. In the words of Walter T. Stace, Princeton’s professor of philosophy 50 or more years ago, one moves from

the world of dualism to the world of silence (The Night Air) or “unitary conscious” and back again.

If this occurs, then the subject, the silent interviewee, becomes as if one with the interviewer who then speaks for the silent one. Lest we think this so strange, consider Roberta Flack’s 1973 classic: “*Killing Me Softly*.” “He sang as if he knew me, in all my dark despair. And then he looked right through me, as if I wasn’t there.”

Seems impossible until you have done it.

So, as you may have noted, there is little in this religious poem that qualifies as dogma—doctrine that needs to be believed. There most certainly is an analysis of techniques and approaches that *could be emulated*—even if to others it seems like laziness in the extreme. Seems like a perfect approach for Unitarians.

### **Comments:**

Any suggestions or comments about the newsletter are welcomed and needed. We will be trying to get this out on a monthly basis from now on.





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**Holiday Special Offering**

Included with this newsletter is a virtual special offering envelope for the Holiday Season. An actual envelope will be available at our Candlelight Service. Thank you for using it. This may be returned when you come to the Candle Light Service on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, or you may mail it to the Church at 309 North Main Street, Fall River, MA 02720. Again, your support is very much appreciated. Of course, this is a virtual envelope and it is up to you to turn it into a real envelope and fill it with your support.

**Christmas Flowers**

We will be decorating the Sanctuary with Poinsettias during the Holiday season. Any one who would like to donate a plant in memory of loved ones, please see Kit Tunney or Diane Darling.

**Traditional Candlelight Service**

At this Holiday event, we will be serving light refreshments. Rev Paul Langston-Daley will be our guest minister and Nancy Donnelly will be our pianist for the service.

**Pledge Your Support!**

If you are an active member, an occasional visitor, or just one who believes the Unitarian Society is a worthy cause, we ask you to fill out and return a pledge card to the Church as soon as possible. This returned pledge card, indicating your support, would allow us to plan the year's program, activities, building and grounds expenditures, utilities, etc. We need a commitment to help us grow. That commitment needs to be your personal answer to our call. Please respond! **And, even more, we hope you will come and be an active part of this small community of freethinkers!**

**Homeless Shelter Drive**

Once again, we will be collecting socks, underwear, hats, gloves, toiletries, individually wrapped snacks for the homeless during October/November. Bring your donations to church.

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Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

In Support of the Operating Budget, my/our pledge for 2017-18 will total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I will pay in  weekly,  monthly installments,  Other.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

In addition to a pledge, I/we wish to make a special gift at this time to:

The Operating Budget of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other Special Purpose (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

The Endowment Fund of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**GENEROSITY IS GIVING  
 MORE THAN YOU CAN,  
 AND PRIDE IS TAKING  
 LESS THAN YOU NEED.**  
 — *KAHLIL GIBRAN*



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*"You are invited to"*

*The Traditional*

*Christmas*

*Candle Light Service*

*Saturday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>*

*7:30pm*

A service of readings and carols with special music for all ages

