

# The Pilgrim

Affirming the inherent worth and dignity of every person

## May services

2 May - First Sunday: Rickie Moore & Henry Marshall

### Don't just believe....experience

Freshly returned from a sojourn in the tropical environs of Bali, Rickie Moore and Henry Marshall, two of this fellowship's most inspiring members, will be inviting us, with spontaneity, Sufi songs, mantras, and interactions, to actually experience what we as UUs believe in: the inherent worth and dignity of every person; equity



and compassion in human relations; acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.

16 May - Third Sunday: Druids

### The positive side of 'desire'

The service, led by Marc Waterman and Taco Ijzerman, frequent visitors to the NUUF, will have a modern druidic flavour, and will weave the theme "Putting your faith into practice" into the Beltane ceremony.

In druidry, we celebrate 8 festivals during the year. Beltane, on the first day of may, traditionally is the time of fertility rites.

Desire, hormones, the need to mate, you can see it all around in nature, but also in the city. In many European folk customs, the remnants of the pre-Christian fertility rites are still strongly present.

To make the connection between faith and practice we

will work with desire during the service.

In our Internet society, and even in some religious groups, desire has developed in perverse and dangerous directions. We will try to honour our desire as a positive driving force, that makes our strivings fertile, both for ourselves and for our planet.

What needs and desires do you really have, deep within? Harmony, health, growth, love, unity, naturalness? And what can you do in your daily life to fulfill them? Is it something you can do alone? Often you don't have to do this alone. And what makes our strivings fertile?



This photograph of a maypole dance in a school in Wales in 1920 shows how many of the pre-Christian customs lived on, unbeknownst (?) to the participants.

President's Message: Krissy Ferris

### Home is where the...is??

Heraclitus is credited with saying that "change alone is unchanging." The Buddha identified clinging, attachment, or grasping (Sanskrit: upādāna) as the cause of suffering. And yet, we persist in attaching ourselves to things that we know will change, looking for solidity where there is only fluidity. Is it possible to live in another way?

At first glance, I thought it was impossible (short of enlightenment, but let's stick to the mortal realm for now). People seem fundamentally drawn to stability and certainty. A prime example is the pull that traditional religions have, at least partially, by offering certitude about truth, meaning, and life. However, if we follow the example of religion into our own, what do we find?

A unifying principle of UUism is the "free and responsible search for truth and meaning". This suggests that the stability and certainty that draws us together is a collective understanding that reality is uncertain. It is not directionless uncertainty, but rather uncertainty with a certain striving - instead of being goal-oriented (it could say, "finding in a responsible way"), the focus is on the process, on the search.

This struck me lately, as I was contemplating the idea of "home", and how to feel grounded. Con-

ventionally, this has been done through the cultivation of a particular physical space, "homemaking" in the literal sense. But as we move into a highly mobile modern world, more and more of us find that attaching the concept of "home" to a physical address is too ephemeral to be meaningful. In the past five years, I've lived in six different apartments on two continents, and the number of different cities, hotels, rooms that I've called "home" for at least a night during the same period are too numerous to count. In this kind of a nomadic life, what does it mean to be at home?



This was a question I raised at the recent European Unitarian Universalist retreat. The most satisfying answer that I heard was that you could create a "home" within your self, such that you feel connected to yourself and thus centered, regardless of where in the world you find yourself. I liked that idea because it speaks to the appeal of maintaining consistency in the face of change, a way of clinging to the one (ever-changing) constant that we will always have: ourselves.

On the other hand, I wonder if it is possible to make peace with the flux of life, to avoid that clinging entirely; in other words, to be



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The May services will be held on 2 & 16 May at 2 p.m. in the Keizersgracht Church, Keizersgracht 566, Amsterdam.  
*Bring a friend (or a total stranger)*

## The Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism

The Netherlands Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, as part of the European Unitarian Universalists and affiliated with Unitarians and Universalists around the world, covenants to affirm and promote:

- \* The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- \* Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- \* Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- \* A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- \* The right of conscience & the use of the democratic process within our congregations & in society at large;
- \* The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- \* Respect for the interdependent web of all existence, which we are part of.

The living tradition that we share draws from many sources:

- \* Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces that create and uphold life;
- \* Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- \* Wisdom from the world's religions, which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- \* Jewish and Christian teachings that call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- \* Humanist teachings that counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
- \* Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions that celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As a free congregations we enter into this covenant with others, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

# The energy of Beltane

By Christina Tomlow-de Muinck Keizer  
NUUF Women's Group

**B**eltane – also known as May Day – is one of two Celtic fire festivals. It stands exactly opposite to Samhain (Halloween) on the Wheel of the Year. While Samhain honors the necessity of death, Beltane celebrates life and fertility returning to the world. It is a time for pleasure; pleasure in the returning warmth of the sun, the greening of the Earth and pleasure in being alive.

The word Beltane literally means 'bright' or 'brilliant fire,' and refers to the bonfires lit in honor of Bel, the god of light, fire and healing. At this time the Goddess (in her Maiden form) and the God unite so the land can be fruitful once again. Celebrations traditionally included dancing and singing around Maypoles and bonfires. Flowers were placed about the home. Beltane fire ashes would be spread throughout the fields to ensure a fruitful crop. Beltane usually marks the end of the planting season and the beginning of tending the crops.

As I bike to work and see the lambs cavorting in the meadow, I am reminded that above all this is a time of youth. It's a time for relishing in the corporality of life. The natural world is alive with the unbridled energy of youth.

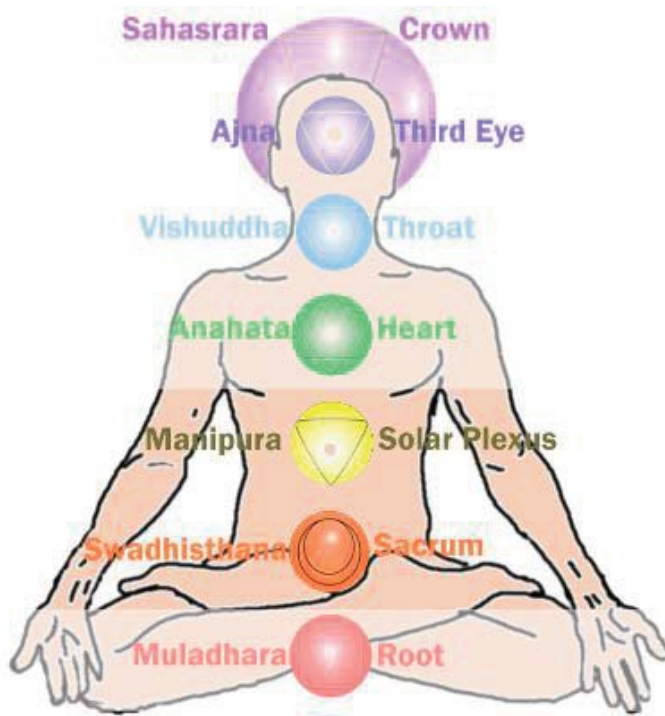
This energy is primarily governed by the second and third chakra's; the sacral chakra and the solar plexus. The sacral chakra (right below the navel) represents our sense of self and confidence. Sensuality and sexuality are experienced from this chakra. It corresponds to the element

water and the expression of creativity. The solar plexus (right above the navel) corresponds to the element fire and the expression of emotions. It houses the sun energy in our body which gives rise to our personal power and ability to assert ourselves. These are all qualities we tend to explore in our youth.

It is helpful to recognize youth as an energy and not just a period in our life. This allows us to delve into, explore and re-discover the energy of youth at all stages of life. We can let go of the linear thinking that at 40 our youth is a closed chapter. Compare a human lifespan to one year's cycle: youth is spring, the young adult years are summer, the parenting years are fall and winter is the time of old age – wisdom and reflection. And in our life the cycle of the year returns again and again. Consequently, each year we spiral through all these energies, which resonate in the natural world and in us.

So, this Beltane explore the fiery energy of youth. Celebrate your sensuality, sexuality and your body in general. Express yourself, be creative and most of all... enjoy!

Bright Blessings,



The second chakra governs the sense of self & confidence and sensuality & sexualit. The third chakra governs the emotions and personality.

# Milestone events at 6 June service

When planning your Sunday activities for 6 June, next, you should remember that two important events - in addition to the service itself, of course - are taking place at the NUUF service on that day for those who want to take their participation in the fellowship to a new level, to wit: the welcoming of new members and the yearly elections.

Those who have decided that they would like to officially become a member in the fellowship are welcome to sign our book and to be welcomed as a full voting member.

And once they have done that, they will be empowered, as all the other members are, to vote in the elections for the four elected board positions, President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Worship Coordinator/Secretary, which will be held immediately following the service.

Both of these events are important milestones in the life of any fellowship. If at all possible, you are encouraged to be in attendance and help to keep us on the path of fellowship, spiritual pilgrimage and growth that we are all individually, and all of us collectively embarked on.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Cont'd from page 1

"at home" in the process of living, instead of in the destinations. The nomadic part of me finds this notion appealing - that's the part of me that loves the feeling of sliding between crisp hotel room sheets.

Each place is a new adventure, a new smell, a new set of sounds to wake up to in the morning; it appeals to the drive of my curiosity.

On the other hand, part of me thinks that being at home in the process is a dreamy but impractical idea. This is the logistical part of me - floating around the globe is great, but when will I do the laundry? Why is my grocery store closed on Sunday? Is my cactus dying of dehydration?

This line of questioning brings me fiercely back to earth, and makes me want to settle in one place. Surely it would be easier to

water the cactus regularly if I had a regular schedule myself!

I suspect that, as with everything else in life, the answer lies in balance. Technology has certainly opened the door to the supporting a mobile lifestyle, but our way of conceptualizing home, as a culture, hasn't quite caught up. Perhaps the unease comes not because we lack a "home", but because our homes don't look the same as those of previous generations - maybe they're not tangible at all. Could it be that what we need is not a mourning of the loss of "homemaking", but instead a realization that we can make ourselves at home in the process of living our lives?



Dallis Rademaker and Derek Suchard giving a stirring rendition of Desiderata and a parody thereof at the open stage on Saturday night at the EUU Retreat in Oberwesel.

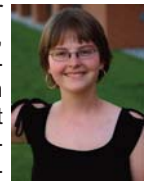
## Religious Education

Parents of RE children are reminded that there will be no RE in the May services. There **WILL** be an RE class at the last service of the year on 6 June.

## European UU

### NUUF President now also V-P of EUU

Kristina Ferris, our very own President, was elected Vice-President of the European Unitarian Universalists, at the Annual General Meeting held during the EUU retreat in Oberwesel, Germany in April, putting her at the beating heart of the UUcommunity of communities.



We are pleased to share Krissy with the greater community, and look forward to the enthusiastic contributions she has to make for the betterment of us all.

### Mittel Where?

And speaking of logistics (see Krissy's message), the EUU Fall Retreat from 29-31 October 2010 is being held in beautiful downtown Mittelwihr, which you would be forgiven for assuming was in Germany...it's actually in the Alsace, a region at the top right corner of *la belle France*, in the *departement* of Haut-Rhin, (see map), and somewhat more distant than recent retreats have been.

Depending on your starting point, Mittelwihr is between 600 and 700 km from points in the Netherlands. The nearest big traffic hub (for trains and planes) is Strasbourg, followed by a reasonably long drive (and an even longer bike ride).

It is about 15 minutes from a high-speed train station at Colmar, and 62 km from the airport at Strasbourg (68 km from the airport in Basel, Switzerland).

Well, they don't call it travel (= *travail* (work)) for nothing, you know.





## You are Invited!

to take part in

An International Unitarian/Universalist  
Theological Symposium

Belonging: Our Unitarian Identities  
and the Nature of our Relations

July 13 – 17, 2010

Rolduc Conference Center, Kerkrade,  
The Netherlands

Our focus will be theological exploration and discussion, of who we are as U-U's, in the many places in which we live and work, and of how we belong – to each other, to our global movement, to the world around us, and to God or Life.

For registrations - e-mail [execsec@icuu.net](mailto:execsec@icuu.net)



## IARF Congress

4-7 September  
Kochi, Kerala, India -

"Beyond Conflict to Reconciliation:  
The Challenge of the 21st Century"

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama will deliver  
the inaugural address at the  
Opening Ceremony,  
on Saturday, 4 September 2010.

to register, go to:

<http://www.iarf.net/>

International Association of Religious Freedom

### NUUF Services 2009-2010

<p><b>2 May</b> Rickie Moore &amp; Henry Marshall "Don't Just Believe....Experience"</p> <p><b>16 May</b> Druids "The Positive Side of 'Desire'"</p>	<p><b>6 June</b> Rev. Derek Suchard "Service to whom" + Membership book signing + NUUF Board elections</p>
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### NUUF Services

The Netherlands Unitarian Universalist Fellowship services usually begin with a candle-lighting ceremony and sharing of joys or concerns.

Each month a minister or a member of our congregation presents information about a particular religion, spiritual quest or another topic of interest to religious liberals.

Music and singing is always a part of our service but we also provide time for contemplation and meditation. After the

service we have a social hour with coffee, tea, juice, refreshments and, of course, good company. We meet at 2 o'clock in the afternoon on the first or second Sunday of the month (Sept. to June) at the Keizersgrachtkerk, Keizersgracht 566, Amsterdam.

For more information contact Bill Britt on 015 369-2614 or by e-mail at [wwjebritt@gmail.com](mailto:wwjebritt@gmail.com).

We hope to see you!

### NUUF contacts

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(conciierge)

**website: [www.nuuf.nl](http://www.nuuf.nl)**



### The Caring Group

The NUUF's Caring Group invites you to call someone from the Group if you need some help. You can also call one of us if you know of someone in the group who could use a helping hand, emotionally or otherwise, but who cannot call us for some reason. And, of course, please let us know if you would like to add your name and number to the group list:

Rev. Derek Suchard  
023 562 8681  
or 06- 203 379 64  
Willem van Leenhoff  
071-523 25 96  
Dallis Rademaker  
06 10947649

### Masthead

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Articles, information or illustrations for publication in *The Pilgrim* may be submitted at the Fellowship service, by post or e-mail by the 10th of the month to Derek Suchard.

### Service helpers

Service helpers help to prepare the church for the service and help at the bar after the service.

Helpers are asked

- 1) to come early to help set up and take down the service : set out hymnals, name tags, altar cloth, candles, etc.
- 2) to bring flowers or some altar decoration
- 3) to bring some cookies or baked goods for the 'coffee and conversation' hour
- 4) to help Jan in the kitchen and behind the serving bar.

May 2: Rosemary and \_\_\_\_\_  
May 16: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
June 6: Willem and Els

If you can fill in your name to be a helper in the missing blanks, please e-mail Bill Britt at

[wwjebritt@gmail.com](mailto:wwjebritt@gmail.com)

### The NUUF Women's Group

meets on the second Friday of each month at 7 p.m.

For information, contact Christina Tomlow on  
030-288-7657.

