

## News from St. Lawrence District Congregations, Spring 2008

**Albany** has set up a new planning committee to facilitate discussions during the next year among FUUSANs about who they are as a congregation, what they are called to do at this time, and who are their neighbors.

A FuturesTeam has been created in **Barneveld** to lead the congregation in molding a vision of the future, to help it set priorities, and to suggest a pathway to that future.

The **Canton** congregation is examining class issues in an effort, according to Co-Minister Anne Marsh, "to think together about how we can open our doors even wider, and how we can help everyone who walks through those doors feel accepted and included."

The Earth Day celebration organized by the **Fredonia** congregation, EarthFest 2008, attracted more than 300 guests to the environment-themed small group discussions, information displays, coffee sales, silent auction, children's activities and evening concert.

The Oneonta Community Health Center, organized to provide free health care to those without health insurance, will open July 1. The **Oneonta** congregation initiated the project more than two years ago to meet a significant community need.

**Saratoga Springs** has appointed four mediators as staff for the congregation's Dispute Settlement Procedure, which offers the confidential assistance of a neutral third party in clarifying and resolving disputes within the congregation.

Knitters at **Schenectady** are forming a group to work with Afghans for Afghans, a project that sends hand-knit and crocheted wool blankets, sweaters, vests, hats, mittens and socks to the people of Afghanistan.

Rev. David Blanchard has challenged members of the **Utica** congregation to donate 500 rolls of toilet paper during May. Rev. Blanchard says the mountain of toilet paper will "...help remind ourselves, through a very visual device, what a difference a relatively small group of people can make." The rolls will be distributed to local agencies that serve the poor.