



The Flaming Chalice

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

April 2015



April Theme

Sustaining Earth



April 5th

Earth Rising

Rev. Carie Johnsen

Easter Sunday is a full and busy day at UUCC. The Peace Jam youth serve up Easter brunch before service. The youth lead an Easter egg hunt for the youngest children between services. The choir and the orchestra fill the sanctuary with extraordinary music to deepen and enhance the service theme: earth's awakening, rebirth and resurrection.

April 12th

Compassionate Consumption

Rev. Carie Johnsen

Ethical eating, eating locally, fair trade products, field to fork, reduce, reuse, recycle, slavery in the fields, fair wages in the fields, factories and restaurants ... The human rights injustices and the complexity of issues in the food industry are mind-boggling. It is so easy to get overwhelmed and feel useless in a global system gone bad. Still, as Unitarian Universalists, our principles and purposes remind us our covenantal community extends beyond the corner of Winthrop and Summer.

April 19th

New Eyes for Gaia

Rev. Carie Johnsen

Gaia has no eyes but our eyes, no ears but our ears, no hands but our hands, no voice but our voice. Creator has blessed us with so very much, including stewardship. How shall we respond to this formative call?

April 26th

A Joyful Collage

Small Group Ministry

The Small Group Ministry Committee invites you to join us for a service that will lift your spirits and remind you of the presence of joy in your life.

A Faith Journey...by Rev. Carie Johnsen

As we enter into the new monthly theme—Sustaining Earth—it may serve us well to consider the journey of sustainable living more broadly. There are a multitude of ways (personally, professionally, religiously, spiritually, financially) in which the question of sustainability has relevance.

Here are a few that come to my mind:

Do we take enough time in our days and weeks to cultivate stillness and deep listening to that which matters most? Do we breath in and celebrate wonder and awe? Do we notice ordinary miracles?

Does our home budget reflect our values, passions and commitments?

Does our church budget reflect our values, our sense of ministry and our call in the world?

Where in our lives are we overextended or over functioning? Where do we do too much?

Where in our church ministries are we stretching ourselves too thin? Where in our church ministries are we over extending or over functioning?

Where in our lives do we let others in to care for us? When do we ask for and welcome help?

Where are we trying to be all things to all people? What grounds us and sustains us? Are we connected to and in relationship with a guiding center? Do we make choices from this center?

Sit with and ponder a weekly or monthly schedule in your household/church. What does a balanced ministry/lifestyle/congregation look like? How will I adjust my commitments accordingly? Who will I disappoint to nurture balance? Am I ready and willing to disappoint others?

Do I devote enough time to the things I am passionate about? Do I devote enough time to the things that feed my spirit and sustain my joy?

As I serve Unitarian Universalist Community Church during this year of sabbatical activity, these questions about sustainable ministry resonate and reverberate into all aspects of my life. In fact, part of the work of sabbatical is to reflect upon this very notion of living from and modeling a balanced ministry. This is no easy task. It is a one formidable challenge for sure as I struggle every day to not be the minister who does too much, accommodates too often and squeezes in the next thing. Learning to live sustainably within an inspiring call—serving love while living joyfully, passionately and enthusiastically in the call to create a more just and compassionate world community—is the awesome privilege (and sometimes daunting mountain) of ministry.

Oh my! Now I'm tired again!! Yes, my work in this sabbatical is still very much underfoot!!! I invite you to join me in this journey through your own deep reflection of how and where you give away your time. What inspires, sustains and deepens your spirit or faith? What or where or who is your guiding center? **How will you create more of that in your days? What will you need to let go of?**

May your spring be a time of cleaning out the debris that has fallen on your path. May the joy you find, the meaning you recreate, the peace you cultivate reverberate widely.

In Faith, Rev. Carie Johnsen

News from RE....

Building Bridges

Happy Spring! As we all turn our attention outside during this time of year, anxiously awaiting the first crocus to pop through the snow or the first peep of a spring peeper, our RE classes are directing their attention to the wonders of our world as well.

The Chalice Children have been learning about the interconnections between nature and people. They are exploring their feelings when they are out in nature and learning about how all the plants and animals are connected in some way. They have a Nature Wonder table in their classroom and have planted seeds in little pots that they artfully decorated. In addition, they are learning about important and influential Unitarian Universalists, who have taught others about the beauty and importance of our natural world.

The Ages of Action group have directed their attention on the natural world as well. They are learning about watersheds and ecosystems before turning their attention to the ecology of vernal pools. I am hoping the snow melts soon, so we may have a chance to see the amazing creatures vernal pools in person. Then, we will explore how government and non-government organizations protect wildlife and habitats.

Finally, our Spirit Play group continues to explore spirituality in connection with nature through dance, art, movement, and theatre. Recently, our group performed a little puppet show exploring how different animals cope with the different seasons. All of our lessons directly connect with our 7th UU Principle. Our 7th Principle, as beautifully described by the Rev. Forrest Gilmore: *"Our seventh Principle may be our Unitarian Universalist way of coming to fully embrace something greater than ourselves. The interdependent web—expressed as the spirit of life, the ground of all being, the oneness of all existence, the community-forming power, the process of life, the creative force, even God—can help us develop that social understanding of ourselves that we and our culture so desperately need. It is a source of meaning to which we can dedicate our lives."*

With the business of our lives, the strong, alluring, and constant pull of electronics, and our cultural trend to disconnect with nature, will in my

opinion, have a huge (and negative) impact on the spiritual and ecological health of our people and our planet. How wonderful it is that we belong to a faith which provides an environment that recognizes and indeed nourishes the strong and deep connection between spirituality and nature. What is so exciting to me is that the next Rachel Carson or E.O. Wilson may just be enrolled in our classes as we speak, and it is up to us, as a congregation, to ignite that fire!

Warmly,
Nicole Danielson
Sunday Morning Coordinator

Elder Lunch...

Noon April 12 Fellowship Hall

Plan to relax and socialize with your friends. Menu includes breads, salad, entrée and dessert. Lunch is not exclusive to seniors—we have regular attendees in their 40s and 50s, too!

Please join us. For information or to help, call Marty Thornton at 333-0938 or marty.thornton@gmail.com

Goddess Continuing/ Earth Circles...

Goddess/Earth Circles meets the fourth Sunday, 12:15 - 2:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall, for youth and adults, all genders welcome.

April 26th Women of Wisdom: Reflect on the wisdom through our lives, using the matrix of our decades. We will consider several goddesses throughout our lifespan.

We will also discuss having a Croning Celebration and Ceremony. Please contact Helen Zidowecki if you are interested in joining the fourteen women in UUC who have been crowned. Join us in April for more discussion of this celebration.

The material developed for the January 25 and March 22 sessions on Witchcraft is on the website. (Church Life, Goddess/Earth Circles, and click on Archives). We are planning on adding materials as we develop them for gatherings.

UCC AUCTION & CAFÉ

Friday evening, May 15, 2015 beginning at 5 p.m.

The goal is 100 donations. Everyone can donate SOMETHING!

Some ideas for Auction donations

AN EXPERIENCE: Host a musical evening or play reading, a trip to a State Park, a play, a concert, a museum, a film or a whale watch on the ocean. Donate time at your camp, lead a bird walk, plan a picnic, a kayak outing, or organize a birthday party. Invite some children to your farm. Keep in mind that what is a common event for you may be a rare treat for someone else. Some people, for example, cannot or do not drive, especially at night.

A SERVICE: An offer to help in some way: Join a work crew, prepare a meal, help paint a room, wash a car, wash some windows, repair a bicycle, rake leaves, groom a dog, mow a lawn, photograph a family or pet, help clean a house, plant a garden, stack a wood pile, offer child care or elder care, provide transportation to Maine Medical Center or other destination.

AN ITEM: Something homemade from your kitchen or that you have otherwise grown or created: A promise of vegetables, fruits, fresh eggs, pies, bread, cakes, pickles, casseroles, jams and cheese. Your own photography, paintings, jewelry, note cards, quilt, braided rug, or other hand crafted items.

A donation from a Maine business or restaurant of food, gasoline, oil, wood pellets, meals or other items. As of January 25, receipts have been available on the Fundraising Bulletin Board to give to the donor. Please obtain the address of the business or restaurant so that we can send them a nice thank you letter from the church.

And don't forget gift cards!

Please fill out and give this form to Hannah Faulkner or Terry Cookson Cairn, or place it in the envelope on the Fundraising Bulletin Board in the Fellowship

MY DONATION TO THE UCC AUCTION, FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2015

Name: _____

E-mail and Phone _____

Donation: _____

Estimated Value _____

I will bring sandwiches _____ or baked goods _____ for the Café.

UUC Board of Trustees
March 9, 2014, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

Board Summary

REPORTS:

Treasurer: Mary Simpson distributed the financial reports for January and February noting that although our investments turned downward for a short period, everything is back up to normal now. Mary and Rev. Carie spent some time fine tuning how line items appear on the budget report. Other than that there was nothing remarkable about the last two months.

Leadership: Vice President, Martha Naber, reported the January 25th meeting was most successful. Each committee chair spoke to how their committee was involved in meeting the goals of Leap of Faith. Martha is promoting collaboration between committees to enhance communication and shared projects. Dates for all meetings next year will be set at the April 19 meeting.

A meeting has been set for March 15 for all leadership members. The book *'Who's in Charge Here?'* will be discussed. The book addresses the complex relationship between ministry and authority. It was recommended at the UUA training for church leadership working with an 'after pastor' congregation.

Minister: Rev. Carie submitted her written report and then spoke briefly about her journey to Wales. She wants to set an agenda for her remaining 8 weeks before the second half of her sabbatical. She will not be here for the annual meeting (June 7th) or production of the annual report so wants to be certain everything is set in motion. Her priorities will be supporting staff; committee chairs and leadership in establishing their spring programs and closing out the church year.

President's: Gary Chapin said that during the months before year's end, he wanted to ascertain all committee reports are submitted to the office by May 1st; reschedule Finance 101; establish an *'ask the board'* event once a month during Fellowship; and schedule the technology conversation with the congregation (late April). He noted the announcement of the annual meeting must go out at least 10 days prior to the meeting to be in compliance with our by-laws.

COMMITTEE AND PROJECT REPORTS:

UUC WEB: Helen Zidowecki distributed a report on the progress of the web site update and gave an explanation of the revisions. There was a significant upgrade to how worship calendar events appear on the home page; they are now advanced automatically, once input. Each individual component of the content has been freshened and updated. Office administrator will be responsible for weekly updates.

TECH GRANT: Rev. Carie and Helen are working on a grant, due in September, to update technology in the sanctuary. It will allow us to purchase flat screen TVs for mounting on the walls; multimedia presentations, as well as videotaping which could be used for various projects like pod casts, satellite stations, etc. RFPs have been sent out. It was also decided to ask for input/suggestions from the congregation.

BUDGET: Written requests were submitted for paid positions for the Membership Committee, Hospitality and Greeting ad hoc committee and the UUCCOO. It was noted that the board had previously agreed to flat fund the budget for two years.

RE COMMITTEE: Diane Smith spoke with the board via cell phone, updating people on the progress and problems of the new RE positions. Although the two new staff members are doing an excellent job, there are responsibilities which are not adequately staffed (or at least not assigned) with just the two positions which were funded. Rev. Carie will discuss this with Diane when she returns to Augusta.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Gary Chapin reported that Finance Chair, Annie Reiter is taking a leave of

absence, hopefully returning in June. Gary said he will ask Wick Johnson and Hilary Neckles if they will co-chair the committee until Annie returns. 61 pledges have been received to date. At this point last year, we had 85 pledges.

Nonviolent Communications...

The **Nonviolent Communications (Also known as Compassionate Communications) Practice Group** meets on the First and Third Fridays, 1:15 pm --3:15 pm, in the Robbins Room. The First Friday will be a more informal meeting, with extended check-in and/or an Empathy Session. The Third Friday will be an NVC-related topic.

The sessions for April are: April 3 (Informal) and April 17.

NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION TRAINING: CLEAR & COMPASSIONATE COMMUNICATION in Lewiston on May 16 & 17, 2015, with Leah Boyd, a professional mediator, facilitator and trainer who has trained extensively in Nonviolent Communication. Brochures, which include a registration form, are available outside the sanctuary.

If you have any questions about Nonviolent Communication please feel free to contact Helen Wing at hcranewing@roadrunner.com or 685-3804. The basic reference is *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*, by Marshall Rosenberg.

Seasoned Souls to Meet...

Seasoned Souls is a group of mature church members who meet twice a month on the first and third Wednesdays to share candid conversation about the issues related to aging. The only requirement for membership is to be over the age of 65, and to have an open mind, compassionate heart, and energetic sense of humor.

We will be meeting in Fellowship Hall from 10:30 a.m. – noon on April 1st and 15th, and all are welcome.

History Committee...

The History Committee meets the Second Thursday, 10:00 am to noon in the Drew House, and we work on projects. The next Committee Meeting is April 9, 2015. We will be adding some notations to the UUCU timeline on the website. Ongoing projects include:

Preparing the RE Artifacts for the Display Case in the hallway, maintaining the Memorial Book, and creating the members and friends scrapbook from articles and clippings that you have saved for us.

Contact: Krista Zidowecki (582-5308) for more information.

Social Activities...

Coming in May....

Katherine Stewart, author of "The Good News Club - The Christian Right's Stealth Assault on America's Children" will be speaking at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church in Augusta on Sunday, May 31. The talk will be from 1 to 2 PM, followed by a reception and book signing from 2 to 3 PM. Katherine is an investigative journalist who has written for Newsweek, The New York Times, and The Atlantic Monthly. She has given talks across the country and has appeared on the Melissa Harris-Perry TV show, among others.

Katherine looked into the Good News Club after her child came home from school one day saying the family belonged to the 'wrong' religion. The Good News Club is an Old Testament fundamentalist evangelical group with a focus on sin and salvation that proselytizes to very young children in elementary schools in Maine and across America. Katherine's book is a chilling exposé of the well-funded, highly coordinated effort by Christian Nationalists to use public schools to advance a fundamentalist agenda.

Come hear this interesting author at our church on May 31st, and bring your insights and questions with you!

For more information, contact Tom Waddell at us1863@gmail.com or (207) 512-5382.

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 newsletter@augustauu.org with the article as an attachment. Photos of church activities welcome!

Deadline: April 20.

Minister: Rev. Carie Johnsen

President: Gary Chapin

Sunday Morning RE Coordinator: Nicole Danielson
Youth Advisor: Monique McAuliffe

Administrator: Lynn Smith
admin@augustauu.org

UU Office hours:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9am-3pm
Wednesday noon-6pm

Choir Director: Bridget Convey
Choir Practice Wednesday 6-8pm
Small Group Ministry Coordinator: Kathy Kellison
Office: (207) 622-3232

Rev. Carie's office hours:

Monday 11:00 - 5:00
Tuesday Writing Day
Wednesday 2:00 - 6:00
Friday Sabbatical - Day off
And by appointment