



The Flaming Chalice

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

May 2014



May Theme

Peace

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS WITH A BIT OF A DIFFERENT RHYTHM

May 4th Peace Jam Service (both services)

I can think of no better way to begin exploring the theme of peace together than by hearing from the youth involved in our Peace Jam program. Peace Jam is a program that focuses on peacemaking as a process of education, inspiration and action. The culmination of a year of service learning is the opportunity to spend a weekend with several hundred youth from all over New England to share their projects with each other and a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate. On May 4th during worship they'll be sharing what they've learn, how they've been inspired and what they're doing to create a more peaceful world. I hope you will come to support them and to be inspired by them.

May 11th "Americans Who Tell The Truth" (both Services)

Brooklin, Maine resident, Robert Shetterly will join Rev. Carie Johnsen at both services to share his portrait series, "American's Who Tell the Truth". A fuller discussion in the Sanctuary with Mr. Setterly will begin at 1:00 p.m. following our Elder Luncheon.

Robert Shetterly is an American artist nationally known for his portrait series, "Americans Who Tell The Truth", a project in response to the US government's actions after the 9/11 attacks on NYC. Since 2006, he has completed 180 portraits (and their stories) of Americans who tell the truth. His most recent portrait is of Edward Snowden. He has also published a collection of selected portraits and their stories, which will be on display for our perusal.

May 18th RE Recognition Sunday at 9:15 a.m.

Rev. Carie Johnsen & Sharon Piantedosi will lead the 11:00 a.m. service

On May 18th we'll have an opportunity to mark the milestones in the lives of our children and youth and to thank the adult volunteers who make our Religious Exploration program possible. This is an opportunity to send off our graduating seniors knowing that they are loved, that they will be missed, that they will always have a spiritual home at UUC and that they can take Unitarian Universalism with them wherever they go. We'll hear a bit from them too about their plans for the future as they head out into the world. It's a very special service.

There will be a breakfast sponsored by the Religious Exploration Committee before the 9:15 service to honor RE volunteers and their families. It's an opportunity to let us serve you in return for your service to our children and youth.

May 25th We move to ONE Service at 10:00 until Labor Day

Worship led by Claire Curole, Seminarian

A Faith Journey by Rev. Carie Johnsen...

A Faith Journey...

This has been a very busy and productive year at Unitarian Universalist Community Church. As a community we have come together for a variety of conversations, listening circles, celebrations and fun. Breaking bread together, bidding on chocolate and experiencing the magic of butterflies in the sanctuary brought deep connections in the midst of winter isolation. Then along came the joy of a multi-generational interactive Easter pageant followed by the spectacular music of the choir and orchestra to help us survive the long anticipated time between winter and the slow arrival of spring. In the end we came through a long cold winter with joy in our heart and a renewed commitment to the community we hold so dear. The energy in the community for Stewardship Kick-off, Leap of Faith, and the Sunday services this month has been exhilarating. There is community where joy abounds, generosity flourishes and where best practices and healthy innovative systems emerge in times of challenge.

As we gathered for our Leap of Faith weekend, we invited participants of listening circles to consider the call from our UUA President, Peter Morales to think in terms of "*Congregations and Beyond*." With congregations as our base, he seeks to inspire communities to focus their energy on creating a Unitarian Universalist movement beyond our congregation's walls. This parallels the recent board decision to shift the focus of our ministry from children and youth on Sundays to Family Ministry. In this vision, Sunday RE programming remains the base while we bring energy to developing relevant and innovative faith formation programming for families with children and youth in the Twenty First Century. This is not an easy call and it will require the commitment of the full community.

We hear more and more often from a variety of sectors that fewer and fewer people are making religious communities and institutions the center of their moral and spiritual development. We are being asked to reimagine how we "do church." In a recent paper outlining this call, Rev. Morales writes,

The central conviction driving this proposal is that our core values appeal to far more people than are attracted to (or likely to be attracted to) our congregations. We have always treated this as a problem to be solved by devising ways to get people to become members of our congregations. But the reality of today's world is that not everyone who shares our core values will want to become part of a traditional congregation. The fact that so many share our values is an enormous opportunity, not a problem. The future relevance of our faith may well depend on whether we can create a religious movement beyond, as well as within, the parish. I am confident that together we can seize this historic opportunity for our faith.

We know that change is never easy; we also know that being innovative is in our DNA. It wasn't that long ago when UCC embarked upon new and uncharted waters by leading the way with Small Group Ministry. I have also witnessed UCC as a congregation that does not stand down when a challenge arrives. As one person recently said, "When we see walls, we find ladders and climb over."

How will we answer Rev. Morales call and embark on a journey of bringing Unitarian Universalism out into the world? We don't have to have the answers today. We don't even have to begin the planning today. Consider this a seed. Consider our Leap of Faith the soil and the water. Consider the summer a time of gestation. Consider the conversations yet to be the composted. Blooming is in our DNA. It is bound to happen. Dare I say, we don't know how **not** to rise up from the frozen tundra of a long winters night. It is who we are. It is what we do. It is the way of a Mainah, and us folks from away who join the locals in making our home in the woods and along the shores of this beautiful state.

Like Rev. Morales, I am confident we will seize this moment for our faith.

In faith, Rev. Carie Johnsen

Religious Exploration Report....

By Rev. Carol Strecker, Director of Religious Exploration

This month I'd just like to highlight a couple of very important Sundays in the life our church:

May 4 - Peace Jam Sunday (both services)

I can think of no better way to begin exploring the theme of peace together than by hearing from the youth involved in our Peace Jam course. Peace Jam is a program that focuses on peacemaking as a process of education, inspiration and action. The culmination of a year of service learning is the opportunity to spend a weekend with several hundred youth from all over New England to share their projects with each other and with a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate. On May 4th during worship they'll be sharing what they've learned, how they've been inspired and what they're doing to create a more peaceful world. I hope you will come to support them and be inspired by them.



May 18 - RE Recognition Sunday (first service)

On May 18th we'll have an opportunity to mark the milestones in the lives of our children and youth and to thank the adult volunteers who make our Religious Exploration program possible. This is an opportunity to send off our graduating seniors knowing that they are loved, that they will be missed, that they will always have a spiritual home at UUCC and that they can take Unitarian Universalism with them wherever they go. We'll hear a bit from them too about their plans for the future as they head out into the world. It's a very special service. There will be a breakfast sponsored by the Religious Exploration Committee before the 9:15 service to honor RE volunteers and their families. It's an opportunity to let us serve you in return for your service to our children and youth.



With the church year winding down I feel called to take a deep breath of gratitude for so many experiences of joy, wonder, compassion, inspiration and hope in the company of children, youth and adults who care deeply for each other, for this church and for the world.

Faithfully Yours,

Rev. Carol Strecker, Director of Religious Exploration

What Our Next Year Looks Like...

By Doug Rooks, President

Our Leap of Faith weekend in early April with our partners from the Milton, Mass. UU church was, by any measure, an extraordinary occasion. From the magic show on Friday evening to the listening circles on Saturday and worship on Sunday, well over half of UUCC's members participated in one or more of the events. And the food? Did I mention the food? Our Milton friends said they'd come back any time we asked.

When we began planning for this weekend, one big question was whether this congregation would embrace the process of change that Leap of Faith is designed to foster. That question has been resoundingly answered in the affirmative.

Now we turn to an equally important question: What comes next? We know from the experience of Milton and other Leap of Faith congregations that this isn't a short-term process. It will take many months and even years for change to unfold. It will not be easy or painless, and will in fact involve a lot of hard work.

We were reminded of that when the board accepted the minister's recommendation and voted to make change in the Religious Exploration program, which are explained elsewhere in this issue. But an accounting of our standing as a congregation would be incomplete without recognizing the great energy and commitment we are also witnessing.

We are in the midst of a very successful stewardship campaign. Though the final results are not in yet, it's clear we will replace all the pledge income provided by the "bridge pledges" over the last two years, which will put us on a sounder financial footing. Equally important, more members of the congregation are making pledges, reversing a three-year decline.

I am also struck by the energy around music and performance. Joelle Morris, our music director, is a fine performer as well as a capable choir leader, and the program is starting to branch out beyond our walls. A community concert is set for June, and, if successful, could lead to a concert series next year that will bring new people to UUCC and provide another reason for others to join us.

The Fundraising Committee has outdone itself with new events, new programs, and a commitment to make the highly successful auction an annual event, starting May 9. While some may wonder whether these activities are worth all the effort, I can report that the committee and many volunteers find it not only rewarding, but energizing. We can raise money while having fun and building community. It's hard to top that.

And I must also mention one of our quieter, less visible programs, Small Group Ministry. The 10 small groups involve non-members as well as members – though two-thirds of current members have joined, at one time or another – and can provide a vital link to the church community for those who have suffered loss, gone through a divorce, or face other daunting challenges in their lives. Small Group Ministry has helped us through rough spots before, and I am sure it will play a key part in Leap of Faith going forward.

For all of these reasons, and more, I am, as a church leader, grateful to be part of this Community.

Fundraising...

SILENT/LIVE AUCTION WITH SUPPER CAFÉ

FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 9, 2014

Unitarian Universalist Community Church

69 Winthrop Street, Augusta

Bring your family, friends and neighbors!

Fundraising Supper Café and Silent Auction 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall,

including “Buy It Now” Selections, followed by Live Auction at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Auctioneer: **Mark Rolfe**; Singer and Pianist: **Annie Voorhees**;

Instrumentalist & Accordionist: **Gary Chapin**;
Cashiers: **Brenda and Kit Sawyer**,

Rita Moran

Registrar of Bidders and Bids: **Janet Sawyer**;
Runners: **Terry and Betty Cairn**

Person with White Gloves Who Hands Items to Auctioneer: **Noah Gottlieb**

Provider of Computer Format for Auction: **Ansley Sawyer**;

Auction Preparation Workers: **Carol Aft and Sunshine Perlis**;
Organizer: **Hannah Faulkner**

Consultants: **Bruce Bierce and Judith McCown**.

Experiences, Services and Choices for you to bid on:

Handmade Items, Gift Certificates, Helpful Services, Artworks, Work Crews

Memorable Events, Food, and Surprises Come one, come all. Don't miss the fun!!

FELLOWSHIP HALL BOOKCASE: Check out the current books. Here's how it works: take the books you want, tally up the price (\$1.00 for hard-covers, 50 cents for paperbacks) and at your next opportunity, put the money into the church collection plate. Your money will benefit the good causes of our church. These ongoing book sales are completely on the honor system.

DESSERT/FILM SHOWING SATURDAY EVENING MAY 17, 2014

Dessert at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall followed film in the Sanctuary

In connection with the Holocaust Remembrance, Carol Aft has provided a film by Artemis Joukowsky III, “Two Who Dared, the Sharps’ War.” This is the story of a young Unitarian minister and his wife, Waitstill and Martha Sharp, who left Wellesley, Massachusetts for Czechoslovakia in February 1939 “on a dangerous mission to save imperiled human lives.”

Where We Live... a year later

In Spring 2013, we had a series of 3 small group ministry sessions related to where we may be living as we age. I have had inquiries about having an informal follow-up session to see what has happened in the year since the series, and resources that we might want to share. If you were part of the series, or are interested in the topic, please join the informal session after second service, Sunday, May 18. Look for additional information in the upcoming announcements. It would be helpful to know if you are interested in participating in the session and have specific topics to be included.

Contact: Helen Zidowecki (582-5308,
hzmre@hzmre.com)

St. Mark's Suppers/Ministries *UUCC -St. Mark's Connection*

U and U and U are needed to lead and/or volunteer at this summer's St. Mark's Suppers. Please consider planning, prepping, setting-up, cooking, cleaning and encouraging friends and relations to volunteer. Many of you know how much fun and rewarding it can be. Kids are welcome if supervised.

Dates for this summer are on the first Saturdays of the month

June 7th, July 5th and August 2nd

Our church leads the suppers in June, July and August with the support of volunteers from St. Mark's and St. Barnabas (Augusta's Episcopal Churches). The supper is one of the meals served monthly by the **Augusta Angel Food Network**, formed by several Augusta churches.

A planning meeting will be held soon in May for the lead planners/cooks and the current leaders: Skip Ernst and Rachel Leonardson from St. Mark's Episcopal (who have led the suppers for 12+ years) and Gay Patterson and Dan Stevens from St. Barnabas.

We put together groups for two shifts: **1:00 to 4:00 p.m.** and **4:00 to 6:45 p.m.**, with the meal served at 5:00 p.m. A number of people who eat at the meals help to set-up, prep, serve and clean-up. In good weather we would serve and eat outside (more set-up involved, but worth it). We use a large rolling grill! Possibilities for involvement also include playing music during the meal.

Cook up your ideas and look for the May planning date soon. Rev. Carie has graciously agreed to take a leading role in planning the first meal on June 7th. Let's fire-up our U.U. energy, put our faith into action and grill!

St. Mark's Ministries are located at their church, and you can always donate: **Addie's Attic** clothing bank, which is free to the public,

The Essential's Pantry can always use diapers and Depends, toiletries, laundry soap, etc.

The Augusta Food Bank is also housed there.

Jenny McKendry-
Chair of St. Mark's Connection
St. Mark's Suppers and Ministries

Goddess Continuing/Earth Circles...

Join us on a trip to 'Beltane on the Beach' on May 3!

Please see <http://beltaneonthebeach.org/> for more information about this annual event. Several members of Goddess Continuing/Earth Circles group have attended the last few years. Activities include the Beltane ritual, Maypole and the Beach Goddess with stories, music, song, and poetry. See the additional information and sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

Join us on **June 1** after the service for the last gathering of the year, a joint session between Cakes for the Queen of Heaven (session 5) and Goddess Continuing/Earth Circles. The focus will be on women and goddesses of peace.

Contact: Helen Zidowecki (582-5308,
hzmre@hzmre.com)

Nonviolent Communications...

The **Nonviolent Communications (Also known as Compassionate Communications) Practice Group** is meeting Friday May 2 and May 16, 10:15 a.m. -- 12:15 p.m. in the Robbins Room.

The group is open to people who have taken Nonviolent Communication Training programs, or who are/have been in a practice group. Others may attend, but there is an expectation that they will attend a training when one becomes available.

Contact Helen Wing at 685-3804,
hcranewing@roadrunner.com

blue cliff monastery

Two Days of Mindfulness in Maine Monastics from Thich Nhat Hanh's Blue Cliff Monastery

~ join us for one or both ~

**Saturday, May 17, Unitarian Universalist Community Church
69 Winthrop St, Augusta, 9:30 – 3:30**

~ Sitting & Walking Meditation, Dharma Talks, Deep Relaxation ~

Sunday, May 18, Wolfe's Neck Woods State Park, Freeport, 10 – 2

~ Walking Meditation along the coast - Shelter with picnic tables for lunch ~

Saturday Details:

To Pre-register, contact Greg Fahy at Peacefulheartsangha@gmail.com or 207-622-7012

Please put “*DOM registration*” in subject line of email

Space is limited, so register soon –

Registration will open to the wider community in early May
\$20 at the door (cash or check) – *no one will be turned away for lack of funds*
Dana bowl will be available for gratitude donations for monastic teachings
Bring your own bag lunch and wear comfortable clothes for outdoor walking, regardless of weather

Bring cushion or bench, if desired. Chairs/pews will be available

Sunday Details:

No pre-registration

No charge (though donations to help cover the \$100 rental fee for the shelter are welcome)

Dana Bowl will be available

Bring your own bag lunch, comfortable walking clothes, sun & rain & bug protection

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P. O. Box 8
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Newsletter Submissions

Please submit all articles 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. Photos of church activities welcome!

Next edition submissions due May 19.

Minister: Rev. Carie Johnsen
President: Doug Rooks
Director of Religious Exploration: Rev. Carol Strecker
Office hours-Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10am-4:00p.m. or by appointment
Administrator: Steve Moore
admin@augustauu.org
UU Office hours: Monday and Tuesday 8a.m.-4p.m.
Thursday-noon-8pm
Choir Director: Joelle Morris
Intern Minister: Sharon Piantedosi
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 Office Hours:

Monday 12:00 - 5:00 Beginning Feb. 3rd
Tuesday 12:00 - 6:00
Thursday 4:00 - 6:00

Friday is my Sabbath. I do not attend to emails, phone calls or meetings. For pastoral emergencies please call my cell phone (508-221-5295) and I will return your call as soon as possible.

Minister's Study:(207) 623-3663 (Office)
(207) 395-8051(Home)
(508) 221-5295 (Cell)
revcariejohnsen@gmail.com