



The Flaming Chalice

The newsletter of The Unitarian Universalist Community Church
69 Winthrop Street ~ PO Box 8 ~ Augusta, ME 04332-0008

June 2015



June



June 7

Annual Meeting

Board of Trustees

Friends, integrated within our ten o'clock service, UUCG will hold our Annual Meeting. As is our tradition, the Board of Trustees will report on the year, By Law changes will be entertained (though none have been proposed at this point), and next year's budget will be voted upon. We urge you to attend, as a quorum is necessary. The Annual Meeting is a bedrock of UU tradition, uplifting and (dare I say it?) entertaining. Come help our congregation embody our Fifth Principle, *"the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations"*.

June 14

Flower Communion

Nicole Danielson

Join us for this year's Flower Communion, an important event in the calendar year of the Unitarian Universalist faith tradition and this church. Bring a flower to join all the others on our altar and take one home another following this stunning celebration of the spirit of spring and community.

June 21

Summer Solstice: Gods,
Goddesses and Summer Spirit

Helen Zidowecki

Goddess/Earth Circles celebrate connection between summer, the sun and our spirituality. Join us as we move into summer, literally.

June 28

Four Agreements

Helen Zidowecki

This worship service is the result of an Adult Enrichment class. The group will illustrate how the power of "The Four Agreements" -- Be impeccable with your word, Don't take things personally, Don't make assumptions, and Always do your best -- can transform lives. It certainly has for the participants of this class as you will hear in this worship service.

A Faith Journey...by Rev. Carie Johnsen

A message from sabbatical to say how excited I am to be planning ahead to my return August 24th and a new church year. I am looking forward to returning to a full church year and collaborating with the new professional staff team. Lynn, Nicole, Monique and Bridget have done a phenomenal job over the year keeping the vision and mission of UUCB thriving. Nicole and Monique have provided meaningful programs for our children and youth; Bridget quickly orientated to leading our choir and bringing her touch to Sunday services; Lynn has jumped right in to improve our office systems and respond to the needs of the community. We have been blessed with a solid staff team. I can't wait to work alongside them as we collaborate around program and worship next year. We have already begun our planning and are excited to be together in mid August.

Next year we will continue with theme based ministry by connecting with the UU theme based ministry network and adopting the themes of the Soul Matters Circle along with 25+ congregations across the nation. We look forward to contributing to and accessing resources and tools developed by all the participating congregations. I suspect this will bring a fresh and diverse voice to our Soul Matters packet. The themes selected by the team of congregations involved are as follows:

2015-16 Soul Matters Themes

What does it mean to be a people of...

Sept: Invitation
Oct: Letting Go
Nov: Ancestry
Dec: Expectation
Jan: Resistance
Feb: Desire
Mar: Liberation
Apr: Creation
May: Blessing
June: Simplicity

See you in August. Have a great summer. May the gift of the summer sun bring you abundant rest, joy and peace.

In faith, Rev. Carie

Coming soon!!

Everyday Ordinary Theologies

A blog and website
by Rev. Carie Johnsen

Launch date: June 1, 2015
Stay tuned for more information on
how to subscribe to her most recent posts.



President's Column....

Assuming Best Intentions

In our meetings as a church – at whatever level of leadership, committee, congregation, RE – we tend to try to explicitly state the norms of that meeting. “Norms” are a list of assumptions that the participants agree to hold that will facilitate good communication and, we hope, increase the quality of communication going on.

One of my favorite of these norms is “**Assume Best Intentions.**” Usually it will be on the list, and if it's not I'll suggest adding it. Asking folks to **Assume Best Intentions** is a plea to optimism or, conversely, a plea against cynicism. Essentially, it means that unless you have *evidence* otherwise, assume a person making an argument or proposal or asking a question is doing so out of sincere good intent. Perhaps it seems obvious? In our church community, our community of faith, of course we would lend each other the benefit of the doubt – assuming best intentions.

Still, this can be difficult to do. We are human beings, emotional and passionate, and we hold issues close to our heart. Questioning the motives and sincerity of someone who asks a question that seems to jab at our values (*question* our values) is a natural way of argument. It's natural, but not helpful. Also, let's face it; questioning motives and values is rhetorically very powerful. Aristotle was only the first to point out that you can often win an argument by choosing to have a different, more personal, argument.

Here's the thing. In assuming best intentions, we realize we very well may be wrong! We make assumptions in the *absence* of evidence. Still, I will urge you, **assume best intentions**. It may make any individual piece of the conversation awkward or problematic – or you could misread one particular person – but the quality of the conversation *as a whole* will rise in quality. The focus will be on the merits of the work and its mission. **Assuming best intentions** is an act of generosity that actually pays off.

One of our goals as a church is to have communication that is “abundant, transparent, and compassionate.” **Assuming best intentions** promotes abundance because it encourages an environment free of resentment and suspicion. More importantly, **assuming best intentions** is a central aspect of engaging each other with compassion and faith.

Thanks,

Gary Chapin

Goddess Continuing/ Earth Circles...

The Women of Wisdom (WOW) Open House brought sharing about wisdom, our own and what we experience from others. We are surrounded by people of wisdom and are saddened to hear they too often shy away from acknowledgment. We live our wisdom every day, all ages, all genders. Consider who you call wise. Consider your own wisdom and join us for the wisdom conversations.

September 27 Wisdom Through Our Lives. What wisdom do we gain with the experiences during the decades of our lives? How does that influence who we are now?

We would like to have women and men of all ages join us, including youth. This can be held with a diverse group, or some time with same gender or age groups. Look for more information in the August newsletter.

October 25 Women of Wisdom Celebration. Our last ceremony was October 2012. This comes from the tradition of Croning, or honoring of wise women.

Reflect on these questions: How do you acknowledge your own wisdom? How do you share your wisdom?

Then join the celebration yourself and/or talk with women about participating in these events.

In addition, we will have Connection gatherings throughout the summer. We have found it helpful to meet informally, usually around the picnic table in the yard, for check-in. We bring our own lunch and may bring things to share. These are scheduled for:

June 21 (after the Summer Solstice Service),
July 26, and August 23.

For more information, contact Helen Zidowecki (582-5308, hzmre@hzmre.com)

Nonviolent Communications

Nonviolent/Compassionate Communication (NV/CC) is based on the human needs and feelings that underlie all behavior. Some basic premises are that:

All actions are attempts to meet needs

Human needs are universal - we all have the same needs

Feelings result from needs being either met or unmet – when *needs* are met we feel *happy, pleased, etc.* – when needs are *unmet* we feel *sad, hurt, anxious, scared, angry, etc.*

The process focuses on observation, identifying feelings and needs, and stating a request.

Tom Waddell attended the *Nonviolent Communication Level I Training: Clear & Compassionate Communication* workshop in Lewiston on May 16 & 17, 2015, with Leah Boyd, a professional mediator, facilitator and trainer.

A practice group, for those who have had at least Level I training, meets on the first and third Fridays, 1:15 -3:15 p.m. in the Robbins Room. (Summer St. entrance). Meetings in June are:

June 5: Informal meeting, which may include an Empathy Session

There will be a Celebration of Life for Barbara Thurlow at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church on Saturday, June 20, 2015, at 1:30 p.m., followed by a reception in the Fellowship Hall. Barbara was a long-time member of UUCU who moved to be with her family in Vermont in 2010. For more information, contact Rev. Helen Zidowecki

History Committee...

The History Committee meets on the second Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to noon in the Drew House, and we work on projects on the other Thursday mornings.

You are invited to our **June 11** meeting for open discussion of:

- The role of History in this congregation
- What we have in our historic collection and current activities
- Planning for next year

In addition to enhancing what we are currently doing, we will discuss how and where history can be visible in our congregation, and capturing church history in an electronic age.

For more information, contact Heide Munro at 622-7395 or heide.munro@gmail.com

Thank You to the Congregation...

Dear UUCC Members and Friends,

Please accept the gratitude of the Finance Committee, the Stewardship Committee, the Board of Trustees, and (since we are a representative body) the Congregation of the Church. You have been gracious in your response to the initial Pledge request and to our more recent Call for Action. We have met our goal and have been able to propose a budget that we're proud of. The budget will be presented to the congregation for approval at our June 7th Annual Meeting (though the budget will be available sooner). Again, thank you.

Throughout what became an extended Stewardship season, we have drawn in the voice of our members and weighed the needs of the church as a whole. We try to forge a path that both lives our church's mission and is sustainable. We try to allocate resources that are remarkable in their finitude. There has been conflict, as there should be in any democratic organization, but it has been marked by the fact that at every step we have recognized the best intentions of all.

We appreciate your traveling this process with us – co-conspirators in Faith.

The budget and annual report will be sent out in a few days. Then we will talk on the seventh of June at the Annual Meeting.

Gary Chapin, Board Chair
Wick Johnson, Finance Chair
Hilary Neckles, Stewardship Chair

INSIDE/OUTSIDE YARD SALE

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY
CHURCH

69 WINTHROP STREET, AUGUSTA
SATURDAY June 6, 2015
8:30 AM to 1:30 PM

Hannah's Boutique- known for
lovely treasures

Café serving refreshments

Sports equipment ** Household goods **
Baby Items ** Men's stuff ** Plant table **
Clothing ** Luggage ** Books ** Toys **
and MUCH MORE!

Call Hannah at 293-9377 or
Terry at 445-2942
To tell us when you will bring
your contributions.



News from RE....

Hello All,

The Peace Jam and Coming of Age Youth Programs are vibrant and energized; our youth were actively engaged and committed to the programs throughout the RE year!

On Sunday, May 3rd, our Coming of Age (COA) youth hosted our Worship Service and shared their faith statements with the congregation. It was powerful and inspirational! *Thank you COA youth* for your openness and your commitment to the program; for your wisdom, your insights and for making it FUN!

A special *Thank You to the adult volunteers* in our community who helped our youth work toward their Coming of Age Credo's: Tonia Rieter, Jenny McKendry, Cheryl Abruzzese, Marty Soule and Lynn Deeves, Liz Johnson and Terry Cookson Cairn; for being a supportive COA youth Mentor, Annie Voorhees; for all her help and support as our COA youth Mentor and my teaching partner, Janine Bonk.

On May 10th our Peace Jam (PJ) youth hosted both worship services that included their project presentation for Shirin Ebadi at the PJ Conference. *Thank you Peace Jam youth* for your positive, inspirational, happy spirits, can-do energy and beliefs with conviction! **Change Starts Here!**

A special *Thank you* to my Partnering Peace Jam Advisor, John Barnes, and *Thank you* to all our actively supportive Peace Jam parents!! We are grateful!!

Next fall we will be adding the *Our Whole Lives (OWL)* program for K-1(2), 4-6, 7-8(9) grades. OWL explores human sexuality and development within the context of relationships and the UU values of inherent dignity and respect for all people.

I work diligently to uphold the values and principles of the UUCC mission and vision for our youth. I continue to strive to create a safe space for them in our programs so they may explore and discover their world, their ideas and their relationships, creating lasting bonds and bridges with each other and their community that will give them strength as they grow and become. The energy and light that is supported and grows in our youth with these programs strengthen and inspire me and my role as your Youth Advisor.

Rev. Carie, Nicole, and I are already making plans for next years RE programs. We will be meeting again in the late summer to concur and confirm our RE plans and intentions for 2015/2016. We are grateful to the dedicated and positive support of our RE Committee. Carie, Nicole and I are passionate, inspired, excited and committed to our UUCC RE program this fall. Nicole and I will not be jumping on board in October, but planning and organizing with a positive and rejoicing spirit over the summer!

The great end in religious instruction is not to
stamp our minds upon the young,
but to stir up their own.

William Ellery Channing

Monique McAuliffe

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Newsletter Submissions

Please submit all articles as an attachment in a Word document using Arial font size 11. Don't forget to give it a title and sign it, and send it as an email newsletter@augustauu.org with the article as an attachment. Photos of church activities welcome!

Deadline: June 15.

Minister: Rev. Carie Johnsen

President: Gary Chapin

Sunday Morning RE Coordinator: Nicole Danielson
Youth Advisor: Monique McAuliffe

Administrator: Lynn Smith
admin@augustauu.org

UU Office hours:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9am-3pm
Wednesday noon-6pm

Choir Director: Bridget Convey
Choir Practice Wednesday 6-8pm
Small Group Ministry Coordinator: Kathy Kellison
Office: (207) 622-3232

Rev. Carie's office hours:

Monday 11:00 - 5:00
Tuesday Writing Day
Wednesday 2:00 - 6:00
Friday Sabbatical - Day off & by appointment