

The Flaming Chalice

The newsletter of
The Unitarian Universalist Community Church
69 Winthrop Street
Augusta, Maine 04330



Interim Minister: Rev. Lee Devoe

President: *George Lapointe*

Director of Religious Exploration : *Karen Fisk*

Administrative Assistant: *Margaret Goodale*

Ministerial Associates: *Susan Burnett, Marty Soule, and Helen Wing*

Church office is open 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tues.-Fri.
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May 4-18, 2008

Sunday Services and Religious Exploration are at **9:15 & 11:00 AM.**

Nursery care is available from 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon. Open Small Group at 9:30 AM in Annex

On Sunday:

May 4 Small Group Ministry: Your Congregation Transformed

In honor of the tenth anniversary of Small Group Ministry in this congregation, SGM Coordinator Kathy Kellison and the Steering Committee will present this service and celebration to consider this practice and its legacy.

Congregational Meeting at 12:15 pm

**The Nominating Committee will present the slate
for the Ministerial Search Committee for congregational approval.**

May 11 What's in your Canon?

Rev. Lee Devoe

What is authoritative in your life? Are there texts that you consider sacred? Christine Little and other members of the congregation will share their reflections on texts that have been transformative as we explore the meaning and practice of creating a Canon.

May 18 9:15 am Religious Exploration Recognition Sunday

Rituals old and new, music for youth and by youth will mark the learnings and passages of our children, youth, and RE leaders this year.

11 am The Imperfect Surrender to Now

Rev. Lee Devoe

We will explore our relationship to the past, present, and future using meditations from, and reflections on, the work of Eckhart Tolle (author of *The Power of Now* and *A New Earth*).

May 25 Memorial Day Weekend – One Service at 10 am from now until Labor Day

June 1 "Peace Jam" Service The teens will share their reflections on creating peace and justice from their recent interactions with Somali teens and Jody Williams, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize for her work to ban landmines

June 8 The Journey in Music A musical exploration of the dreams and diversities of our faith

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on

Sunday, June 8 at 11:15 am

See notice on next page

Our thanks to *Elva Ingraham, Hannah Faulkner, Cally Stevens and Mary Perkins* for helping to get this newsletter out on time.

Next newsletter deadline is 5/12/08. Please submit all newsletter articles as **WORD** documents if possible.



A Letter from Lee

By Rev. Lee Devoe

In the midst of the excitement for the plans for this summer's renovation of the church building (69 Winthrop Street, rather than that famous renovation 71 Winthrop Street - site of legendary teamwork and community spirit not to mention crowbars and sledgehammers), questions have arisen. Like, what the heck are we going to do this summer?

I have answers! As quickly as this renovation plan has concretely taken shape, a shape has come for the summer. We will hold summer services at 11 King Street. This building was formerly the home of the All Souls Unitarian Church before the consolidation that formed the present congregation in 1992. It is owned by congregation member Debbie Mattson and her partner Jacqui Clark. King Street comfortably holds 60 people (more when really needed!). Seating can be in the round or a semi-circle for gatherings that have a more inclusive, participatory feel. There is an additional room and a back yard for children's activities.

Leadership has also made a commitment to consistency. The goal was set last year to move back and forth between two services and one service, or times for the services, as little as possible. A more regular schedule, including not cancelling 2nd service for meetings, has perhaps contributed towards our new robust second service attendance. It also helps us be kind to newcomers and visitors. This year we will attempt to bridge the awkward gap in the traditional routine, between the end of Religious Exploration for children in mid-May and the beginning of the summer worship schedule in mid-June, by making the change to one service continuous from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

We will not bulldoze any buildings with this renovation. You will, however, be leaving the space at the beginning of summer and essentially never coming back. Like our children who emerge from adolescence so changed while the imprint of the toddler we knew remains, the building will still stand yet you will enter a fresh space. Please consider the moments and the meanings this building has held for you, as individuals and as a congregation, and how we can honor them.

I am so enjoying the warm sunshine, the greening around me, and the few small blossoms that catch my eye. I hope you too are reveling in the energy of spring, around you and within you.

In faith,

Lee

**From Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day Weekend,
May 25 – August 31, there will be one service at 10 am.**

**From Sunday, June 22 through Sunday, August 31
Sunday Service will be held at 11 King Street.**

**The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on
Sunday, June 8 at 11:15 am.**

There will be one worship service at 10 am with the meeting starting directly following it
Children's activities will be provided during the meeting.

Members of the congregation will:

- ~approve a budget for the next fiscal year (beginning 6/1/08)
- ~honor our leaders and our ministry this year
- ~consider a slate of new leadership presented by the Nominating Committee
- ~consider a proposal from the Welcoming Congregation Task Force to apply to the Unitarian Universalist Association for designation as a Welcoming Congregation, institutionally inclusive of people who are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgender
- ~hear highlights of the comprehensive long range plan, how it has been reoriented for this year, and move to accept it

And other business as determined by the Board of Trustees



FERRY BEACH

Snow is gone, Spring is here, Summer is just around the corner!
Include Ferry Beach in your summer plans! This historic and evolving Unitarian Universalist camp and conference center is just a little over an hour away, on the coast of Maine in Saco. Summer conferences for Youth, Families, Professional Development, Adults in addition to vacations and camping accommodations. Excellent food, fun at the ocean, opportunity to meet other Unitarian Universalists. See the display on the counter by the sink in the hallway. Check out the website at www.ferrybeach.org. Ask me about Ferry Beach! Helen Zidowecki

WHERE U CAN BE U!

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

It has been 10 years since the UCC began exploring the idea of offering an opportunity for people to meet regularly in groups of 8 or so to talk about matters of spiritual growth and to minister to one another. Many people's lives have been changed by their experience in one of our ministry groups. Connections and commitments within the church have also been deepened. Those of us who have worked with Small Group Ministry over the years count many successes.

On May 4, during the Sunday Services, the Small Group Ministry Steering Committee and I want to hold up this ministry and all of you who have participated over the years. We plan to tell you some about the history and purpose, and then show you how it works. Helen Zidowecki and a group of volunteers will model a group for you to see. Helen is writing a session specifically for the morning. Our hope is to increase understanding and appreciation for Small Group Ministry among those of you who have not participated in groups. We also want to celebrate this milestone in church history. (There will be a cake during the fellowship hour!)

For those of you who have your interest piqued, the Open Small Group will be available at 11:00 on May 4th and also at both 9:30 and 11:00 on May 11th. Please feel free to join us upstairs in the Annex at any of those times

Kathy Kellison

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY OPEN GROUP SESSIONS

- May 4: "Being Alone"
Marilyn Karasopoulos
May 11: "Radical Hospitality"
Beth Whitman
May 18: "Spiritual Goals"
Kathy Kellison
May 25: "May: The Month of
Memories and Healing"
Helen Zidowecki

All are welcome to join us in the Annex at 9:30!

- May 4: 11 am only
May 11: 9:30 & 11 am

DISTRICT DELIGHTS!

On April 11-12, Lee Devoe, Kathy Kellison, Dan Sorensen, and Helen Zidowecki were in Durham, NH, participating in the Joint Districts Annual Meeting. This one was different. This was the last meeting of the Northeast and the New Hampshire/Vermont Districts, and welcomed in the new Northern New England District of the Unitarian Universalist Association, projected to go into effect July 1, 2008.

We carried our banner, shared our "Good News", and sang, ate and celebrated with about 250 UUs from the three states. Kathy was on the Awards Committee for the NED, and Helen was on the Joint Planning Committee. And our delegates to General Assembly in Fort Lauderdale in June will need to vote on making the new district "official"!

Helen Zidowecki

AUGUSTA FOOD BANK

Are you looking for a meaningful way to volunteer? The Augusta Food Bank has the following requests:

1. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday we need one volunteer each day to pick up bread at Sam's Club at 7 a.m. Those volunteers can have the benefit of a Sam's business membership card. Please contact Bernie at 215-4661 if you are interested.
2. We are asking all church members and friends to save Shaw's Supermarket receipts. The food bank receives 1% of the total value of those receipts. You can deliver the receipts directly to the food bank (located at the St. Mark's fellowship hall at 9 Summer Street in Augusta), or to Sarah Schultz-Nielsen, church representative to the food bank.
3. We also need volunteers to tabulate Shaw's receipts. If interested please leave a message at the food bank: 622-5225.

Thank you for your continued help and prayers.

Sarah Schultz-Nielsen



CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE

Address Change:

Poland, Lucy Hunter
52 Hill Street, Apt. B
Farmingdale, ME 04344-2988

Email Change:

Thornton, MARTY
mmartythornton@verizon.net

HISTORY OF THE FEMALE DIVINE

The first session of the "History of the Female Divine" was held on April 17. While Joe Laferriere has led this type of program previously while a member of a congregation in Providence, RI, he has introduced some anthropological information on how population growth influenced societies and would have affected the development of religious beliefs in the ancient world. We will have this basic material available for YOU when you attend a session. The reflection question for each session is "What are the characteristics of the deities that arise from a culture?"

Historians and archaeologists frequently have a hard time piecing together what ancient peoples believed. Evidence is sometimes rather scanty. A second reflection question that we had at the first session was, "Suppose you are an archaeologist 5000 years in the future. You come across the remains of this church. How much could you tell about what happened here? Would you even recognize this as a religious institution?" Think about it.....and think about joining upcoming sessions, Thursday evenings, 6:30-8:30 PM, Fellowship Hall.

- April 24 2. Egypt
- May 1 3. Mesopotamia
- May 8 4. Greece and Rome
- May 15 5. Germanic/Norse and Celtic
- May 22 6. Hindu
- May 29 7. Christian Europe and America

See the glass case in the hall for details of the course, along with a changing display.

Helen Zidowecki, Co-leader



\$5 Rebate for Mercury Thermostats

Maine residents can now receive \$5 for each mercury-containing thermostat they return for recycling to the TRC – Thermostat Recycling Corporation. The rebate process is easy. Homeowners can order a TRC mailing label and shipping instructions by sending an email request to TRC@nema.org or by calling 1-800-238-8192. After the thermostat is received, the homeowner gets a \$5 check in the mail.

The rebate program offers homeowners another alternative for ensuring mercury is safely recycled. Many towns and cities in Maine have mercury collection programs where thermostats can also be recycled. The TRC program allows homeowners to recycle their old thermostats directly with the thermostat manufacturers.



Can Anyone Take Care of Our Cats?

We (Deb Hjort, Nancy Niven, Taj and Vy) are going to Florida for about 3 weeks (June 24-July 14) and we need our two cats to be cared for. If you could house-sit as well, that would be great. (Our house is on 40+ mostly wooded acres in rural Richmond.) The cats could also board at your house (they're indoor cats). Fair compensation to be decided. decided.

Welcoming Congregation Task Force Calls For a Vote

By Maggie Ricker

For more than two years, the members of the Welcoming Congregation Task Force have worked toward the goal of putting forth a congregational vote on whether UUCC wants to officially become a Welcoming Congregation. I'm delighted to say that goal will come to fruition this June 8th.

The Task Force has provided education to the UUCC Congregation through workshops, worship services and newsletter articles. We have reached the point where it's now time to ask the congregation if they are willing to *officially* become a Welcoming Congregation.

I can hear you thinking, 'so what does that involve'? In actuality, not an awful lot will change. It means leadership will continue to provide the tools necessary to make certain UUCC creates a congregational culture that is welcoming and nurturing of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. It means making certain we use LGBT friendly and inclusive language in everything from worship services, to church sponsored events, to our by-laws. It means remembering to include celebrations of the LGBT community, such as rights of passages, commitment unions, and historical events. In other words, to continue to celebrate diversity and the unique skills and traits brought to our congregation by all its members.

If the congregation votes in the affirmative in June, the Welcoming Congregation Task Force will dissolve in the fall and will be replaced by a Welcoming Congregation Alliance. The charge of this new alliance will be to:

- 1) offer life span religious education that incorporates LGBT life issues; 2) promote participation by the congregation's minister, religious exploration director, and board in the Welcoming Congregation Program; and 3) to serve as a resource to the minister, board, church leaders and committee chairs as they plan events to celebrate diversity and continue to promote a culture of inclusivity and celebration of LGBT individuals and their contributions.

We have submitted to the board recommendations for LGBT related changes in the by-laws. These changes basically codify expectations and standards that are already in practice. The changes just give voice to text that has previously been silent on the subject, assuming consensus.

It's been an amazing journey as the Task Force has worked its way from being a group of individuals interested in diversity and justice to becoming a lean, mean, working machine well versed on our particular area of interest. We have often heard comments from other committees meeting nearby that we are laughing too much to be really working. I can assure you nothing is further from the truth.

We have come together in what I believe is the very best interpretation of a team, expressing our opinions openly, directly, but with respect for the feelings and opinions of other team members. We have addressed some seriously intimate subjects with equal openness and respect. Yes we do laugh, often and loud! We tease, we goad, we provoke. And we work hard to reach our goals. This is without question, one of the best collections of people that I have ever had the privilege of working with!

If you have questions about the vote in June or about the changes that might befall UUCC as we continue our work to become the best we can be, please don't hesitate to contact me or any other member of the Welcoming Congregation Task Force; Dan Sorensen, Joan Mohlar, Terry Cookson, Helen Zidowecki, Keith Morgan-Davie, Don-Paul Sommerfeld, Ida Gammon-Wilson, Priscilla Jenkins, Helen Wing, Marion Blasziez, Jim Spicer.



The church newsletters that you receive in the mail are the product of much work by our minister, our church leaders, our administrative assistant and the volunteers who appear on Friday mornings every three weeks to collate, fold, and seal the pages before placing labels on the newsletters and putting them in trays for distribution by the post office.

In March, Barbara Thurlow completed 28 years of working on The Flaming Chalice. Her contributions included not only this Friday morning work, but editing and laying out the newsletters as well during the 1980's and 1990's when she was UU administrative assistant, first at All Souls Church and with the consolidation in 1992, here at UUCC..

Barbara, in addition to all your other church work, we want to say many, many thanks for the countless hours you have given over the years to assure that our news reaches church families and friends.

2008 Christmas Bazaar

The Christmas Bazaar is getting a new look. This year we will hold it in the Augusta Armory on November 22 (that's the weekend before Thanksgiving). Changing locations will allow us to do a variety of things including at least the following: 1) increase the amount of space our exhibitors use, 2) increased visibility, 3) increased number of exhibitors, 4) expand what the Bazaar is.

As for the specifics about number of exhibitors, hours, activities to be part of the Bazaar have not yet been decided. Marty Thornton is heading up this event and she is asking for volunteers to work with her. Here are some of the ideas already discussed with some church members: 1) café, 2) Santa Claus with photos, 3) bake sale, 4) Thanksgiving pie orders, 5) children's activities, 6) live music. All these ideas need more discussion!

Our Bazaar can become a Christmas Festival or something more than just a Bazaar. Something that many in the community will want to attend just because there will be so much more than just an ordinary Christmas crafts sale. The goal is to turn this into a major fundraising event and draw from a larger community than just our members.

Planning needs to begin now in order to make this event successful. Please contact Marty Thornton if you would like to help with this new exciting event. Marty has many years experience in organizing crafts shows and special events, but to make this successful she needs some help.

Please contact Marty at: martythornton@verizon.net or 512-2587.

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Sunday, May 4 at 12:15 pm
Congregational Meeting
To elect the slate of the Search Committee

SPRING CLEANUP DAY



Saturday, May 3rd, at 8:30 am.

Tasks include raking, window washing, and special projects.