



The Flaming Chalice

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

February 2012

Worship Services Sundays at 9:15 and 11:00 a.m.

Feb. 5th

Einstein's Cover-up

Rev. Carie Johnsen

In this multimedia service we will explore how Einstein experienced the mystery behind the discoveries in science.

Feb 12th

On the Road from Ethos to Fundamentalism

Rev. Carie Johnsen

This is the 2011 auction sermon you have been waiting for and didn't know it. The question that emerged from the dinner conversation started something like this "Are republican's welcome or offended in our midst?" Then journeyed down the road to thinking about the typical character, attitudes and beliefs (ethos) of Unitarian Universalists resting in the quandary of a possible UU fundamentalism. Come be a part of this fascinating conversation.

Feb 19th

I Do: Reflections on Marriage

Annie Voorhees

What does marriage mean to you? This Sunday we will take a closer look at the partnership of mind, body and spirit that we call marriage. Members of the congregation will help Annie Nessen Voorhees delve deeper into what marriage means to us in our community.

Feb 26th

"UU Hymnody"

Rev. Carie Johnsen
Douglas Barley

Doug returned from his second pilgrimage to the Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network Conference with a service exploring Unitarian Universalist theological evolution through page one of the four most recent hymnals. This service originally created by Mimi Gonigam Stevens will be adapted by Doug and Rev. Carie for UCC.

Minister's New Office Hours:		Administration's New Office Hours:	
Monday	1:00 ~ 5:00 p.m.	Monday ~ Tuesday	8:00 a.m. ~ 4:00 p.m.
Tuesday	12:00 ~ 4:00 p.m.	Wednesday	Off
Wednesday	Writing Day	Thursday	4:30 ~ 8:30 p.m.
Thursday	4:00 ~ 7:00 p.m.	Friday	Off
Friday	Sabbatical	Saturday	8:00 a.m. ~ 12:00 p.m.

A Faith Journey by Rev. Carie Johnsen...

*I do not have to go
To Sacred Places
In far-off lands,
The ground I stand on
is holy.*

*Here in this little garden I tend
My pilgrimage ends.
The wild honeybees
The hummingbird moths
The flickering fireflies at dusk
Are a microcosm
Of the Universe*

*Each seed that grows
Each space of soil
Is full of miracles.*

*And I toil and sweat
And watch and wonder
And am full of love,
Living in place
In this place,
For truth and beauty
dwell here.*

~ Mary de La Valette

What comes to your mind as you read this poem? Do you bear witness to the glorious miracles of nature abundant? Are you the neo-transcendentalist who finds Wisdom in nature's playground? Do you hear a metaphorical story of UUCU where the grace of relationships and kindness are lived out abundantly and generously everyday? Maybe you hear something entirely different. I hear both and they are the same.

In this holy land, made sacred by our presence, we bear witness every day to the unfolding of truth and beauty; the grace of humanity in relationship to life abundant, generous and kind; the grace of nature's transformation season in season out. We have experienced how love dwells here. We know it deep in our bones. We bear witness to miracles flourishing. We admire the majestic eagle, the mighty redwood, the vast expanse of sky at the shore and the earth beneath our feet. Standing in awe at the mountaintop, we witness with elegance the nature's roar.

Each day we enter beloved community, we chose life abundant. Each time we reach out in pain and ask for help, or offer compassion to an aching soul, we choose to live generously into the fullness of love. Each time we fumble or disappoint, and then rise up to say, I'm sorry, we know truth and beauty dwells here. Each time we rise up out of our loneliness, bravely bringing despair through the door, we claim life. Each time our sorrow is shared and our joy express, we claim love.

The life giving qualities of human nature and Mother Nature replenish the private wellsprings of our spirit as we traverse this holy land. We are a microcosm of the human story, how shall we choose to live out and tell that story? How will you choose to live out and tell your story?

Here is my prophetic vision:

Befriending visions of scarcity and fear, they boldly choose abundance and generosity.

So may it be, may it be so, *Rev. Carie*

From the Board President ...

Greetings!

I hope everyone enjoyed the break holidays afford us to enjoy good food and the company of family and friends. At one gathering I attended the topic of New Year's resolutions came up. The obligatory "I want to lose that extra 10 pounds" was a common theme as was the ubiquitous "I will exercise more!" And of course there is always one joker in the room who proclaims "I resolve never to make a resolution!"

How many of us will follow through with our lofty January goals? Probably not many. As Oscar Wilde once quipped, "Good resolutions are simply checks that men draw on a bank where they have no account."

With that in mind, this year I decided that it will be the little things that I will focus on. Yes, I know that I could eat less chocolate cake and lose some weight, but I am going to try to do things that affect someone else-like write a letter to my elderly aunt who lives in another state or invite someone who lives alone to share dinner. At church I am going to try to be more observant about 5 minute chores that need to be done-putting away the dishes in the drainer in the kitchen, or sweeping up the crumbs in Fellowship Hall after a Coffee Hour.

How about you? Are there little things you could do?

Ellen Goodman sagely offered this advice for the new year-"We spend January 1 walking through our lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work to be done, cracks to be patched. Maybe this year, to balance the list, we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives... not looking for flaws, but for potential. "

I hope that each and every one enters 2012, not with the high pressure list of "must-dos" for the annum, but rather with a list that can change us all in small ways and make us better members of our community.

In closing, I leave you with the words of Benjamin Franklin-"Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each new year find you a better man."

My best,

Sheila Comerford

Mark Your Calendars!...

NNED Spring Conference

April 13-14, 2012

Justice Making Together

Red Jacket Resort, North Conway, NH
Keynote: "Creating the World We All Want to Live In" by Linda Stout

Congregations in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont join for the Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony of the Northern New England District—bring your church banner, network with UUs from other congregations, share in worship and discussions, and celebrate a vibrant Unitarian Universalism in the NNED! This is a family event and the accommodations have a great indoor water park. The conference includes children and youth programming. See flyer in fellowship hall. For more information:

<http://nned.uua.org/index.php>

General Assembly 2012

June 20-24

Phoenix, Arizona



**This is a historic moment.
Be part of the story.**

General Assembly 2012 will be a gathering with multiple ways of engaging in justice work for people of all ages. Joining with the people of Arizona, we will worship, witness, learn and work together. We will leave General Assembly grounded in our faith, energized for justice and with resources to bring this work home to our congregations. For more information visit:

<http://www.uua.org/ga/index.shtml>

Interim Director of Religious Exploration ...

We are now in the Year of the dragon! Happy Chinese New Year!

Plans are under way for offering sessions of OWL (Our Whole Lives) for our Chalice Children and for our 8th and 9th graders. Watch for notifications about parent orientation meeting dates!

Mark your calendars:

- Peace Jam: February 12th
- Jr/Sr Movie Night: February 26th

On February 19th and 26th (school vacation weekends) we will offer special multi-age activities in fellowship hall. All children (and any parents) are invited to take part! Spirit Play will happen at 11:00 as usual.

Peace Jam's (www.peacejam.org) 2012 conference is March 23rd, 24th and 25th (Friday-Saturday-Sunday) in Storr, CT.

Several weeks ago the Jr. High Seekers polled those who were at coffee hour about their views of God. You may have seen the posters on the wall... you may have voted! Each person got three dots to register three opinions on the various ideas about God. As we might have predicted, UUCC adults have a wide variety of opinions!

Unitarian Universalists have always been a diverse lot. We come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Our beliefs and opinions begin to form when we are very young, based on the views of the adults around us, and on our own experiences. I have occasionally heard parents say, "I'll just let my child form her/his own beliefs. S/he doesn't need to attend a church, then s/he will be completely free to develop her/his own ideas." But what they forget is that no-one exists in a vacuum. Children are influenced by those around them - their friends, their schoolmates, what they hear from adults around them, from the media. Here at UUCC we want to show our children the many possibilities, the variety of ways others believe, But we also want to guide them in a direction that we believe to be a good way of living in the world.

Believe it or not, now is the time when planning for next year's RE program gets under way. We have a fantastic array of folks who commit to teaching our young people! Many return year after year! Being an RE teacher is a great opportunity to get to know our young UU's! It's also a fantastic way to grow and stretch your own spirituality!

Think you might like to know more? Ask a member of the RE Committee. Ask Rev. Carie. Ask me. The possibilities are endless!

DRE Pat

Adult Religious Exploration ...

It's not too late! Sign up now for Living our Greatness: Strengthening and Building our Shared Ministry Training. Saturday January 28th 10:00 – 3:00 and Sunday, January 29th 1:00 – 4:00. This training is open to all members of the congregation. If you are seeking ways to get involved, develop a spiritual practice of compassionate listening or want to meet more people then you are invited to attend the Saturday session. Leadership and committee chairs are strongly encouraged to attend both days. This training is required for Small Group Ministry Leaders and Pastoral Care Associates. Deadline for registration is Thursday, January 26th! Please contact the administration office at 622-3232 or admin@augustauu.org to register! Thank you!

UUA Common Read with Rev. Carie Johnsen

Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation. Monday, February 6, 2012 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Stewardship Committee ...

This year's budget supports a vision of greatness for our UUCC community, one which will afford us more resources for our church community and will give us the ability to have more of an impact on our larger community. We on the Stewardship Committee are excited about the opportunity to help the church reach this goal. We invite you to participate in Stewardship Sunday on January 29th and the upcoming Cottage Meetings to share in this vision of "Living Our Greatness".

Please feel free to speak with any of us on the Stewardship Committee (Annie Reiter, Hillary Neckles, Noah Gottlieb, Mildred Stengel or Karen Foust) regarding this year's campaign. We look forward to living this vision together.

DRE Search Committee ...

We are excited to report that the Search for a permanent Director of Religious Exploration (DRE) is underway. The board has given the DRE Search Committee approval to seek a full time DRE and advertising will start this month. Look for the job announcement and updated RE prospectus on the UCC website.

This is a year of transition for the RE program and I would like to thank Pat, our Interim DRE, the classroom teachers, the RE Committee members, the DRE Search Committee members, and the many others who are helping to make this year run smoothly. We are always looking to add new volunteers to the RE team, so please let Pat or myself know if you would like to spend some time with our children or youth or as a part of the REC helping to ensure this program remains vital.

Pam Lombard,
REC Chair & DRE Search Committee Chair

History Committee ...

Due to inclement weather, the January 13th History Committee meeting was rescheduled to January 26th at 10:00 a.m. at the Kennebec Historical Society. We will be doing research on two of our early ministers, Rev. William Drew, founding minister of the Universalist church, and Rev. Sylvester Judd, a revered minister of the Unitarians. Our next meeting will probably be February 9 or 10 in the Olsen Room (Annex). Watch Sunday announcements for specifics, or contact Helen Zidowecki at: 582-5308 or hzmre@hzmre.com

Display Case ...

The **January** display has been a collection of books on Islam, provided by Rev. Carie Johnsen. This display will be up through January 29.

The **February** display will be Unitarian and Universalist Women's Heritage. The UU Women's Heritage Society (WHS) has consolidated with the Unitarian Universalist Historical Society to form the UU History and Heritage Society. One of the changes is the move of the UUWHS Library from its location on Newberry Street to Andover Newton Theological School. We are taking this opportunity to display some of the work of the UUWHS that will continue within the new structure for UU historical focus.

To display, contact Thursday SGM, via Helen Zidowecki or the UCC office

Membership Committee ...

New Members – Save the Dates: Thursday, March 22 - New Members Welcome Dinner and Sunday, March 25 - New Members Recognition at 9:15 & 11:00 services

Greeters & Hospitality Volunteers Needed! Each Sunday all who come to church are greeted warmly at the door and have an opportunity to enjoy a drink and snack in community during fellowship time. Volunteers are needed for both tasks. Please consider signing up for one or the other. Thank you to those of you who have signed up on a monthly basis. Would you be willing to provide help one Sunday per month? No experience needed – training is provided. We just need a willing heart and helping hands! Please contact Jim Caldwell at: jscaldwell@roadrunner.com or 582-8658.



Nonviolent Communication ...

The Practice Group meets on the *first* and *third* Fridays for those who have taken at least Level I training and/or been in a practice group. We encourage people who wish to join the Practice Group to take a training as soon as possible. In addition to using *Nonviolent Communication* by Marshall Rosenberg, we are also using *Connection* by Bonnie Fraser. We have periodic Small Group Ministry Sessions on specific topics, such as Connection and Attitude. These plans are then available to other SGM groups. Please mark your Calendars for the following February meeting dates:

February 3 and 17, 10:15am-12:15pm (Robbins Room, located at the back of the church)

**Introduction to Nonviolent Communication* for those without experience with NVC, but open to anyone, will meet the *second* and *fourth* Wednesdays, 10:30am to 12:30pm when there is interest.

Contact: Helen Wing at: hcranewing@localnet.com or 685-3804 for either of these groups.

Goddess Continuing ...

"Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going?" was the focus of the gathering on January 15. The program at UUCC evolved from *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* curriculum in the mid-1980's and *Rise Up and Call Her Name* in the mid-1990's. While retaining the power of the early focus on female deity and women's spirituality, we are considering more inclusivity of genders and age, and earth-based spirituality. This is evolving.

Our February meetings are being held in the Annex 12:15 p.m.-2:00 p.m. (White house next to church)

February 5, Small Group Ministry Session on Imbolc/Awakening. Please bring signs of Spring that you notice (This is in place of a celebration service.)

February 19 Continuing Revisioning. More details in the Sunday announcements.

For more information contact Lorna Doone at: 685-1061 or ldoone@roadrunner.com

Peaceful Heart Sangha ...



Peaceful Heart Sangha ~ Join us any time for our weekly sittings, every Monday 6:30 – 8. Newcomers always welcome. Children/family practice is offered every first Monday of the month (February 6) from 5:30 – 6:15 followed by childcare so that parents can participate in meditation.

January 2012 Intensive Practice Period, Offered by the Peaceful Heart Sangha ~ Opening session: Saturday, January 7. Closing Session: Saturday February 4 ~ You are invited to join us along with Buddhist communities around the world who have been practicing an intensive winter/rainy season retreat for centuries. The dark, quiet beginning of the New Year is an ideal opportunity to commit to the deepening of our meditation practice without interrupting our regular lives. You might consider extending your meditation time, adding silent mindful meals into your week, or committing to focused Dharma study. There will be two Saturday meditation and potluck gatherings to begin and end the intensive. We will share our intentions with each other and also have time for a dharma reading and discussion, before sharing some delicious vegetarian food.

4 DVD Dharma Talks by Thich Nhat Hanh ~ will be offered on Sundays from 3:30 – 5 in the Annex beginning on January 8.

The Heart of the Buddha's Teachings ~ Our New Year will begin with a new reading practice and a new book. Copies will be available for those who would like to join our twice per month readings and discussion.

For more information or if you would like to arrange an introduction to meditation contact:

[Peacefulheart Sangha @gmail.com](mailto:PeacefulheartSangha@gmail.com) or martysoule@gmail.com or call 685-9270.

Mark Your Calendars:

We will have a sangha trip to Blue Cliff Monastery in February.

Upcoming Events ...

You're Invited to a Concert at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Augusta! ! Saturday, February 11th, 2012 from 2:00 ~ 3:30 p.m.

America in the Poetic Imagination ~ Soprano Nancy Ogle and pianist Ginger Hwalek present poets and composers envisioning American life. Narrated by Dan Sorenson. Featuring music by Don Stratton and Bill Goldberg.

Refreshments provided by Liza Gottlieb (snow date February 18th)

Elder Luncheon ...

Elder Lunch ~ Won't you join us on Sunday, February 12th (after second service) for our monthly Elder lunch? We don't check your birth certificate..."elder" is self-defined! All are welcome!

Social Activities ...

The Social Activities Committee is considering holding a Saturday kids Art class. Does anyone have access to a kiln that we could use for clay work? Reasonable rental fee please. Is there anyone interested in holding a simple kids painting class? Please contact Cheryl Clukey at 441-0337 for more Information. Thank you!

Buildings and Grounds ...

January 2012 we instituted every "Second Saturday" for building and grounds projects from 9-12 p.m.. Thank you to the seven participants who volunteered in January to strip wall paper, paint, wash woodwork and rebuild bookcases.

Second Saturday in February will be a painting day. We will hold working hours from 9-3 p.m. Morning? Afternoon? Both? Any time you can give will be greatly appreciated.

Also during January, Tom and Marilyn will be at the Annex every Tuesday from 9-3 p.m. We are currently painting trim in the Olsen room and skim coating the kitchen and bathroom. Join us if you can.

Fundraising ...

Travelogue - We wish to thank Marty and David Thornton for hosting a series of three photographic Travelogues and Desserts in January. The first, held on January 10th, featured Turkey and was attended by 22 people. Home-made baklava, Turkish coffee, and Turkish music in the Fellowship Hall preceded the fascinating slide show in the Sanctuary. The cost was \$6.50 per person and proceeds totaled \$168. The second and third Travelogues were held after this Newsletter deadline so information on those events is not available at this time.

Raffle of Quilt - A raffle is currently being held for a lovely quilt/comforter made in India. It can be seen in the Fellowship Hall during coffee hour. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. The drawing will be held on March 1st.

Raffle of Catered Gourmet Dinner - Rev. Carie is offering a fully catered gourmet dinner for 4 to 6 people plus the rights to choose the theme for one Sunday service during the 2012/13 year. The delectable menu will include crab and mushroom lasagna, green beans almandine, Caesar salad, artisan bread and Rev. Carie's signature dessert - blueberry crumble cheesecake. The dinner may be served at the winner's home or at the church. The evening's conversation will reveal the selected theme for one pre-arranged worship service. Raffle tickets will be sold during coffee hour and the drawing will be held on April 1st. Tickets will cost \$1 each, 6 for \$5 or 13 for \$10.

Clynk - This bottle recycling program, managed by Hannah Faulkner and Terry Cookson's Small Group Ministry, is a continuous and steady source of income. An additional \$100 was donated last month from this project.

Cookbook - The first 200 copies of *The Fellowship of Food* have been sold with proceeds totaling \$1,348. A second edition will soon be complete. Two replacement pages are available for cookbooks purchased before December 11th. If you have not already received yours, please see Judy or Bruce during coffee hour.

Hosts - Individuals or groups are encouraged to host small fundraising events in March and April. If there is something that you would like to do, please talk with us. We will offer support and will publicize your event for you.

Bruce Bierce bbierce@myfairpoint.net and
Judy McCown jsmbierce@myfairpoint.net, Co-chairs

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From the Administrator

*Newsletter articles are due the **third Monday** of each month. The next newsletter deadline is **February 20th**. Please submit newsletter articles by email, no later than 9:00 a.m. to Julie Pelletier, UUCC Church Administrator at admin@augustauu.org. Thank you!*

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President: Sheila Comerford
Interim Director of Religious Exploration: Pat Gardiner
Administrator: Julie Pelletier
Choir Director: Douglas Barley
Small Group Ministry Coordinator: Kathy Kellison

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Thursday, 4:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.
Saturday, 8:00 a.m.- noon
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