



The Flaming Chalice

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

April 2014



April Theme

Power of Myth

Sunday Morning Services at 9:15 and 11:00

Religious Exploration at 9:15

Spirit Play at 11:00

Nursery Care provided at 9:15 and 11:00

Easter Sunday Services

April 20, 2014

9:15 Multigenerational Easter Pageant

Includes the annual Easter egg hunt for the children

11:00 Traditional Easter Service

with UUCS Choir and Occasional Orchestra

Membership Ceremony

Sunday, April 13, 2014 at the 9:15 and 11:00 services

Our New Member Welcoming Ceremony is a way of celebrating those who have become members during the past few months, and also inviting those who have begun to be part of our community to consider whether they might like to join at this time. Membership is a journey of belonging, deepening one's commitment to the church community. Membership is a way of participating more fully in the life of the congregation. Membership is a commitment to share one's time, talents and treasures with the congregation. Membership enables you to vote during congregational meetings, and to help shape the direction of our spiritual journey together.

To become a member, we ask that you express that intention in a visit with the minister and by signing the membership book. If you are interested in exploring membership at this time, please schedule an appointment by calling Rev. Carie at 207-623-3663 or sending her an email at revcariejohansen@gmail.com

New Member Welcome Dinner

Friday, April 11th in Fellowship Hall at 5:30 pm

The Membership Committee would like to celebrate the people who will become members of UUCS on the following Sunday. This dinner is an opportunity to meet with congregational leaders and other members of the church family. If you plan to attend this dinner, please contact Nancee Campbell at (207) 621-7727 or nancee1944@gmail.com.

A Faith Journey by Rev. Carie Johnsen...

Spring is coming. Spring is COMING! Spring IS COMING! SPRING IS COMING!!!

I know, I know, I know, Spring is here? But really, take a look outside.

As I grow older and wiser, there are many things that I once was sure I knew, that I'm not so sure I know anymore; but of this I am sure, SPRING IS COMING. Just as sure as the sunrises each day, we can be sure the sun will return to the northern woods. As the frozen earth and the northern skies struggle to shake off the winter chill, we humans cling to this simple truth, SPRING IS COMING! In the still of our awaiting hours, we greet the morning light and the lengthening days with eager anticipation, and we say, "Welcome, we are glad you're here."

It has been a long cold winter. It has been a long hard winter. With each week it seems it may never end. I look ahead at the forecast and it seems thirties is as good as it gets. I was sure I wouldn't need to call the sand truck again, but then the driveway froze over and my four-wheel drive began sliding up the hill. Ok, one more time, but please, no more plowable snowfalls. And then, I remind myself, oh yeah, I now live in Maine and this could easily be our reality.

Did I say it's been a long hard cold winter? Need we be reminded again, SPRING IS COMING!

During these months of hibernation and isolation so many of our friends and members have encountered loss: employment, housing, friendship, separation and divorce; death of children and parents and pets, loss of independence, good health and mobility. Car accidents have weighed on our sense of safety on the snow and ice covered roads. Conflict has kept us awake at night, anxious in our days and trusting wavering. Estrangement has been the loss that keeps on repeating itself. Broken bones and illness have impacted how we walk through our days.

When we gather on Sundays in community as a people of faith, I look out upon the friends and members in the pews and I pray for peace and joy, harmony and balance, warmth and relief from heating bills. I pray for the hardship, turmoil and transitions to be carried lightly. I ponder the trials and tribulations of the people I have come to minister to with deep respect and affection. It is a privilege to walk alongside each of you; learning to walk gently and carry it lightly is the challenge.

Five years of shared ministry have brought us deeper into relationship and strengthened our commitment to care for one another. At times, as I hold the joys and sorrows of the collective community in my heart, I am amazed by all we humans are called to be and do.

Just this week, as I sat in a circle bearing witness to the fullness of our lives, I found myself uncertain about how to hold it all, respond to it all and carry it all. Then I was reminded of what it means to be in a faith community with shared ministry as its foundation. There in the circle, as each person cared for another, I was able to bear witness to the grace of people ministering to one another with compassion, understanding, respect and empathy. In a circle of mutuality, our shared experiences find the healing balm of tears and laughter. Gratefully and humbly I am reminded we hold this ministry of caring for each other together. Each of us has the ability to listen deeply to another human being, bear witness to the fullness of another person's story, and partake in the divine act of lighten another person's burden.

May each of us find a way to listen deeply, hold it lightly and walk gently together into the sun.

In faith, Rev. Carie Johnsen

Leadership for the Future...

By Doug Rooks, President

Church life is busy from September's In-Gathering Sunday to the June annual meeting, but the pace quickens during the last months of the church year. Our Sunday services increase in variety and depth. We're well into our annual stewardship campaign. And this year, our Milton, Mass. mentor congregation's visit the first weekend in April marks a high point in the ongoing exploration we call Leap of Faith.

But another, quieter process is also taking place. The Leadership Development Committee has begun its work toward creating a slate of candidates for UUCC leadership posts for consideration at the annual meeting. But Leadership Development, the name that recently replaced Nominating, is about a lot more than filling names on a slate, as we've come to realize. Leadership training programs offered by our Northern New England District and the stellar work of our minister, Carie Johnsen, have shown us that keeping lay leadership at a high level is an ongoing, year-round endeavor.

I've had dozens of "leadership conversations" over the past few years, and I can honestly say I've enjoyed them all. Even when a member decided not to take up a leadership opportunity, I've learned something important, and often enough heard, "This isn't right for me now, but maybe it will be later."

That makes a sense. We all have moments in our lives when just keeping our existing commitments is all we can manage. But there are other times when it's good to become more closely involved in church life. We ask a lot of our leaders, but we give them permission to say when they need a change, or simply time off. That's the best way I know to avoid "burnout." It's now unusual to have a committee chair, or a board member, serve more than three years in any position. But keeping leadership fresh and appealing also creates more challenges for the Leadership Development Committee. I'm pleased to report that this important role is again in good hands.

Last year, Leadership Development performed its task so well that all its members had new things to do. Annie Voorhees, the chair, volunteered to become chair of the Music Committee. Lois Whitcomb, who'd served for several years, decided to retire. And Janet Sawyer, a former congregational president, took time from her work as Small Group Ministry Committee chair to lend her experience for that year.

The Board of Trustees has now appointed a new committee that we're sure will maintain high standards. Debbie Mattson, who served as president from 2008-2010 and in other leadership roles, including the Safe Congregation Task Force, will chair. Jeff Janell, former chair of the Long Range Planning Committee, will also join the committee, as will Beth Nasberg, a one-year member who will help us reach out to those who've recently joined UUCC.

In the coming weeks, committee members will be having many leadership conversations, so don't be surprised if you hear from one of them. There are at least two board positions available, and UUCC has 13 standing committees, plus a variety of subcommittees, work groups and task forces. All are important to our community life and, together, represent much of what we hope for and aspire to as one of Maine's leading UU congregations.

There's no obligation, of course. But we hope everyone will consider whether they can help build our community through service. During my own time in office, I've come to realize that nearly every church member is a potential leader.

Stewardship Committee...

Our special thanks to everyone who made our "Sustain the Flame" Stewardship Month such a big success. And additional thanks to everyone who has already returned their Stewardship Pledge for our 2014-15 church year.

For those of you who may be still pondering your pledge or just haven't returned your pledge card, now is the time! When you return your pledge card by March 30th, you will be automatically entered into a drawing to be showered with flowers and kisses – chocolate ones that is! Also, our Board will have the information it needs to plan the 2014-2015 budget.

After March 30th we will start making phone calls to anyone who has not returned a pledge card. We're happy to make these calls and talk with you about pledging. But if you would rather avoid that call, the best way is to return your pledge card today.

Thanks so much for all you do for our faith community.

Hilary Neckles, Annie Reiter, Mildred Stengel, and June Zellers

The Stewardship Committee



Learn to Write an Ethical Will...

Many of us have made plans to distribute our financial assets after we die, but have we planned for our spiritual legacy?

In this session, local clergy will join together to discuss writing an ethical will. These wills have roots in ancient Jewish tradition and allow us to leave a moral and spiritual legacy for our loved ones.

After learning a little bit about ethical wills and studying some examples, we will have some time to begin writing our own ethical will. After the session we will join together for a potluck lunch.

When: Saturday, March 29th 10am-noon (lunch to follow)

Where: Temple Beth El—3 Woodlawn Street in Augusta

Bring: A dish to share for the potluck lunch. Please do not bring meat or seafood. Fish and dairy products are fine. These requirements are in keeping with Jewish dietary laws.

For more information call Nancee at 621-7727.

Buildings and Grounds ...

Annual Spring Leaf Raking

The annual grounds cleanup is scheduled for **April 12th from 9-noon** and we need volunteers...

The place will look pretty shabby this Easter if we don't get busy. Bring gloves and rakes if you have them. Come join friends, get some exercise and enjoy the spring air.

Snow (kidding)/rain date April 19th.

Student Essay Contests on Atheism and Religious Liberty..

The Freedom from Religion Foundation, a group that pursues separation of church / state violations, is offering high school, college and graduate/older student essay scholarship competitions.

The High School Senior essay asks college-bound high school seniors to write an essay on "A Moment When I Spoke Up for Secularism." The College essay asks college students to write an essay on "My Atheist/Unbeliever 'Coming Out' Story" . The Graduate / Older Student essay asks college student aged 25-30 to write an essay on "Why 'Religious Liberty' Does Not Mean the Right to Impose Your Religion on Others".

Winning essays will receive \$3,000 1st place, \$2,000 2nd place, \$1,000 3rd place, \$750 4th place, \$500 5th place and \$400 for 6th place. Several \$200 "honorable mentions" may be awarded.

Download pdfs of our topics and requirements at: ffrf.org/outreach/student-essay-contests/

Nonviolent Communications...

The **Nonviolent Communications** (also known as Compassionate Communications) **Practice Group** is meeting Fridays, April 4th and April 18th from 10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. in the Robbins Room.

The group is open to people who have taken Nonviolent Communication Training programs, or who are/have been in a practice group. Others may attend, but there is an expectation that they will attend a training when one becomes available.

Upcoming Trainings

April 12 & 13, 2014 in Unity, ME *Deepening Open Communication: Level 2 training* with Peggy Smith. Further info: <http://opencommunication.org/Level2UnityApril14.pdf>

July 28th – August 1st in Belfast, ME *Sustainable Communication: The Theory & Practice of Nonviolent Communication*: a three-credit course offered by the University of Maine System.

Further info:

<http://opencommunication.org/PAX470-2014.pdf>

Contact Helen Wing at 685-3804, hcranewing@roadrunner.com

Sharon Piantedosi's Ordination...

Don't you just love a celebration? As a teaching church for our Intern Minister, Sharon Piantedosi, we have a celebration coming up on May 4, 2014. Sharon will be ordained at her home church of First Parish UU in Portland, ME. We are all invited to the service at 4:00 PM.

Our Board of Trustees has voted to share the expenses of the ordination, up to \$1000, with the home church. Traditionally, in addition, as the teaching church we will be buying Sharon's robe as a gift. This cost is about \$570.00.

SO.....This is where we all can share in this celebration. If you would like to make a donation to help UUCC support the celebration for Sharon, a special collection will be taken on Sunday April 13th at both worship services. You can:

§ *Put a donation in a clearly marked envelope in the collection plate.*

§ *Bring a donation to the church office.*

§ *Mail a donation to the church office clearly marked for the ordination.*

Thank you in advance for your contribution to this celebration! See you there!

Martha Naber, Member, Board of Trustees

UUCC Web... www.augustauu.org

Quick Notes has been added at the bottom of the Home Page of our Website for congregational items of immediate and short duration. Please continue to see Order of Service at the top left on the Home Page for the Announcements for the week.

Leap of Faith (accessed from the Home Page) has a reference to "A Journey of Trust & Discovery" that Carie wrote for the Northern New England District newsletter in March.

Also a reminder that Small Group Ministry plans are added regularly, and include some specifically developed around the Theme for the month.

Comments on the website are welcome. To participate on the Website Committee regularly or on special projects, contact Helen Zidowecki, Website Committee Chair, at 582-5308 or website@augustauu.org.

Many paths lead to

**Leap of Faith Weekend
April 4th – 6th**

Members and Friends of UUCC are invited to participate in the Leap of Faith weekend. Join us for an experience of interconnectedness and leave with a meaningful sense of our adaptive challenge. There are many ways to get involved. Join us for one or all.

FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 2014 at 5:30 P.M. Fellowship Hall

“A NIGHT OF FAITH AND MAGIC”

Potluck Dinner and Magic Show
with professional Magician Scot Grassetto!

Youngsters to Elders are invited to join in a **Welcome Dinner!**
Please contact Marilyn Dunn regarding food contributions or fill out the purple form in the weekly Order of Service. maine2007@hotmail.com

Saturday April 6, 2014

Listening Circles*

Morning session with long-standing (15+ years) and
new members (fewer than 5 years).

9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Afternoon sessions with church leaders, members and friends.

1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Please RSVP with Rita Cherubini, cherub1@rocketmail.com

Buffet Lunch

Drew House from 11:45 – 12:45

Everyone participating in the morning and afternoon listening circles
are welcome to stay or come for lunch.

Please RSVP with Rita Cherubini, cherub1@rocketmail.com

Sunday Worship

First Parish Milton will join us for the 9:15 Service and fellowship hour.

Rev. Parisa Persa, Minister of First Parish Milton will join

Rev. Carie Johnsen in worship.

*** What is a Listening Circle?** An opportunity for members and friends to explore UUCC's adaptive challenge through a practice of deep listening and reflection. The circles will center around questions that invite us to explore who we are and our purpose, and how we will inspire each other toward a sustainable future. It is also a time for us to get to know each other and celebrate all that we value about

UUCC.

Leap of Faith Planning Committee

*The Congregations of
the Unitarian
Universalist Community Church of
Augusta, Maine and
The First Parish Church of
Portland, Maine
invite you to attend the ordination of*

SHARON ANNE PIANTEDOSI

*On Sunday, May 4th, 2014 at four o'clock
in the afternoon at First Parish Church,
425 Congress Street in Portland, Maine.*

*Childcare for children under six years
will be provided.*

*A reception at the Parish Hall
will follow the service.*

*Clergy and Candidates of all denominations are
invited to meet at 3:00 p.m. to robe and process.*

Upcoming Events...

SILENT AUCTION/LIVE AUCTION AND CAFÉ will be FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 9, 2014

Please contact Hannah at 293-9377 or hannahuu3@fairpoint.net, or Terry at 445-2942 or tlcnaturalhealth@yahoo.com to make your donation, which can be an EXPERIENCE, a SERVICE or an ITEM. Because we are preparing an advance booklet of donations, **we would like to know by mid-April** what yours will be. Some of the many exciting donations received so far are four day lake cottage stay, two wills, one day work crew, 300 yards of handspun yarn, \$75 gift certificate to Slate's Bakery, colorful crocheted hot pads, silver cuff bracelet, tree felling or pruning, gift certificate for acupuncture, a painting by a well-known local artist, a photograph by a well-known local photographer, handmade Jewelry, 14" rosewood knitting needles, small adjustable dog harness, and much more. What unique experience, service or item will you provide to our 2014 all-church auction? **EVERYONE CAN CONTRIBUTE SOMETHING!** Please tell us soon.

BOOKS: On Sunday, March 16, Noah Gottlieb brought lots of new books to our Fellowship Hall bookcase and rotated the old ones into storage for future perusal. Therefore you have interesting new choices of books. As you know, we hold an ongoing sale at the corner of the Fellowship Hall. Here's how it works: take the books you want, tally up the price (\$1.00 for hardcovers, 50 cents for paperbacks) and at your next opportunity, put the money into the church collection plate where it will benefit the good causes of our church. We do not keep track of book sales except at the initial yard sale. The ongoing sales are completely on the honor system.

**DESSERT/FILM SHOWING SATURDAY
EVENING MAY 17, 2014** In connection with the Holocaust Remembrance, Carol Aft

has provided a film by Artemis Joukowsky III, "Two Who Dared, the Sharps' War." This is the story of a young Unitarian minister and his wife, Waitstill and Martha Sharp, who left Wellesley, Massachusetts for Czechoslovakia in February 1939 "on a dangerous mission to save imperiled human lives." Dessert in the Fellowship Hall will precede the showing of this film in the Sanctuary.

ANNUAL ALL-CHURCH YARD SALE SATURDAY, MAY 31, 2014

Please hold your generous donations at home until at least a week before the event. The garage is an active workshop area for Buildings and Grounds, so storage space is limited. We look forward to setting up the sale on May 30th and providing a wide array of goods to church members and to the Augusta community on May 31st.

Automatic Pledge Payment Good for You, Good for UCC!

You can now pay your annual pledge via a monthly electronic transfer (EFT). This allows you to simply set up your payments once for the entire pledge year. A monthly withdrawal from your checking account would be transferred to UCC's Operating Account. The withdrawal occurs on the 2nd Friday of each month.

The advantage for UCC is that we have regular, known contributions coming in, even if you are away, or too busy to get to church on Sunday morning. The accounting is also streamlined, and you don't need to write checks!

If you would like to make your 2014-2015 pledge payment as a direct debit, please contact Mary Petersen Simpson, Treasurer, by phone **(207 620-6664)** or email **(mary.simpson753@gmail.com)** for the required form. Or see me in church!

Unitarian Universalist Community Church
P. O. Box 8
Augusta, Maine 04332-0008

Newsletter Submissions

Please submit all articles 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 to newsletter@augustauu.org with the article as an attachment. Photos of church activities welcome!

Next edition submissions due April 21.

Minister: Rev. Carie Johnsen
President: Doug Rooks
Director of Religious Exploration: Rev. Carol Strecker
Office hours-Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10am-4:00p.m. or by appointment
Administrator: Steve Moore
admin@augustauu.org
UU Office hours: Monday and Tuesday 8a.m.-4p.m.
Thursday-noon-8pm
Choir Director: Joelle Morris
Intern Minister: Sharon Piantedosi
Office Hours Tuesday and Thursday-10:30a.m.-3:30p.m. or by appointment
Small Group Ministry Coordinator: Kathy Kellison
Office: (207) 622-3232

Minister's Office Hours:

Monday 12:00 - 5:00 Beginning Feb. 3rd
Tuesday 12:00 - 6:00
Thursday 4:00 - 6:00

Friday is my Sabbath. I do not attend to emails, phone calls or meetings. For pastoral emergencies please call my cell phone (508-221-5295) and I will return your call as soon as possible.

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