



The Flaming Chalice

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

October 2014



October



Monthly Theme: AGING

Worship schedule

October 5th Living through the Decades Rev. Carie Johnsen

We kick off the monthly theme – aging- with a celebration of birth and childhood. Today's child dedication ceremony will celebrate the birth and growing years of the children in our community. We then head off on an exploration of the ages through the lens of the decades.

*The Child Dedication Ceremony is a time for celebrating the birth or adoption of a child in a ceremony of naming and dedication. It is a time for celebrating the growing years of the young children in the family. It is a time for welcoming our children into the world, into the family and into the church community. It is a time for acknowledging that each child's life is sacred and hold that truth in the light of our faith. **Please contact Rev Carie Johnsen to discuss your child's participation in this ceremony. She can be reached at 623-3663 or 508-221-5295.***

October 12th Graced by Age Rev. Carie Johnsen

Does there come a time when we welcome the accumulated treasures of a well-lived life? What gifts arrive on the wings of maturity? Join us today as we welcome, celebrate and honor the elders in our community.

October 19th Ageism: Do We All Experience it? Rev. Carie Johnsen

At the end of the day, do we all experience some sort of discrimination based on our age? How are our lives shaped by the stereotypes and prejudices others impose upon our living?

October 26th Ethical Wills Rev. Nancee Campbell

This congregation will have recently hosted a workshop on Ethical Wills that included members of other Augusta congregations. In this service we will examine what Ethical Wills are, their purpose in a person's legacy, and the possible impact on the generations that follow an individual's lifetime. Many people consider this document an important way to celebrate and honor the totality of their lives.

A Faith Journey by Rev. Carie Johnsen...

A Faith Journey...

It's time for a sabbatical. Yes, it is true. The word on the street (or in the pews) rings true. Your minister, the Rev. Carie Johnsen is taking a sabbatical this year. And it is right around the corner. And you are all well equipped to live out our shared ministry in my absence. And the Board of Trustees has appointed a sabbatical committee to hold my ministry.

Some of you might be asking, 'Just why do ministers take a sabbatical?' The sabbatical handbook explains,

"Sabbaticals are designed to foster rest, reflection and renewal, a respite in depth, to provide an opportunity to break away from established routine and the press of heavy responsibilities, a chance to experience different cultures and be stimulated by new learning's, and time and space to reflect on the meaning of it all. Sabbaticals typically include study and/or travel, and provide the opportunity not only for formal learning and cultural enrichment but also time for receptivity and reflection. We are able to be receptive only when we have let go of our normal regimen. Receptivity opens the way to interior healing, fresh insight and perspective, and possibly a new energy that is less driven, more balanced and productive.

My sabbatical goal is to cultivate a deeper practice of presence, mindfulness and contemplation. My time away will include a time of rest from the demands of a scheduled life to develop a practice of spaciousness, thus allowing for more theological contemplation, reflection and writing.

My sabbatical will include an ancestral and religious pilgrimage to Wales for six weeks in January and February. I will be staying in a private home on the land of my ancestors. My genealogical research has surfaced ancestors in Wales who were either ordained or lay preachers. I am planning to tour their churches. I have begun to make inquiries about co-leading a worship where my great, great, great, great grandfather Samuel Howell preached. The Jerusalem Church is Congregational and the Saron Church is still a bit of a mystery.

I am happy to report my plans to spend time with the Unitarian Society of Southern and South East Wales are beginning to come together. Wales has 22 Unitarian congregations with over 400 members. Many (not all) Sunday services are in Welsh. I will spend time in their communities and worship with them, including leading and supporting Sunday services.

The details: I will be taking a split sabbatical. Which means I will be away for December, January, and February. I will be here at church March, April and most of May. I will be on sabbatical again in mid May to mid August. Five of these months are sabbatical time. One month is vacation. The value in a split sabbatical is it is easier on the congregation and it aligns with my plans for travel and extended time on Cape Cod over the spring and summer with my family and new granddaughters.

The Sabbatical Committee: Abbie Laurie (Board of Trustees), Debbie Mattson (Personnel), Noah Gottlieb (Worship), Nancee Campbell (Pastoral Ministry), Sara Hodgkins (Religious Exploration), Rita Cherubini (Membership). More news and information will be forthcoming from this very capable group of leaders.

In faith, Rev. Carie

President's Corner...

By: Gary Chapin

At the Leadership Council retreat last week, when asked about my vision for the church in five years, I wrote that I'd love the community to be "so vibrant and active" that no one person could be expected to keep track of it all. I feel like we're almost getting there already!

No one could accuse us of getting off to a slow start this September.

Aside from the "usual business" of ingathering (re-envisioned this year), our RE committee launched its year on strong footing in the absence of a director. Our choir gathered to knock our socks off. Our Leadership Council had a retreat aimed at following up our Leap of Faith work (and there were puppets). Our minister organized a truly awesome series of Adult Enrichment programs. And the Buildings and Grounds committee is overseeing the running of a gas pipeline to the building, AND the conversion of our furnaces!

It's only September 19th!

Two common threads run through all of that. First, the number of volunteers involved in the running of this church is mind-boggling. I've never been in the position of being grateful to so many people as I am right now – or, at least, I've never realized it. Second, the number of conversations that have to happen to keep us going is also mind-boggling – especially since, as president, I'm having a lot of them.

One of my favorite sayings is, "Change happens one conversation at a time." But my experience here is showing me that just *being* happens one conversation at a time.

We are. We are in relationship. We are in conversation.

Thank you, everyone.

Gary

Observations from a new board member: *Abby Lourie*

What has surprised me the most about being on the board is what I have learned about our Augusta community. I had heard and read that church attendance nationwide has decreased in the last two years, but I didn't realize how much. All denominations have been seeing a decrease. In Augusta most of the Protestant churches now have membership numbers under 50. The UCC in Augusta is a thriving, vibrant hub of liberal religion.

Also with the decrease in membership there is a decrease in pledges. The UCC is facing this too. Although it is to a lesser extent than most churches, it's still going to mean that we have to cut back. This is going to be a hard move, as all programming is a part of our church and community ministry. Nothing about cutting funding is going to be clear, feel okay, or make sense based on our shared values and the beliefs we hold sacred.

Lastly, does everyone know that the board's meeting minutes get posted for membership to read? This is part of being an open and transparent community.

Immigration/Migrant Group..

Thank you for your support of the collection of food, clothing, and bedding for downeast blueberry pickers. The Immigration Work Group participated for the second year in the Blueberry Raker Fair organized by The Maine Migrant Health Program and faith groups in the Ellsworth area.

UUCC members donated generous mounts of clothing, sheets, towels and food-a whole car full. Steph drove the items to Ellsworth and stayed to see the beginning of the distributions. It was heartwarming to see the tables stacked with good quality used clothing, and cases of food including some fresh produce donated by stores. A local church



group was serving a fish soup dinner. The farm workers started arriving about 4 p.m., men and women who

chatted among themselves and pointed out good finds to each other. The added clothing items to their bags then went to look at the food. Shortly the doctor providing services for the evening arrived and those waiting to see the doctor gathered in a side room that offered some privacy.

This is an example of how UUCC can improve the lives of migrant farmworkers who are so important to our economy. If you would like to learn more about immigration or contribute other talents you have to this work, please contact Steph Ralph at stephralph@gmail.com about joining our group.

Small Group Ministry...

'Never doubt that a small group of committed (members) can change a (church)'. As I paraphrase Margaret Mead with a bit of humor, I mean what I say. Small Group Ministry started as a dream of lay people in our congregation who believed that we needed a new vehicle for connection and ministry. They met for many weeks, studied experiments in other churches extensively and adapted what they found to fit UUCC. This small group of committed members created what has become one of the hallmarks of our congregation.

We currently have 11 groups meeting on a regular basis. These groups have met the needs of their members for intimacy and ministry among themselves and offered service projects to the congregation and our wider community. They have helped many newcomers find a place of connection within our community. They have supported their members through losses, celebrated life's milestones together and created a story of caring for one another.

When we started this ministry, it was a new way of doing church. It was not worship. It was not adult education. It included some social justice work and was far more than that. We were anxious when we began. What if no one signed up? What if the groups became cliques? What if the groups are so good people stop coming on Sunday mornings? What if people only give time to their groups and didn't volunteer for other activities around the church? When we started this ministry we had no idea what the answers to these questions would be. We went forward anyway. We had faith that our community would adjust and adapt and absorb this new way of doing church and thrive. Our faith was rewarded.

I am heartened by this story as I see the changes and challenges that this year brings. I have faith that our expanded adult enrichment program will thrive and provide opportunities for many people from within and outside our current community to connect. I have faith that we will discover a family ministry that will enfold and enrich families in a new and dynamic way. And I have faith that Small Group Ministry will continue its mission of connection and ministry.

If you have been considering joining a group, please let me know. We have openings!! If our availability matches your scheduling needs, we will make a match. Small Group Ministry can be for you! Check it out.

Kathy Kellison, SGM Coordinator

Summary of August 2014 Meeting of the UUCC Board of Directors

This is the first of an on-going monthly summary of action taken or discussed by the board.

Board Meetings: In an effort to enhance transparency of the work done by the board, it was decided to publish a summary of the Board Agenda, Minutes and Treasurer's report short form each month in the Flaming Chalice and in one weekly newsletter.

Budget: There was concern expressed that the numbers in the revenue line of the Budget Report were not as robust as expected. It was worrisome that the pledge campaign predictions have not been this far off in the past. The Finance Committee will be asked to attend a Board meeting to discuss this. Also for the spring budget process it was thought it might be beneficial to hold a separate meeting for the budget work as opposed to folding it into the regular monthly meeting.

SGM: Beth Nasberg has agreed to chair the Small Group Ministry Committee.

Leadership: The Leadership Retreat in September will include chairs of all the committees and board. The theme will be 'What Now'; deciding next steps in year 2 of Leap of Faith. A regional trainer from UUA will facilitate.

Orientation: A 2-hour board orientation/training will be held in August for new members of the board.

Minister's Contract: The annual contract for the minister was approved. It's essentially the same as the original except for compensation. The new salary is consistent with UUA standards (revised).

Financial Trustee: Dissatisfaction has been expressed regarding the current trustee of the Ballard Trust and it was questioned if the money should be transferred to a different trustee. There are many different options. They each will need to be researched with regard to advantages and consequences.

Natural Gas: The natural gas pipelines to the church will be installed by the end of August. Long before the cold weather sets in, all will be up and operational.

Immigrant Harvest Workers: The local immigrant harvesters requested and were granted permission to use UUCC's kitchen to prepare their meals.

Director of Family Ministry: The Hiring Committee did not receive any applications they felt were viable. They will advertise the position again.

Seasoned Souls to Meet...

Seasoned Souls is open to any church member who is over 65 and wishes to talk openly about topics related to the aging process. Seasoned Souls will be meeting Wednesdays, October 8th and 22nd from 10:30 a.m. until noon in Fellowship Hall.

Summary of September 2014 Meeting of the UUCC Board of Directors

Social Justice Committee: The couple who currently run the St. Mark's Saturday night community suppers, are moving out of the area, which will leave a large gap in that program. UUCC has been asked to take up responsibility for more of those suppers, 6 or 8 if possible. We now have responsibility for 1 dinner in each June, July and August. The cost is around \$250 to \$300 per week. Each week roughly 200 meals are set up; one for dinner and one to take home. Three other churches, far smaller than ours, pick up the other 3 Saturday nights. This program is critically important to our neighborhood. People have been depending on it for a very long time. It was noted that our budget is already underfunded and the question was asked, how we would meet this new expense. This will require research into new funding mechanisms.

A Sabbatical Committee has been chosen to plan, organize and coordinate church activities while Rev. Johnsen is away. The Committee is comprised of Deb Mattson, Nancy Campbell, Noah Gottlieb, Abby Lourie, Sarah Hodgkin and Rita Cherubini. Rev. Johnsen expects to be gone: December 1, 2014 to February 28, 2015 and May 25, 2015 to August 16, 2015, with the final month being vacation.

The Finance Committee reported there is a significant gap between what we budgeted for income and what is actually being received in pledges and plate donations. Some people have lowered the amount they pledged this year, compared to previous years; which threw off projections; and a number of people didn't pledge at all. There was serious, lengthy discussion about remedies. The board is working diligently with the Finance Committee to come up with the best possible solutions.

After-Pastor Congregation. UUCC has been asked by UUA to join the National Conference of After Pastor Ministries. UUA requires a team of three attend and pays for all but air fare. Carie gave information about the length of time a congregation remains at risk of falling back into an environment which could lend itself to more problems of this nature. The minister and team attending will get education and support for managing an After-Pastor Congregation. And with the team guidance, our congregation will continue to grow in its knowledge and understanding of what it means to be an after-pastor congregation and how to create systems that lean toward health. The Board approved attendance, pending funding of air fare.

Pride Film Festival. UUCC was asked by UMA to sponsor the Pride Film Festival this year. The board decided in the affirmative.

Annual Leadership Retreat. The theme was Leap of Faith, Next Steps. Attendance was good and suggestions were great. Martha Naber wrote up all the suggestions and distributed copies to the board, explaining she will have people consolidate the suggestions that repeat then set goals, objectives and time lines to each suggestion.

The next board meeting is October 12, 2014.

Goddess Continuing/ Earth Circles...

Goddess Continuing/Earth Circles meets the fourth Sunday of the month from 12:15 - 2:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall (unless noted otherwise). Join us for the **Earth Circles Ingathering** on September 28th.

Share **foods for the season** -- always a treat of our gatherings

Ingathering ritual to honor our time to together

Considering what the year might hold: The Celebrations for each month, honoring women of Wisdom, small group ministry sessions

Adult Enrichment offerings: The first is *On The Threshold*, the updated *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven, Vol. II* on Tuesdays (Oct. 14 & 28; Nov. 11, Dec. 2 from 5:30 - 7:30) Full description will be available.

October 26th will include **Samhain** and honoring those who have died, with ritual, songs. Help us plan for this on Sept. 26th. What is meaningful about Halloween and this time of year?

There will be a brochure of the year's events after the Sept. 26th Ingathering. And we are located on the UUCC website under "Ministries". All ages and genders are welcome. Contact: Helen Zidowcecki at 582-5308 or hzmre@hzmre.com.

Elder Lunch...

Could you cook or serve just once for Elder Lunch this year?

Elder lunch is the second Sunday of each month October through May. This event has grown in popularity and 35-40 of our elders enjoy lunch and conversation. Each event requires two large salads, 4 entrees choices, and plates of finger desserts.

Could you cook a casserole, quiche or soup for the Elder Lunch just once this year? Or are you willing to cook a finger food desert like cookies, brownies or bars?

Or would you be willing to bring a large green salad or cole slaw? If you aren't a cook, would you be willing to help setup, serve or clear?

Please call Marilyn Dunn to schedule 512-5382 .

Buildings and Grounds...

Building and Grounds Committee seeking members!

We guarantee your time will not be taken up in meetings. We will meet annually to prioritize big projects and the rest of the year we will communicate by email. Members should work the monthly second Saturday work days when possible and take responsibility for occasional minor repairs and maintenance that come up during the month if Tom is unavailable. Please call 512-5382 or ail maine2007@hotmail.com if you are willing to be a committee member. Thank you.

Building and Ground Workdays are the Second Saturday of the month from 9am to Noon

Please mark your calendar for October 11th and November 8th and give us a hand. October will be emptying the compost to a trailer, tidying the flower beds, washing windows, winterizing, cleaning out basements and installing cellular shades. November is the annual leaf raking event. We really need a turn out to button down the campus for winter.

Tom Waddell and Marilyn Dunn

Ethical Wills

Saturday, October 18, 2014

10 a.m.— 2 p.m.

Community Church Fellowship Hall

Facilitated by Nancee Campbell

and Rabbi Erica Ash

What do you want to be sure people know about you after you die? Aside from material possessions, an Ethical Will is a heartfelt expression of that has truly mattered to you in your lifetime. What values have guided your decisions and choices during your life, and why? We will briefly look at the history of Ethical Wills, see some examples, both from olden times and more contemporary, and take a stab at writing one of our own. We will share a pot-luck lunch and then discuss our efforts, if we so desire. This is just the first of a series of workshops we're considering offering on this meaningful topic.

Please come prepared to share something for 8 at our pot luck lunch. Registration is limited, so please call Steve at 622-3232 to register and tell him what you will be bringing for lunch.

Sign Up Now for These FALL Adult Enrichment Programs

The **fall** calendar for adult enrichment is set with a variety of opportunities for connection, community and spiritual formation. The diversity of programs are open to UUCC members and friends and members of the greater Augusta community. Please note some programs are designed to encourage participation and support specific groups. We hope you will be inspired to sign up for one or more option. To do so, please contact Steve Moore, UUCC Office Administrator at 622-3232 or admin@augustauu.org. For a full listing of all programs visit www.augustauu.org or pick up a program booklet in the church vestibule.

Writing Your Sacred Journey

Writing as spiritual practice can be a rich, active form of paying attention to the self and the world. Writing as contemplation can focus us, center us, slow us down and allow us to simply observe, be present, open, aware and appreciative of what we have, here, right now. We are excited to have a different leader facilitating each session. The diversity of leadership will allow for varied styles of leadership, structure, facilitation, activities and creative writing assignments. This program will be offered in three distinct sessions. Participants may sign up for one session, two sessions or all three. Class is limited to 10 participants.

Fall Session (5 gatherings)

Tuesday evenings, 5:30 – 7:30

September 23rd, October 7th, 21st, November 4th, 18th

Leader: Rev. Carie Johnsen 623-3663 or revcariejohsen@augustauu.org

The Way of the Naturalist

As Unitarian Universalist we strive to respect the interdependent web all existence of which we are a part. This program offers five stand-alone sessions that offer an experience and an opportunity to discuss how we are all interdependent with each other and the natural world. These sessions offer participants an opportunity to feel connected to the earth and to each other, to share their own personal experience, and to deepen their understanding about the natural world.

This program is part of our *Congregations and Beyond* ministry whereby we bring our values and principles out into the greater Augusta community. Members and friends of UUCC are also very welcome to sign up for these events. Participants are not required to attend all sessions. Each session is designed as a “stand-alone”, so that participants may attend one, or all. These sessions will be designed for adults over 18.

The Way of the Forest

October 5, 2014, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

China School Forest

Unitarian Universalists Praying

We will have a six session long exploration and conversation about prayer – its role in our lives, our relationship with it, our hopes for it – and we will pray. Prayer is complicated for Unitarian Universalists, being private, public, universal, personal, and intimate – and also traditional. Help me sort this out on Sunday afternoons this fall. Participants will read Anne Lamott's, *Help. Thanks. Wow: The Three Essential Prayers* and *Simply Pray* by Eric Walker Wikstrom. This program is designed for members and friends of UUCC with a distinct Unitarian Universalist identity

or curiosity about prayer in our faith.

Sundays October 5th, 19th, November 2nd, 16th, December 7th, 21st

Time: 12:30 – 2:30 Location: Drew House

Leader: Gary Chapin 458-1726 or garyparkerchapin@aol.com

On the Threshold

This is continuation of the course *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven (Volume II)*. We will continue our journey into the past to reclaim the stories of powerful women to be found in ancient Judaism and in early Christianity. We will look at the global silencing and brutalization of women that accompanied the rise of patriarchal religion and society. Finally we will celebrate a new world-view and theology that has emerged in our time, and explore the personal and social changes that may be suggested by this new world-view and theology. We will continue the complex process of telling a new story.

Tuesdays, October 14th & 28th, November 11th, December 2nd

Times: 5:30 – 7:30

Location: Fellowship Hall

Leader: Helen Zidowecki 582-5308 or hzmre@hzmre.com

Ethical Wills: What are They and Should I have One?

We will all leave remnants of our lives behind when we depart this life. We will leave possessions, be they many or few, we will leave sums of money, be it large or small, and we will leave memories that will be unique to the person who will be remembering us. But what do YOU want people to remember you best by? What values have you cherished most that you hope to have passed on? Has your life exemplified what you had hoped to teach the world? If you want to be very clear, why not write an ethical will? Ethical Wills have a long history in the Hebrew religious tradition, and Rabbi Erica Ash and Rev. Campbell will share examples of olden and contemporary ethical wills. They will also guide us as we experiment with writing our own ethical wills. We will be inviting members of our neighborhood churches in an effort to expand our adult education beyond our own walls. We'll also have a pot luck lunch together. Registration is limited and is required.

Date: Saturday, October 18, 2014

Time: 10 a.m. -- 2 p.m.

Location: Fellowship Hall

Leaders: Nancee Campbell and Rabbi Erica Asch



UUCC Web...

www.augustauu.org

New on the UUCC Website

The new manual of policies and procedures, **How Our Church Works**, has been incorporated into the respective sections of the website.

The other big addition is the CALENDAR. You can link to this from the center of the Home Page to where it is located in CHURCH LIFE.

I invite you to explore the content of our website. See what is on the website by starting with the BLUE section at the bottom of each page, the very last item, SITE MAP. Click on that for the major headings of the website – these match the headings at the top of the page.

For every section, except the HOME Page, there is a plus sign (+) before the name. Click on it and -- behold -- a listing of additional sections appears. For example, under WORSHIP, there are three additional sections. (To close that section up again to just the word “Worship”, click on the minus (-) sign next to the word.)

There is much more.....Go to another section, click on the + sign, and more sections appear – sometimes with another (+) to open! There are over 50 different sections! This SITE MAP gives an overview of what is where. And you can click on each item listed to access that item. But you do not have to use the Site Map to get to sections. Just click on the broad section at the top of the page, and the listings are in the left margin.

Have you:

** Looked at the Home Page, Upper Left Corner for the Sunday announcements? They are usually posted by the following Monday.

** Looked at the video from “Visitors Welcome” on Home Page and from Visitors and Newcomers?

** Looked at the Calendar?

Were there any surprises when you looked at the Site Map?

Your suggestions and comments are welcome. The website provides almost everything you might want to know about UUCC! It is a way to stay informed and engaged with the church community. BUT the value of the website relies on the contributions and input from the congregation. We are upgrading the software to increase efficiency for the Administrator and the person entering the text (not sure what title to use) and easier access.

Comments, questions and offers to assist may be sent to website@augustauu.org. I would be interested in hearing how many of you actually took the journey with the Map.

Helen Zidowecki, Website Chair

Coffee Hour...

Help Fellowship Refreshment Happen

Coffee hour needs assorted herbal teas in individual foil packets for the tea caddy. Additionally, the fellowship goody closet could use restocking with crackers, cookies, and crunchies. Also, cheese, dips, fruit, or home baked goods are always welcome Sunday morning.

See you at Coffee Hour.



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

Newsletter Submissions

Please submit all articles as an attachment 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. Deadline: October 13. Photos of church activities welcome!

Minister: Rev. Carie Johnsen
President: Gary Chapin
Director of Religious Exploration:
Administrator: Steve Moore
admin@augustauu.org
UU Office hours: Monday and Tuesday 8a.m.-4p.m.
Thursday-noon-8pm
Choir Director: Joelle Morris
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 Fall Office Hours

Rev. Carie Johnsen

Monday: 12:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday: Writing Day

Wednesday & Thursday: 2:00 - 6:00 p.m.
and by appointment

Friday is my Sabbath. I do not attend to emails, phone calls or meetings. For Pastoral Emergencies please call my cell phone and I will return your call as soon as possible.

Minister's Study:(207) 623-3663 (Office)
(508) 221-5295 (Cell)
revcariejohnsen@gmail.com