

A Message from Rev. Carie Johnsen.....

Happy Holidays...

The season of growing light, love and charity is upon us. Our homes and hearts widen with the joy of family and friends. The kitchen overflows with decadent food. The parties bring merriment and fellowship. The college students return home for the holidays. Through the giving and receiving of gifts, we partake in the ritual of sharing the blessings. Life is filled with loving abundance and generosity of giving.

Here at Unitarian Universalist Community Church we have begun the year's end with the traditional cycle of festivities. This past Friday, the Annual Harvest Feast was enjoyed by many and then on Sunday we gathered together in Communion. Sunday services this month offer an opportunity for many to experience the rich cultural and religious stories and traditions of the season. The UUCC Choir has a service of music that hopes to inspire us all to find the treasure of gift giving of a different sort this season. The gift tags for our tree are prepared to be hung. The food pantry wagon will overflow.

There is much merriment and joy. Yet, I am reminded that this season also brings great sorrow. Some families will feel the crunch of the economy. Some families will long for loved ones unable to return from places far and wide. Some families will grieve the death of a loved one as the family draws near. Families living with a loved one's declining health or in the middle of abuse and addiction may approach the season with trepidation and worry. Memories of happier days bring tears of sadness where once there were tears of joy.

If you are one who struggles to find deep joy, may you find time to care for your spirit with loving tenderness during this holiday season. And, may each of us open our hearts and homes to care for those who need their faith community more than ever during the holiday season.

May this truly be the season of love spreading throughout the earth, *Rev. Carie Johnsen*



From the Director of Religious Exploration.....

Taking time to express gratitude is one of the deepest prayers we can offer. I feel very much inclined to pause for prayer when I think of this church community. From the eldest to the youngest, I am grateful that each person walks through the doors on Sunday mornings, adding to the warmth and welcome of the day. I am grateful for the adults and youth who serve our children as teachers, leaders, models of beloved community. I am grateful to the children who enter to rejoice with open minds, helping hands and loving hearts.

This past Sunday as we celebrated our new members, we also took the time to pause and think about the kindnesses we have received from this faith community. We wrote them down on cut outs of acorns, to symbolize the potential for growth we all have within the support of this community. The acorns (and leaves) make the barren sticks I brought in from outside into a beautiful, lovely tree. Please check out the tree of kindnesses in our fellowship hall. I was moved to tears by the love expressed there.

During the Young UU Worship, we also held a circle council to decide on our worship approach for the winter holiday pageant. Many good ideas emerged. The best came from a little one just five years old. She spoke up to say, "We need to remember to bring food for the hungry." And so we will. Please join the children and youth by bringing non-perishable food for the food pantry on December 19th.

As we approach the holidays, our youth group Peace Jam will be selling fair trade coffee and chocolate during fellowship time. Please consider making the gift of fair trade over the holidays.

Thank you all a thousand times over.

Yours in faith,

Karen

UUC Youth

As one of our young people said last Sunday, "Diversity tends toward stability."

We often call a Circle Council in Young UU Worship to make decisions that are of consequence to all of the children and youth. This past Sunday we held a council to decide whether to stick with our traditional Christmas Pageant or try something new.

The children and youth, in a blind vote, unanimously chose to try something new! They asked that we work to integrate and interweave ideas from many winter rituals, looking for what is common among them. They also asked for speaking parts in whatever play-act we include.

An important idea came from a little one just five years old. She spoke up to say, "We need to remember to bring food for the hungry." (And so we will. Please join the children and youth by bringing non-perishable food for the food pantry on December 19th.)

Our director of religious exploration, Karen is working with a worship team of adults and children to prepare and present our Winter Holiday Pageant! May it be so, may it be worthy, may it be.

Greeting from the President of the Board.....

Hello All-

Recently I had the privilege of participating in the UUCC's annual Leadership Retreat. Members of the Board of Trustees and leaders of the committees took part in an afternoon's activities designed to clarify our roles as leaders and explore avenues for church growth. The retreat was lead by Angela Matthews of the Northeast Regional Office of the UUA.

Ms. Matthews began the workshop by congratulating us-apparently she had never facilitated a leadership retreat with such an overwhelming attendance-18 UUCC leaders. (This was especially noteworthy because the retreat was being held on a Sunday afternoon in primetime football season!)

UUCC's leaders commitment to the well-being of their church community by attending was very encouraging, but what was even more gratifying to me was when the facilitator asked us all to draw a picture or use a phrase to describe our church. The images that were shared were remarkable-a phoenix rising from the ashes, a Jack in the Box-with a surprise inside, a garden (with a few weeds!), a Christmas stocking, Dorothy and friends from the Wizard of Oz, a beautiful bouquet with many different flowers, and everyone's favorite-Martha Bentley's picture of "The Island of Misfit Toys" from a 60's Christmas special!

Clearly, we all have individual visions of our spiritual home, but one thing was evident-that we all believe the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Augusta is a unique and vibrant place, with much to offer us all.

What picture does the UUCC paint for you?

Wishing you a warm and wonderful holiday season!

Sheila Comerford

News from Committee on Ministry.....

In response to a recent Sunday morning incident where an unknown person on the property was spewing anti-gay rhetoric in response to our rainbow flag and service titled "Heterosexuals Coming Out" the Committee on Ministry (COM) recommended to the Board of Trustees the adoption of a policy to address imminent risk.

The UUCC Board of Trustees adopted a policy in 2005 regarding emerging concerns and behavior that disrupts and challenges congregational safety but do not pose imminent risk. On November 8, 2010 the Board approved the policy recommended by the COM that addresses imminent risk. Imminent risk might be a situation where there is someone who is angry and/or threatening. The policy directs identified people (the Minister, the Board, the DRE, COM, Worship Associates, Usher greeters and regular greeters) to contact the police and take any available steps to address the safety of the congregation. We ask all people to read this policy, it will be posted on the leadership bulletin board in the church entrance. The policy was also distributed to all staff and Committee Chairs via email and in their respective committee boxes.

The COM- Harry Grimmnitz, Wick Johnson, John Pelletier, Abby Lourie, and Reverend Carie Johnson.

History Committee...

The History Committee is alternating between work sessions and Committee meetings, with the next History Committee meeting on **Friday, December 10, 10am to Noon in the History and Olsen Rooms in the Annex.** We welcome your items of congregational history. They may be left in the History Committee tray in the Committee Room. We will be presenting parts of our history as they relate to congregational events and focuses throughout the year. If you are interested in participating on the History Committee or would like a list of the please History Committee Projects, contact Helen Zidowecki (582-5308, hzmre@hzmre.com)

DISPLAY CASE

How often have you walked in the hallway next to the Sanctuary? How often have you noticed the Display Case? How often have you really looked at it? Have you ever wondered how the displays appear? This has not been a coordinated effort and has happened somewhat by default. That is about to change – and you have an opportunity to

SHOWCASE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM!

Coordinated by Thursday morning Small Group
Ministry Group

November 14-28 “That All Might Eat”

Look for and contribute ways to make food accessible for all.

Starting with *Guest at Your Table!*
Thursday Morning SGM

December 5-26 Winter Celebrations

Solstice <> Advent and Christmas <> Kwanza
<> Hanukah <> Others?

We will set aside a space for respective celebrations.

The case is open. Please contribute symbols of the season yourselves. We want this display to be a UCC Community event.

Starting in January 2011

We invite displays from Individuals, Committees, Programs, Groups within Unitarian Universalist Community Church to contribute displays for 2-4 weeks in length. Please contact Helen Zidowecki (582-5308, hzmre@hzmre.com) or leave a note in the corner of the Display Case.

Church Life...

Peaceful Heart Sangha ~ The Day of Mindfulness that Dharma Teacher, Joanne Friday, and the Peaceful Heart Sangha shared with the wider community in early November was a pure delight. About sixty silent practitioners gathered in the UCC sanctuary for meditation and wonderful teachings. Joanne Friday focused her energies on sharing practices that can help each of us to have more joy and freedom in **our** lives – allowing us to be more available to make a difference in the world. We were very fortunate to have a private pot luck dinner with Joanne on Friday and to have Joanne share her wisdom with the entire congregation on Sunday.

Join us for meditation any Monday (at UCC) or Wednesday (call 215-5661 for details) from 6:30 – 8 PM.

The Caring Committee is seeking volunteers to cook meals, drive and other activities that help support and take care of each other in times of need. There will be a sign up table on December 5 during coffee hour. Please come and be part of this important service as we look after the needs of the members of our community. If you have any questions, please contact Faith Madore @ fmadore@myfairpoint.net or Jill Watson @ jwatson223@roadrunner.com or 623-4537.

ADULT RE

GODDESS CONTINUING: Becoming Women of Wisdom and Celebrations

1st & 3rd Sundays, 12:15-2:15pm

The Annex

Helen Zidowecki (582-5308, hzmre@hzmre.com), Lorna Doone, and others

Focuses on “Marking the Passage into the Crone Years,” and is pertinent for women of all ages. Year will be interspersed with special celebrations.

Detailed listing of session titles is on the bulletin board

December 5, 2010

Remembering Our Teen Years

December 19, 2010

Celebration: Solstice

January 2, 2011

Celebration: The New Year



COMMUNITY NEWS.....

Dear Friends,

It is during this season that I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude and deep appreciation for the kindness and many levels of caring that have been extended to my family since Olivia's death.

Olivia's death by suicide has brought me to my knees. While I know I am not the first to endure such a tragedy, I have learned that suicide has ramifications like no other. I still struggle with whether I am feeling my wounds just in my head or in my heart. Am I just analyzing and thinking this through intellectually or living and really feeling through my heart. This comes slowly to me. I am realizing the need to confront the long haul of this deepest of wounds. Every day I try to make meaning out of its meaninglessness. Eventually I will stop asking myself the questions which can only become destructive, but I am not there yet.

Your kindness has helped me greatly. It has helped me move along the path towards peace and strength for what lies ahead. I can go a little longer without tearing up... small steps... for this I sincerely thank you.

Cheryl Clukey

Photo Directory ~ Do you have any photos of church activities, the church itself, which might be nice to have in our directory? If so, please submit by **November 21st**. We are looking for the following photos:

- ◆ children/youth photo
- ◆ choir photos
- ◆ work day photos
- ◆ community events
- ◆ SGM photos
- ◆ Church service
- ◆ Photo of our banner or the AIDS Quilt

Were you unable to have photos taken but would still like to be part of the photo directory? Send us a family photo that we may put in the directory!

All photos may be submitted by email to Marty Soule and to UUCC. Printed Photos can be dropped off at the church office or the Committee Room.

Thank you!
Marty Soule (207-685-9270/martysoule@gmail.com)

New UCC Program Book - Check out the new literature found in the sanctuary pews and literature racks. This guide is intended to communicate vital information regarding UCC's mission, vision and traditions, leadership, and programs to new and long standing members . It also includes a section on what to expect on Sunday morning as well as our UU Principles and Purposes. If you don't have one in your home to easily reference, please pick one up and bring it with you.

Calling Tree – please contact Julie Pelletier, Office Administrator at 622-3232, if you would like to have your name added to a UCC calling tree. This calling tree will be used to share information regarding cancellation of church related activities and significant or new weekly updates including caring community information.

Barbara Thurlow will be moving to Montpelier to live with her son at the end of the month. Her new address is 60 Dillon Road, Montpelier, VT 05602. She welcomes cards as a way of saying good-bye.

Annual Cookie Walk: The RE program will hold its annual cookie walk on Dec 19th between services. Please bring in a batch or two of your favorite holiday cookies to share on Dec 19th. All are invited to fill a container full of cookies for a small donation to the RE faith in action.

FUNraising NEWS.....

Service Auction ~ Please contact us (Judy or Bruce) if you would like to help organize a Service Auction in 2011.

Small Fundraising Event ~ Individuals or small groups are encouraged to host a Small Fundraising Event. This would consist of a meal and an activity planned for a specific number of paying guests. The number of invited guests would range from 4 to 12 and the price per person would be \$5 to \$25. It can be held at the church, your home, or elsewhere. The proceeds are then donated to the church. We know of two Small Fundraising Events being planned for next year and hope there will be many more. Please let us know if you would like to host one. We will publicize it for you.



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

From the Administration Office

Holiday Administration Hours:

12/25 ~ Office closed

12/29 ~ Office open 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

1/1/2011 ~ Office Closed

Please have any Order of Service Announcements submitted on the following dates:



Tuesday, Dec 21st
Wednesday, Dec 29th

Thank you!