



The Flaming Chalice

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

June 2016

Theme:
Simplicity

SUNDAY SERVICES

June 5th *Annual Meeting as Spiritual Practice* *Rev. Carie Johnsen*
UUC Board of Trustees

The business of the church is as much a spiritual practice as anything we do on Sunday morning, or Tuesday night or Wednesday at noon. In this service the spiritual practice of church governance is a tangible expression of our faith.

June 12th *Flower Communion* *Rev. Carie Johnsen*
Brigid Chapin

In this annual multigenerational service the symbolism of flowers highlights the tradition of bringing a flower to service.

June 19th *Mentors* Cricket Gottlieb
Lucy Gottlieb
Sedona Kmen
Liam McAuliffe

Our personal journeys are guided and shaped by those around us. Our young people come forward this Sunday with thoughts about what makes a mentor, leader, or teacher, demonstrating a practice of religious exploration wherein anyone can be a mentor and a student, and we all have something to learn from, and teach to, one another.

June 26th *TBA*

A Faith Journey...

A Faith Journey...

Ministry is a privilege! Serving the good people of UUC is a blessing! Even on busy weekends when my head and heart and spirit are being stretched and pulled all over this great city. Friday evening with the youth, Saturday morning with fifty activists (MUUSAN), Saturday afternoon holding space for grief (Barbara DeWolfe), Saturday night with Augusta's Citizen of the Year (Wick Johnsen), tomorrow morning blessing the animals, and tomorrow afternoon I get a bit of respite (meaning I don't have anything to write or any role to play) at the UUC Choir and Orchestra Spring Concert. There is great joy and deep contentment in the call to be present to all that is our life!!!

~ Rev. Carie Johnsen, Facebook post May 14, 2016

Nine months ago I returned from my sabbatical ready to enter into deep relationship with the congregation I was called to serve. I arrived back knowing I had been changed by my time away, knowing my three months in Wales was a transformative experience. I also knew that the power of that transformation, the depth and breadth of that transformation, would more fully reveal itself and emerge in my ministry as the year unfolded.

For the first six years of my ministry, I had imagined a day when I would take my ministry back to the shores of Cape Cod. I had imagined that my ministry in Maine would align with the average 8-10 years of service. Interestingly enough, during the early days of my sabbatical, I also believed I was being called out of Parish Ministry into a more focused justice ministry. With all this on my mind, I entered year seven at UUC looking ahead to year eight and I stayed open to follow the path as revealed by something greater than myself. Transformed by my time in Llangadog and Gwynfe, Wales, I am not at all surprised by where my call has lead me this past year.

Staying in Llangodog, where the local post office, pub, market, butcher and the Parish of my ancestors were only a few doors down, was the vision that drew me to an apartment in downtown Augusta. Recognizing the poetry of village life, I wanted to nurture a bit of the same in my days here in Maine. Life on Water Street evokes my partiality for life at The Great House. Putting down roots in the community I serve changes the patterns, rhythms and rituals of my days.



I recall one day, Glenys, the Secretary at my ancestors chapel in Gwynfe, said to me, "I hope you don't mind that we talk about you." I replied, "No, I grew up in a small town where people talked about each other all the time." Whereupon she lovingly corrected me. "Oh," she said, "we are not

gossiping about you. We talk about you because we care. You are a part of this village now. We talk about you because we want to know you are ok. We are looking after you." I return to this simple conversation over and over again as I watch my ministry becoming rooted in the "village" of Augusta. As I keep asking myself, "How will I be part of creating, nurturing and sustaining a community that cares for each other?"

Over the past several months I have begun to describe myself as a Parish Minister with an active community presence rooted in relationships, interfaith community and justice building. Much to my surprise, I am putting down roots in Augusta, in my downtown neighborhood, in my ministry at the church, and it feels right and it feels good!



I have let go of my limited imagination that was holding 8-10 years as a measure of a good ministry. Today, I measure my ministry by the days our shared ministry is rich and bountiful and serving the grace of Love in an aching and joyful universe.

In faith, Rev. Carie

President's Column....

It is May of 2016, my last month as President of the Board of Trustees, and it ends, as it began, in budget season.

I am fascinated by budget processes – really! I almost (ALMOST) wrote my dissertation on public budget meetings at public schools in Maine. This was when I was a curriculum coordinator at RSU16 (Mechanic Falls, Minot, and Poland). The conversations are heartfelt and can be fierce. The best of us can become frustrated and leave our best selves behind. I don't think I'm saying anything controversial. Hard conversations are hard. But those conversations, examples of "ordinary democracy," are where the community decides what matters. It is in those conversations that we prioritize and reify our values – we make our values real and bring them into the world.

As with schools, so with churches. Hard conversations are hard. They should be. In our budgets, we make our values real.

This has been an amazing year for UUCC, and I know you have felt it. The energy crackles every Sunday morning. From the service, RE, the youth, the music, book readings and discussions, and even coffee hour! New people come in and bring their families. Over a dozen signed the Book at the last new members' ceremony, and the last new members' dinner was packed. And we are reaching out, both in matters of faith and social justice. We have our best game on, right now.

What accounts for this? Any number of things – including *all of you* – but one of the most important is that we have the strongest paid staff that we have had for years. Bridget, Monique, Brigid, and Lynn are complete rock stars in their roles and also wonderful ambassadors for the church.

In the budget for next year, the Board of Trustees is proposing that all staff be brought up to a level of Living Wage. This is driven by a number of imperatives. First, UUCC has long been an advocate of both Minimum Wage and Living Wage initiatives, and the UUA has a clear set of Fair Compensation Guidelines for all levels – including that of minister. Second, our staff members are beloved and necessary and respected members of our community. It behooves us to support them in a way that comprises that love and respect. There are other concerns – the repair of our hundred year old piano among them.

We sent a note out to the congregation, explaining where we were, and what issues we were facing. In doing this we were acting on our desire for transparency in all things, whether there's a crisis or things are going okay.

Things are going okay. By pointing out that we were looking for the money to fund things like the piano, or the Living Wage initiative, we weren't issuing code for "these are in danger of not being funded" or "choose one or the other." Money does have to be found. That's a fact, not a threat. Which makes me pleased to know that we've constructed a budget that meets all of these needs, enacting our vision and making our values real.

Please join me on June 5, at our Annual Meeting, to celebrate our year, elect new officers, and approve this budget. Ordinary democracy is a glorious thing.

Gary Chapin

UUCC Yard Sale-Can You Help?

UUCC Yard Sale Help and Donations Wanted for June 10th Setup and June 11th Sale

Yard Sale donations wanted beginning Sunday, May 29th for small items. If you have large furniture or many boxes of items, please hold them at your home until the June 10th setup day unless you absolutely must move these items sooner. Much of the garage space is currently needed for carpentry work and yard maintenance equipment.

Can you help out at the June 11th Inside/Outside Yard Sale this year? Some of you have already volunteered to set up, or sell, or both for the 2016 Spring Sale at the end of this week. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. Please let Terry, Betty or Hannah know what time frames work for you and in what section you'd like to work. We will have a Café, and we will sell from the Fellowship Hall, the Garage and the Yard.

We are selling books, clothing, plants and household items as well as tools, appliances, and furniture. Please do not bring any electronic items such as TV sets and computers, etc. There will be lots of interesting donated items to set up and price on Friday, June 10 between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. and to sell on Saturday, June 11 between 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Clean-up will take place on Saturday afternoon. Looking forward to hearing from you soon. You can reach Terry & Betty at 445-2942 or tlcnaturalhealth@yahoo.com and Hannah at 293-9377 or hannahuu3@fairpoint.net.



George Mitchell: Starting Out Reading...

Come join us in the sanctuary Sunday, June 12 after the Flower Communion service for the first public reading from Doug Rooks' new biography of Senator George Mitchell, "Statesman: George Mitchell and the Art of the Possible," published by Down East Books / Rowman & Littlefield. We'll start about 11:30 after hospitality hour refreshments.

We will read excerpts from the book's opening, tracing Mitchell's early years in Waterville, from his birth at Head of Falls in 1933, his large and diverse Lebanese-Irish-American family, and his unexpected opportunity to attend Bowdoin College, his gateway to the wider world.

There will be plenty of time for questions and discussion of all aspects of Mitchell's life, and his careers in law, politics, business and diplomacy.

Copies of "Statesman" will be available for purchase and signing, with 10% of proceeds donated to UUCC.



George Mitchell in High School, 1949

St Mark's Suppers/Neighbor to Neighbor...

Thank you to Volunteers! Thank you all for volunteering-especially Cheryl Clukey and Ida Gammon Wilson who have been involved for years: thank you for your tireless efforts.

May 2016 UU volunteers included, Cheryl Clukey, Tracy McNaughton, Marty Peters, Catherine and Becky, Phyllis Clark, Karen Nielsen, Emmy Swanton, Cheryl Abruzzese. Bakers were Sue Caldwell and Becky and Catherine. Others included Michele Carpentier, Judy and Valerie, Carlene Kaler and Dan Stevens of Augusta's 209 Church.

Jenny McKendry

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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, please!
Photos of church activities welcome!
Deadline: June 19

Minister: Rev. Carie Johnsen

President: Gary Chapin

Sunday Morning RE Coordinator: Brigid Chapin
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: Luke Curtis
Office: (207) 622-3232

Rev. Carie's office hours:

Tuesday 1:00 - 5:00pm
Wednesday 2:00-6:00pm and by appointment
Friday is Rev. Carie's Sabbath. She does not attend to emails, phone calls or meetings. For Pastoral Emergencies please call her cell phone **(508) 221-5295** and she will return your call at soon as possible.

Social Media links: Professional Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/revcarie.johnsen>

Please note: Rev. Carie also keeps a personal/private Facebook page. If you have requested to be her friend, please do not feel slighted by her decline or unresponsiveness. Instead, take a minute to friend her at RevCarie Johnsen.

Website: www.everydayordinarytheologies.com

Rev. Carie's new website was launched in July as part of a sabbatical project. When you get a minute visit the site and subscribe to future posts.