



The Flaming Chalice

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

January 2012

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

Jan 1st *Ushering in a New Year (One service at 10:00 only)* The Reiter-Conley Family

Michael, Annie, Tonia and Ruslan invite members and friends of all ages to join them in this New Years Day service as they lead the congregation in a variety of rituals, readings and song to usher in the New Year.

Jan 8th *Muslims; the Other Children of Abraham* Rev. Carie Johnsen
Reza Jalali

Reza Jalali is an educator and writer who was born in Iran. A long-time resident of Maine, he teaches Islam and Middle Eastern studies at the University of Southern Maine and Bangor Theological Seminary. He is the author of the award-winning *Moon Watchers*, a children's book about Ramadan.

Jan 15th *Faith: Trusting our Own Deepest Experiences* Rev. Carie Johnsen

In Sharon Salzberg's book "Faith: Trusting our Own Deepest Experiences", the reader is invited into a personal exploration of what it means to be a person of faith. Let us join together in this service to move beyond doctrine, terminology and concepts of faith to exploring the inner quality of faith.

Jan 22ndth *To Love or Change the World* Rev. Mark Glovin

Centered on EB White's famous quote, this service will explore the polarity between enjoying the world and working to change the world. How can we enjoy ourselves when there is so much, so wrong? How can we ever go a day without feeling gratitude for the beauty all around? How can both of these questions speak truth?

Rev. Mark Glovin is in the middle of his seventh year serving the First Universalist Church in Rockland and feels privileged to serve that growing and thriving congregation. A native New Englander, Mark learned lessons early in life about painful blessings by following the Red Sox. Mark believes Unitarian Universalist churches can be beauty and Truth labs where we can learn and love and grow together, serving the world and each other.

Jan 29th *Living Our Greatness* Rev. Carie Johnsen
Stewardship Committee

"It is time for each congregation to find its greatness." UUC is a congregation transformed by their experiences. The Northern New England District of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation proclaimed UUC to be star congregation—a congregation with courage and leadership. So here's the big question, How will we live out this greatness into the next decade? Who will we chose to be on the corner of Winthrop and Summer and in the greater Augusta Community? Come catch the passion of a congregation on the precipice of something spectacular!!

A Faith Journey by Rev. Carie Johnsen...

As long as we have a dream in our heart, we cannot lose the significance of living.

The dream in the heart is the outlet. It is one with the living water welling up from the very springs of being, nourishing and sustaining all of life.

The dream is the quiet persistence in the heart that enables us to ride out the storms of our churning experiences. It is the exciting whisper moving through the aisles of our spirit answering the monotony of limitless days of dull routine.

It is the ever-recurring melody in the midst of the broken harmony and harsh discords of human conflict. It does not take its rise from the environment in which one moves or functions. It lives in the inward parts, it is deep within, where the issues of life and death are ultimately determined.

Keep alive the dream; for as long as we have a dream in our heart, we cannot lose the significance of living.

~ Howard Thurman, "Meditation of the Heart." (adapted)

As we begin the rituals of entering a new year, I ask "What is the dream UUCC holds in the heart of the community for the future?" As UUCC enters a new year, we also enter a new chapter for a congregation transformed by their past. Who will we become? Who will we chose to be on the religious landscape?

Much work has been done in the last five years. The buildings are beautifully renovated. The leadership is growing stronger every year with new committees, by-laws, safe congregation policies, systems and structures to help UUCC realize health and vitality. As personal commitments to this congregation arrive from a diverse and broad group of people, the practice shared ministry at UUCC is being realized. The practice of dispersed responsibility to the life and future of this important congregation is being lived out in all the corners of congregational life.

On January 22nd I will lead worship with the stewardship committee. We, the members and friends of UUCC, will celebrate and claim the vision of *Living our Greatness*. Now is the time for this congregation to catch hold of the passion of who they are, who they will be, and who they are becoming.

On January 28th and 29th, I will co-lead a weekend workshop titled ***Living Our Greatness*** with Doug Rooks, the Vice-President of the Board of Trustees, and Kathy Kellison, the Small Group Ministry Coordinator. Our goal is to help members of leadership, small group ministry and the pastoral ministry team claim and live into their role as lay ministers of this vibrant, vital and dynamic congregation.

Through a combination of conversations large and small we will explore the philosophy of shared and lay ministry as we engage the question of what does it mean to be a community of people who offer compassionate listening at all junctures of ministry. How does a committee chair engage in conversational listening to hear what is emerging as collective wisdom? How does a small group ministry leader embrace their role as the person in the circle selected to be mindful of the group's practices and health? How does a pastoral associate bring a presence of compassion and nonjudgment to a person in crisis?

This workshop is open to any member or friend of the congregation who wants to catch the passion of UUCC's shared ministry and be a part of something spectacular. Members of leadership including committee chairs, small group ministry facilitators and leaders, are strongly encouraged to attend. This training will be mandatory for all members of the pastoral ministry team. Any member who is interested in developing a spiritual practice of compassionate listening is also invited to attend the Saturday session.

What is next for this congregation? What dream will we keep alive? How will you chose to be a part of something spectacular?

In faith of all that is UUCC, *Rev. Carie*

Living our Greatness: Building and Strengthening our Shared Ministry...

Ministry is a quality of relationship between and among human beings that beckons forth hidden possibilities. It is inviting people into deeper, more constant, more reverent relationship with the world and one another. ~ Gordon McKeeman

A Congregation Wide Training

Saturday, January 28, 2012 10:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 29, 2012 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Adopt a spiritual practice of compassionate listening. Do you want to learn why the gift of listening is the best offering you can bring to a friend or family member during time of crisis and conflict or when simply engaged in day to day conversation? Do you want to improve upon your deep listening skills? Do you want to develop a presence of compassion? Do you wish to let go of your impulse to fix others problems, conflicts and dilemmas? Then this Saturday training is for you. No further commitments required.

Leadership and Listening. Do you want to further develop your leadership skills? Do you want to strengthen your skills as a UUCC leader or committee chair? Do you wish to expand your ability to listen, share ideas and be open to the collective wisdom of your committee or team? Do you want to hear what others have to say without preparing your answers and defenses? Then this Saturday training is for you. No further commitments required.

Small Group Ministry Facilitator. Are you a member of a group who takes your turn to lead the group from time to time? Would you like to know what makes this role so important? Would you like to feel confident that your session is going well? Would you like to be able to listen without taking responsibility for how someone else's comment affects the group? Then this Saturday training is for you. No further commitments required.

Building a Pastoral Ministry Team – Join the emerging Pastoral Care Team at UUCC. Do you have a ministry of deep listening and compassionate presence to offer members of UUCC and the wider Augusta community? Do you have a desire to sit with our members who are in crisis or lonely or in long term care? Do you love coordinating resources such as rides, prepared meals and errands for members who are incapacitated or coming home from a hospital stay? Then this Saturday and Sunday training is for you. Following the training you will meet with Rev. Carie Johnsen to identify what specialized lay pastoral ministry is right for you. The Pastoral Ministry Team will meet monthly to continue skills development and support each other in their specialized lay pastoral ministries.

Small Group Ministry Leader. Is the free and responsible search for truth and meaning at the heart of your commitment to UUCC? Has your group chosen you as the person to be responsible to hold the role of leader in your group? Would you like to become a leader in a new Ministry Group? Do you want to listen deeply to the individuals in your group? Would you like to be able to listen to the group as a whole? This Saturday and Sunday training is for you. On Sunday we will focus on the skills needed to be an effective leader in a Ministry Group.

Sign up on the bulletin board or by sending a RSVP to Julie Pelletier, Office Administrator at admin@augusta.uu.org

Adult RE...

Evensong is an 8-week Adult Education offering that is designed to allow participants the opportunity to share experiences of their lives in an open and secure environment. We will follow an order of service each week that will encourage us to share thoughts, experiences, doubts and beliefs from different aspects of our individual life journeys. Listening is at the heart of *Evensong* and invites people to respond authentically to observations, readings and topics rather than reply with what we think others would want to hear.

We will meet on **Tuesdays, 5:30 -- 7:30 p.m. from January 24 -- March 13, 2012.** A few topics that will be covered include: Childhood Memory and Knowing, Scripture and Story, Generosity, Hospitality and the Stranger, and others. *Evensong* is a good way to explore personal beliefs and possibilities, as well as a way for newcomers and long time members to connect with people in the congregation.

Registration will be limited to 8 -- 10 people. To register, please call the church office at 622-3232. If you have any questions about *Evensong*, please contact Nancee Campbell at 621-7727.

UUA Common Read with Rev. Carie Johnsen

The Death of Josseline: Stories of Immigration from the Arizona Borderlands Monday, January 30, 2012, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

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.

Interim Director of Religious Exploration ...

Thank you many times over to all who took part in our pageant on Dec. 18th! I pass along to all who participated the many, many compliments that I heard! I felt privileged to have been a part of it. I felt the presence of Karen Fisk, our previous DRE, as I sought out previous years' costumes and props and as I tinkered, in a minor way, with the script. She left behind an easy to step into plan.

UUCC will have a new, permanent DRE in the 2012-13 year. The search committee has begun to meet and I know that they will find the very best person for this amazing job. In the meantime, I continue to bridge the span with help from the RE Committee, Rev. Carie, and others. Please remember that RE is everyone, not just a few. Your time and energy are what make RE live!

- ◆ On Dec. 18, the first Peace Meals were cooked and delivered by our Sr. Youth. Bravo!
- ◆ No RE classes on Jan 1. However, there will be nursery care
- ◆ RE classes and Spirit Play will resume on Jan. 8.
- ◆ The next RE Committee meeting is Jan. 8 at 12:30.
- ◆ Peace Jam meets on Jan. 8 from 3:00 to 6:00
- ◆ The next Jr./Sr. High Movie Night is Jan. 22.

The ancient Romans had a god named Janus who looked both forward and back (two faces, one head - imagine that). I've been spending some time getting ready for 2012 by emulating Janus and looking both back at the past few months and ahead to the future.

When I arrived in September, I was a bit boggled by all that I had to learn very quickly. So many new names to learn and new faces to try to attach them to! New things that I wasn't familiar with... like Peace Jam, and Cookie Walks... and what key opened what door!

When I used to go to RE Week at Star Island (NH) from Saturday to Saturday... at Wednesday dinner the "new Shoalers" would be asked to peel the newcomer stickers off of their nametags... because by Wednesday you had become an "old Shoaler"! Things happen fast at Star! By Wednesday you pretty much knew the ropes... how to put your hot water pitcher outside your door before going to bed (ask me why sometime), how to listen for the bell at mealtimes, how to walk in silence up the hill for evening chapel. By Wednesday, you had arrived! You were part of the community!

I like to reflect on how I have been assimilated into UUCC. Like Star Island, UUCC is just crawling with cool folks who have a similar way of looking at life. There is caring and sharing, and respect for every individual. True community.

Speaking as an ex-newcomer here, I can say absolutely that this church has something special! Newcomers feel it; I'm sure "old timers" are aware of it... because it doesn't just happen on its own. It takes a special - and continuing - effort on the part of every person. I hope that, if you are new, you'll soon peel off your metaphorical "new UUCCer" sticker and feel that you're one of the community. I know I have.

Happy New Year, everyone!

Namaste!
DRE Pat

Elder Luncheon ...

Elder Lunch ~ Won't you join us on Sunday, January 8th (after second service) for our monthly Elder lunch? We don't check your birth certificate... "elder" is self-defined! All are welcome!

Next Elder lunch is: February 12th! We hope to see you there!

From the Board President ...

Well, here we are again in the midst of the holidays, and before you know it 2012 will be upon us. This year at the UCC we will be doing something a bit different—we will start the annual stewardship campaign a month earlier than we ever have before. The kick-off will be Sunday, January 22. The Campaign is in the capable hands of Annie Reiter and a wonderful committee. I look forward to working with them to support the Unitarian Universalist Community Church. As you prepare to make your 2012 pledge, I would ask you to reflect on what the Unitarian Universalist Community Church does for you, your family and your community. Think about what's going on in the state and the world. Our church is an important vehicle for positive change. Our church affirms the inherent worth and dignity of every person; and through our actions we promote equity and compassion in human relations.

Our community has much to feel good about as we look back on 2011. We have taken a public stance on a number of social issues that affect citizens today—from marching in a spiritual walk to support our brothers and sisters in the Occupy movement, to contacting legislators about devastating cuts to Maine's budget affecting Maine's neediest citizens, and to reaching out to seasonal agricultural workers from other countries.

There is always more to be done. Let's move ahead together to make Maine a better place to live for everyone!

Sincerely,
Sheila Comerford, Board President

Small Group Ministry ...

Just because two or more are gathered, it is not necessarily Small Group Ministry. Our Groups are characterized by the covenant created by the members of each group, the willingness to be open to new members and a commitment to service to our congregation and the wider community. "Affinity groups", on the other hand, are made up of people who have a characteristic in common and come together for celebration and exploration of that common bond. Sometimes there is overlap. Our Men's Small Group was created specifically to be available for men. For the most part, membership in a Small Group is random, dictated by the schedule of the person seeking a group.

Many members of Small Group Ministry value the opportunity to connect with people who see the world differently. They find their own understanding deepened by seeing how others view life with its blessings and challenges. For them, clarity comes through seeing differences. Because this has always been a value aspect of Small Group Ministry, we have decided to avoid creating any more affinity groups within our ministry. We will continue to offer random connections.

At the same time, there are several affinity groups currently meeting at the church, including the Sangha and the goddess group. Carie is currently extending an invitation to any and all who are interested in affinity groups around theological issues. This will be an excellent opportunity to support theological diversity and give a sense of place to people who are exploring a particular approach within Unitarian Universalism. In tandem with Small Group Ministry, the church will offer opportunities to explore similarities or differences, depending on where you are on your quest and which seems more useful.

I continue to be hopeful that we will start a new Small Group this winter. Once the new year arrives, I will gather those of you who have expressed interest and make a plan. I thank you for your patience.

I wish you all the best for the new year!
Kathy Kellison, Small Group Ministry Coordinator

Small Group Ministry will be starting new groups in January. If you are interested in knowing more, visit the Small Group Ministry table during Fellowship Hour, speak with Kathy Kellison, Janet Sawyer or Carie. Groups will try to accommodate schedules of those who are interested.

History Committee ...

The History Committee Meeting is Friday, **January 13, 10:30-noon** in the Annex. What will the suggested names for our buildings and spaces be? What projects are set for 2012? Please remember to clip news items related to church members for our ongoing scrapbooks – capturing history as it happens. These contributions can be put in the History Committee mail slot in the Committee Room.

Nonviolent Communication ...

The Practice Group meets on the *first* and *third* Fridays of each month from 10:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. These meetings are 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. **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.

January meeting times are: **January 6 and January 20**

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

Food Bank ...

I have a different request for this week to help us out at The Augusta Food Bank. This month and next, we are seeking empty egg cartons! We picked up 180 dozen eggs this week, but unfortunately they are not boxed! They are in "flats" of 2.5 dozen each, and needless to say, that doesn't make it very easy to distribute! So please bring empty egg cartons to the Food Bank or leave with your congregational donations in the coming weeks.

There have been some wonderful food drives this month from local organizations, and we send a hearty thank you to all of those businesses and organizations. That being said, we are still looking for the following items: peanut butter, canned fruits and canned soups.

We have been busy at the Food Bank over the past couple months. November saw 52 new households requesting assistance, bringing the 2011 total to 473. I would expect that number to be above 500 by year's end. We have provided enough food to prepare 186,861 meals so far this year, and I wouldn't be surprised to see that total above 200,000 by the end of December. The number of people we serve continues to rise, and we need the support of all of you to continue to be able to provide what we can. We thank you for supporting the Augusta Food Bank.

So, egg cartons, peanut butter, canned fruits & canned soups!

Thanks for all you do and thanks for passing the word on!

Have a happy healthy and safe holiday season.

--Abbie Perry

Goddess Continuing ...

Join us on **January 15** from 12:15-2:00 p.m. in the Olsen Room (Annex) to shape what Goddess Continuing will look like in 2012.

- ◆ Continuing Women of Wisdom
- ◆ Celebrating holy days of the earth cycle
- ◆ Engaging the Goddesses

While there are a few sessions that focus on women, Goddess Continuing is open to men and older youth. Come, explore with us as we begin 2012!



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 (January 2) 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 or martysoule@gmail.com or call 685-9270.

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)

Buildings and Grounds ...

Thank you from Tom Waddell and Marilyn Dunn ~ We had a grand time serving lunch and showing Building and Ground Slides on December 4. The before and after pictures of the annex brought oohs and aaahs and really show what over 50 volunteers accomplished. We were very surprised and moved by the community's show of appreciation. Thank you all for the accolades, pictures and dinner certificates the volunteer work party gave us. Thank you to all the hard working volunteers (numbering over 60 people) who have helped out with projects this past year. A hearty "Well Done!". Special thanks to Hal Booth and Jim McKendry for the many days they spent laboring at the annex last spring and summer.

Building and Grounds initiates "Second Saturday" and Tuesday Mornings ~ To make it easy for everyone to plan, the second Saturday of every month will be a Building and Grounds group project from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Please mark you calendars and if you can plan around that Second Saturday we'd appreciate your help.

Additionally, during January and February, Tom and I plan to work at the annex on Tuesday's from 9-12 so please join us if you can. We'd like to finish the painting at the annex this winter and then move on to exterior projects in the spring.

Please place bags of trash in the bins on the back porch of the annex. Do not overfill the trash bags or they will be difficult to get in the bins. Bags can't be left leaning against the garage or outside of bins. The animals get to them and spread trash across the yard.

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!

Fundraising ...

Cookbook ~ Errors have been found on pages 98 and 99 of the UUCC Cookbook and we have printed replacement pages for those of you who purchased books prior to December 11th. Cookbooks sold after the 11th include the corrected pages. Please see us during Fellowship Hour and we will give you the new pages. Bruce Bierce and Judy McCown, Fundraising Co-Chairs.

For more information contact us at: bbierce@myfairpoint.net or jsmbierce@myfairpoint.net

Travelogue and Dessert – A Fundraising Event!

Marty and David Thornton will present a series of three Tuesday evening travelogues in January on the 10th, the 17th and 24th. Each Travelogue will be held in the Fellowship Hall from 6:30 to 8:30 and will include dessert and coffee. The cost is \$6.50 for each presentation. Reservations are required at least one day in advance of each program in order to plan for seating and desserts. There is a sign-up sheet on the Fundraising Bulletin Board in the Fellowship Hall or you can contact Marty at martythornton@gmail.com.

Descriptions of these fascinating programs follow:

January 10, 2012 ~ Istanbul and Cappadocia

Join Marty and David as they walk the streets of Istanbul exploring the city's rich architecture. Listen to the call to prayer as it echoes in the old city. Experience the vast interiors of many of the city's huge mosques including the Blue Mosque, Haghia Sophia, and Suleymaniye and many other sights of this fascinating city. Then travel to Cappadocia to walk among Fairy Chimneys, visit cave cities, and get off the beaten track to see places missed by most tourists!

January 17, 2012 ~ The Aegean and Mediterranean Regions of Turkey

Many of the stunning Greek and Roman ruins are found in Turkey on the coast. Walk back into history to see these amazing cities including Ephesus on the Aegean and Anemurium on the Mediterranean. An added experience is a visit to the deserted city of Kayakoy

January 24, 2012 ~ Nepal and a Tea House Trek

Join Marty and David as they visit Kathmandu's Durbur Square and many of the most historic and significant temples and stupas. Then on to Pokhara, Chitwan National Park, Lumbini (region of the birth of Buddha), Patan, and Bhaktapur and finish our visit to this amazing place with a Tea House Trek on part of the Annapurna Circuit. We will also visit schools and meet some of the children being sponsored through the ANSWER (American-Nepali Student and Women's Educational Relief) through which Marty and David have sponsored three students since 2003.

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From the Administrator



Newsletter articles are due the **third Monday** of each month. The next newsletter deadline is **January 16th**. 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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Interim Director of Religious Exploration: Pat Gardiner
Administrator: Julie Pelletier
Choir Director: Douglas Barley
Small Group Ministry Coordinator: Kathy Kellison

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