



The Flaming Chalice

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

February 2011

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

Feb 6th

A Higher "We"

Rev. Jay Deacon

A Higher "We" ~ The Farthest Reaches of Possibility for Congregational Life. The culture in which we live is the context in which both we ourselves and the world's future will be created. In a spiritual community ~ just what kind of culture will we create?

Feb 13th

Withouten You?

Rev. Carie Johnsen

The title of this service comes from the "Little Elegy" song sung by the conference choir of the 2010 UU Musicians Network Summer Meeting in Madison, WI. Doug Barley, UUCC Director was inspired and invited Rev. Carie Johnsen to create a service around this piece of music. Please come and be inspired too!!!

Feb 20th

Flooding in Pakistan

Rev. Carie Johnsen
George Spahn
Katelyn McAuliffe
James McAuliffe

This faith-in-action Sunday will be co-led by three UUCC youth who are responding to the enormous humanitarian suffering that continues to exist in the flooded regions of Pakistan. They are a wise group of young UU leaders motivated to respond to global natural disasters. Come and hear how they are reaching across the globe to help people in need.

Feb 27th

Everybody Get Together

Rev. Carie Johnsen

Let us gather to celebrate all that is UUCC and set vision for where we are going.

Minister: Rev. Carie Johnsen
President: Sheila Comerford
Director of Religious Exploration: Karen Fisk
Administrator: Julie Pelletier
Choir Director: Douglas Barley
Small Group Ministry Coordinator: Kathy Kellison

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Next newsletter deadline is **February 21st**. Please submit newsletter articles by email to Julie Pelletier, UUCC Church Administrator at admin@augustauu.org

A Faith Journey by Rev. Carie Johnsen...

After a provocative 30 minute conversation during the January 2nd service titled “Lingering Questions, Awaiting Answers” a variety of questions remained unanswered. At the end of two services, the lingering questions still awaiting answers fell into three themes: What is faith/spirituality? Does evil exist and how might we respond? Why is there so much suffering?

It is the first question –what is faith— which I would like to respond to in this article. Next month I will approach the second part of this question, what is spirituality? Stay tuned for the second two more challenging topics. They will show up as a Sunday Service theme in March and April.

Faith. One might assume, given I write a monthly article titled “A Faith Journey...”, that I would have some solid answers about what faith is and is not. But the truth is that faith is a daily experience much like the quote that hangs at the end of my email, “*Faith is daring the soul [or self] to go beyond what the eye can see*”.

Faith. Some might say either you have it or you don't. Still others would contend, we all put faith in something. *Faith as a state of being ultimately concerned*. Each of us names the something and that something may be God or money. From this perspective on faith, we choose where we center our everyday, ordinary lives. Faith then, is the act of being centered toward ultimate concern albeit God, universe, money, or sports. Either we live oblivious of our faith or we live intentionally in faith. Which is it for you? Or is it something wholly other? This theology of faith emerged in the middle of the twentieth century from Paul Tillich. If you find it intriguing, I suggest you read *Dynamics of Faith*. This classic book is widely available.

I offer you this second concept for what faith is.

The tendency to equate faith with doctrine, and then argue terminology and concepts, distracts us from what faith is actually about. Faith is not a commodity we either have or don't have—it is an inner quality that unfolds as we learn to trust our deepest experience.

This quote comes from Sharon Salzberg, a Buddhist, who authors the book *Faith: trusting our own deepest experience*. This spiritual memoir is a poignantly articulated journey of discovering truth in lived experiences where faith emerges as a personal reality.

There are a multitude of ways to understand and approach faith: the word defined, the theology unpacked and the act of. Four hundred words in a church newsletter are completely inadequate. The best I can do, as I have sought to do here, is point you in a couple of different directions which I believe to be relevant to the audience.

If the topic remains intriguing, think about forming a book discussion group and grappling with the topic via a couple of different authors, theologies and traditions.

In Faith, *Rev. Carie Johnsen*

A Message from Rev. Carie Johnsen...

Thank you to everyone who helped to make the Martin Luther King Interfaith celebrations in Augusta a huge success. Members of Unitarian Universalist Community Church showed up in their usual fashion for all events. Ten UUC members turned out for the interfaith breakfast where Author Ben Skinner raised awareness about human trafficking and ending modern day slavery. The Unitarian Universalists made up one-fourth of the all those in attendance. The Interfaith MLK Service in our sanctuary was well attended by members from Temple Beth El and a variety of the faith traditions in Augusta, Wayne, Winthrop and Readfield. The MLK march sponsored by the NAACP included 10 members from UUC who proudly walked alongside the UUC banner. Thank you to Tom for standing in the cold breeze on the City Hall Plaza as the event speakers delivered a message of Economic Justice to all those attending. Before the weekend was over UUC members contributed \$ 596.28 to the NAACP and the interfaith community contributed \$262.13 to Free the Slaves through the offerings collected.

It is a joy to be part of a local interfaith collegial circle and so inspiring to be the religious leader in a community of Unitarian Universalists.

In faith, Rev. Carie

From the Director of Religious Exploration...

Our first Young UU Worship of the new year was abundant with families! How wonderful it was to begin 2011 overflowing with energy and goodness. We talked together about the fact that just having one friend can make a difference in a person's life and how easy it is to say hello to someone who looks lonely and could use a smile and a person to talk with.

We also talked about the growing problem of hunger in the United States and we decided to devote the next two months to a food bank challenge. Not once, but twice, we will strive to collect enough canned and boxed nonperishable foods to equal the heights of our tallest Young UU Worship participants. Even second service chose to take on this challenge, also collecting food to see if they can collect enough to reach the height of the tallest person in second service.

Why do we discuss these issues in Religious Exploration? We talk about helping others because generosity, philanthropy, empathy and compassion are spiritual virtues. As we learn about our own capacity to help another being, as we continue to realize we are not simply individuals in the world or in the community, but also wonderfully unique parts of a vibrant whole, we learn more about ourselves, each other and the mystery and we grow in our understanding of what is right and true. Those are our third and fourth promises.

As Unitarian Universalists we realize if one person is lonely, we are all lonely and if one person is hungry, we are all hungry. Our own comfort does not free us to sit back, but instead compels us to reach out to others with helping hands.

January and February are traditionally the leanest months for the Food Bank. Let us help break that tradition and replace scarcity with abundance.

Yours in faith,

Karen

Adult RE ...

GODDESS CONTINUING ~ February 6, 12:15 p.m. Join us in Celebrating Imbolc, also known as Candlemas, In the seasonal earth calendar, this marks the beginning of Spring. What signs of Spring are evident, even our wintery weather? What seeds would you like to plant –yes, we will be planting seedlings as our Spring ritual. Join us! The featured goddess is Brigit.

February 20 Becoming Wise Women continues with Remembering Our 30's and 40's.

Nonviolent Communications ...

Introduction To Nonviolent Communication
Presented by Helen Wing, January 30, Soup and Bread 12:30 -- 3:00pm.

Nonviolent Communication, a model developed by Marshall Rosenberg, is an approach to communication based on the human needs and feelings that underlie our behavior. This model is sometimes referred to as "compassionate communication", as it seeks to enable people to connect with the needs in themselves and others in order to inspire a compassionate response. **All are invited.** Invite friends in the larger community who may be interested. If you have not signed up for this, please contact Helen Wing at 685-3804 or hcranewint@localnet.com.

History Committee...

At it's January meeting, the History Committee reflected on the absence of written reference to the Civil Rights activities in the files of the Augusta UU Congregations, in the 1960's, except for the newsletter article and sermons by Rev. Joseph Craig, All Souls. *We cannot judge our past in terms of our present perspectives.* However, the Martin Luther King display and services uncovered some additional oral references to people who participated in activities. We will be recording those, and others as they come to our attention.

The next History Committee meeting is **February 11, 10am-noon**. Contact Helen Zidowecki (582-5308, hzmre@hzmre.com) if you are interested. Items for the History Committee can be left in the tray in the Committee Room (next to coat room).

Church Display Case ...

February Display will be on Symbols of Peace, by Jill and Allan Watson. Items will include Artifacts, peace, plaques, readings

March 6 and 13 is open. Do you have a display to offer? Individuals, Committees, Programs, Groups within UUC are invited to contribute displays for 2-4 weeks in length. Please contact Helen Zidowecki (582-5308, hzmre@hzmre.com). While the Thursday morning SGM group may contribute some displays, if displays are not received, there may be times when the case is empty, waiting for your input.

Upcoming Events ...

Transgender Issues: Video Presentation
Presented by Phyllis Cudmore
February 4, 2011 (rain date February 11th)
6:00 – 8:00 p.m. ~ Fellowship Hall

Light refreshments will be served.

A Question and Answer session will follow the presentation. Phyllis is the Regional Coordinator for PFLAG New England.

Sacred Dance Workshop ~ Saturday, March 12th, 12:00 ~ 3:00 p.m., UUC Fellowship Hall ~ facilitated by Christine Little

Come and explore the unlimited ways that you might express yourself in movement.

How might you commune with the Divine?
Express your spiritual nature? Explore your religious convictions? Lift up your questions?

This workshop is intended to introduce the art form of Sacred Dance, moving with conscious intention as a means of spiritual expression. We will:

- ◆ participate together in exercises to broaden our movement vocabulary.
- ◆ experience movement practices to connect with ourselves internally, as well as with each other inter-personally.
- ◆ explore the space around us.
- ◆ consider how dance/movement is offered in worship.

Whether you are interested in a one time exploration, or might consider creating a Sacred Dance group here at UUC, please consider attending this workshop!

"let it be a dance we do..."

Small Group Ministry...

"Ministry is all we do--together." These words by the Rev. Gordon McKeeman capture the spirit of our Small Group Ministry perfectly. This ministry came into being to offer deep connection and opportunity for spiritual reflection to all who looked for something in addition to Sunday morning worship with more depth than coffee hours and committee meetings. Those of you who attended worship on January 23 heard stories from people who have participated in this ministry. I hope you got a sense of the promise and the power of this special aspect of our community. Well over half of our members have been connected with Small Group Ministry over the years.

Small Group Ministry refers to a wide variety of offerings. Most of our groups meet once or twice a month. This is our basic ministry group. It is structured by a covenant, created by the members to articulate the promises they make to one another to insure the health and vitality of the group. We have women's groups, a men's group and mixed groups. Some meet in the evening and some during the day. Some gather at the church and some in members' homes. When these groups meet, it is most often to have a discussion following one of the outlines offered in a notebook of sessions created by members of our congregation. Our intention is to offer time for personal connection and to spend most of the two hours talking about matters of a spiritual dimension. Our hope is to encourage personal growth and to foster understanding of the points of view of others in the group. We learn about ourselves as we encounter others.

This year we have added two new groups to our repertoire. One Sunday a month a group of parents meets to explore the topic of parenting adolescents. They use a format created by Karen Fisk to focus discussion and provide an opportunity to share their wealth of experience as parents. This is a time limited group which will have its last meeting at the end of this church year.

Also meeting one Sunday a month is the Elder's Small Group Ministry. All who are interested (elder is by self selection!) meet after the elder luncheon to explore a topic presented by the Rev. Carie and the Rev. Helen Zidowecki. This is an open group, meaning that you are welcome to attend once, come when the topic interests you or be there every month. Again we offer personal growth and deeper connection with others in our community.

We have a place for all who are interested in participating in Small Group Ministry. If you would like more information, help yourself to one of the Participants Handbooks located in our literature racks outside the sanctuary and in Fellowship Hall, or feel free to speak with me. I am at church most Sundays and can be reached by phone or email. (Check the church directory.)

~ Kathy Kellison, SGM Coordinator

A Note from the Board President ...

Dear Friends,

Hope everyone had a chance to attend the Martin Luther King service on Sunday, which was as inspiring as any in recent memory. It also connected the civil rights movement to Unitarian Universalism in a very personal way for all who heard the story of our Augusta ministers walking in the Montgomery to Selma march in Alabama in the 60's. Many thanks to all who participated in this reminder of how everyone can play a meaningful role in societal change.

Speaking of everyone playing a meaningful role, check out the yellow insert in each week's order of service to get an idea of the magnitude of activities in which this church and our members take part. From parenting meetings, to men's group to meditation and committee meetings there is barely an unscheduled time in the Fellowship Hall and other church buildings! One thing that caught my attention was a large number of fundraising things happening, both for the church and other organizations. The Peace Jammers selling coffee, a Small group Ministry group doing bottle redemption, Ida Gammon Wilson's pecans, Cookbooks and Whoopie pies, the list goes on and on. At the last Board meeting the Board unanimously approved the Fundraising Committee's proposal that 10% of all money raised by the committee go to a group(s) chosen by the Faith in Action Committee. What better way to be more visible in our community?

Finally don't forget to write your choices for names for the church buildings on the poster in Fellowship Hall. The most popular selections will go to the congregation for a vote in the spring.

My best,

Sheila Comerford

A Note from the Treasurer ...

Send in your receipts – If you have any accumulating receipts to be turned in to the treasurer, please pick up a receipt reimbursement slip in the committee room. After the form is completed, attach the receipt and drop it off or mail it to the office. Committee chairs please encourage all members to turn in all receipts. Prompt processing of committee expenditures helps to create a more accurate monthly accounting.

Unitarian Universalist Connections... ..

Northern New England
Unitarian Universalist Association presents:

WINTERFEST! “JUSTICE IN THE SNOW”

February 5, 2011 9:30am -3:00pm
Unitarian Universalist Church, 15 Pleasant St., Brunswick, ME
Cost: \$18 Registration is due January 29

Select a topic for the day:

- ◆ Immigration with Rev. Mary Higgins and others
- ◆ Covenant of Civil Discourse with Rev. Jill Saxby and Roger Comstock
- ◆ Sexuality Justice Related to Freedom to Marry with Rev. Becky Gunn and Katy Jayne

Flier and Registration form located on the Adult RE Bulletin Board . Contact Helen Zidowecki for more information and to coordinate travel.



Spring Conference & Annual Meeting of the Northern New England District of the Unitarian Universalist Association

Friday, April 1 and Saturday, April 2, 2011

- ◆ Friday Evening, April 1 - Multigenerational Celebration of April Fool's Day with *Rev. Mara Dowdall*, Montpelier, VT; *Karen Fisk*, Augusta, ME; *Kim Paquette*, NNED. What is the story behind April Fool's Day?
- ◆ Saturday Morning KEYNOTE: **The Heart Needs Courage**, *Rev. Dr. Tom Chulak*, Lifelong Unitarian Universalist, Parish Minister for over 30 years, Denominational Leader.
- ◆ This is a family event. The Red Jacket Inn has a large indoor water park and Wii activities. Childcare is available for workshop events.

Full flier, with information on cost is on the Adult RE Bulletin Board. Workshops are as follows:

- ◆ The Heart Needs Courage, Continuing Conversation, *Rev. Thomas Chulak*, *Rev. Mary Higgins*.
- ◆ Building Courage and Hope Towards Environmentally Sustainable Community, *NNED Environmental Sustainability Task Force*.
- ◆ Small Group Ministry for All Ages: UU Humor, *NNED Small Group Ministry Committee*.
- ◆ Building Community Through Music in Worship, *Sarah Dan Jones*
- ◆ Congregationally Based Justice Work, *Rev. Karen Brammer*,
- ◆ A Taste of Harvest, *Angela Matthew*, Plymouth, NH, and *George Anderson*,

COMMUNITY NEWS...

Renovating RE classrooms in 6 Summer Street ~

The RE and B&G committees invite you to help renovate two classrooms at 6 Summer St. We will be doing this work in two 3-hour shifts on Sat, April 16 from 9 AM to noon and from 1 PM to 4 PM. You are invited to sign up for either or both shifts. We will be taking down two walls to make the classrooms larger. It will be dusty but not difficult work. We need people to help take the walls down and others to help get the construction debris taken out to the garage. If you can sign up for a short 3 hour shift, we can put you to work. Both shifts are invited to a free lunch in the Fellowship Hall from noon to 1 PM.

Buildings and Grounds Update ~ Sconce lights and fan switches in the sanctuary.

Marilyn and I wanted to let the congregation know that the sconce lights and the dimmer switches in the sanctuary have been replaced. Please use the new dimmer switches to turn the sconce lights on or off and to dim the lights when needed. It is no longer necessary the use the circuit breaker switches in the hallway to turn the lights on.

The new sanctuary fans / lights can be turned on and off most easily by using the larger POWER button at the bottom of the fan / light switch panel. Press the power button in to turn the fans / lights on, press in again to turn them off. The other 3 buttons control the fan speed, direction of rotation and to dim the lights. These are set for optimal use and should not be changed.

New ice-melt buckets ~ There is now a bucket of ice-melt at each entrance, (one at 71, two at the church and one at 6 Summer St). Please use these as needed. They contain calcium carbonate that is supposed to work better than rock salt, is less likely to be tracked inside and should not leave a trail of white powder in the buildings. Please let me know if this product lives up to their promise.

Please just use the brick to secure the lid. The lids are very difficult to remove, especially in cold weather, if pushed on tightly.

FUNDRAISING...

For more information please contact JudyMcCown or Bruce Bierce, Fundraising Co-Chairs at 897-3683 or ismbierce@myfairpoint.net or bbierce@myfairpoint.net

Whoopie Pie Festival ~ The First Annual Augusta Area Whoopie Pie Festival will be held on Saturday, February 12th, from 10:30 to 2:00 in the Fellowship Hall. It is being organized by Bob Rand and the Men's Club and will include a challenge to find the best Whoopie Pie Baker in the area, A \$24 gift certificate will be awarded to the winner. There will also be Craft Tables, Joe's Books, Hannah's Boutique, a Cafe serving sandwiches and beverages, spirited Music by Annie Voorhees and Joseph Stone, and book signings by Nancy Griffin, author of *Making Whoopies: The Official Whoopie Pie Book*. The Festival and Whoopie Pie Challenge is open to the Greater Augusta public. Tables are available for crafters for no specific charge although a donation to the church is welcome **More Whoopie Pies are needed to sell!!!** If you can help, please contact Bob Rand at 623-1693 or sign the sheet on the Fundraising Bulletin Board.

Small Fundraising Event ~ A dinner and book discussion for 20 guests will be hosted on March 19th by Kathy Kellison, Joanne LaFear, Jane Gilbert and Nancy Fritz. It will be held at the home of Nancy and Jane and is certain to be an evening of delicious food and interesting conversation. There will be a charge for the dinner and proceeds will be donated to the church. Please see one of the hosts to make your reservation or sign the sheet on the Fundraising Bulletin Board.

Silent Auction/Service Auction ~ April 29th is the date for our major fundraiser of the year! We are hoping for many donations of useful, fun and consumable items to be auctioned. These could include a dinner at your home, a bird walk, help with yard work or house work, a cord of wood, gift certificates from local businesses for a hair cut, food items, fuel oil, gasoline or dog grooming. You could host a picnic, a trip to the beach or an island ferry boat ride, or bake bread or your favorite pie. The list is endless and any and all of your contributions will be most welcome !! There will be refreshments, music, a Silent Auction and a Live Auction with Annie Voorhees as the Auctioneer. Please think of a way that you can participate and sign up on the sheet on the Fundraising Bulletin Board.

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

From the Administration Office

Rev. Carie Johnsen - New Hours & Day Off

Monday	11:00 – 4:00
Tuesday	1:00 – 5:00
Wednesday	2:00 – 4:00
Thursday	Sermon writing day
Friday	Day off

Other times available by appointment. Drop in during office hours or call ahead to confirm availability.

On Friday, I practice Sabbath with no phone calls, emails or meetings with the exception of pastoral emergencies. Please leave a message on my cell phone and I will return your call as soon as possible.

Pastoral Emergencies – Please call my cell phone. I do not pick up messages at the office every day and on occasions I am away from my home study for a day or two.