

MUUFLETTER for March 2018

Newsletter from Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

SUNDAY SERVICES SCHEDULE

Always at 10:30 a.m.

Porter Meeting Hall, Skidompha Library

Entrance on Elm St., Damariscotta

March's theme: AGING

March. 4: "Letters to My Younger Self"

If you had a chance to write a letter to your younger self, what would it say? Would you have words of wisdom, or advice? What emotions would you convey, what dreams or jobs would you have pursued? Join our own Tiffany Vencile as she shares various letters from our own members of the congregation in reflecting on the past and present as we connect with one another in a reflection of our younger selves. If you're interested in creating a letter to your younger self please contact Tiffany for more information. willeywonka@hotmail.com

March. 11: *Daylight Savings! Clocks go forward an hour.*

"Home" Rev. Erika Hewitt

How do we define "home," and how does that understanding change over the course of our lives? What does aging have to do with those changes?

Following the service, Dr. Rob Hunold will lead a 12-1 p.m. workshop about planning wisely for our deaths. A primary care physician who's experienced in Hospice/palliative care, Dr. Hunold has witnessed many "lonely deaths," and is committed to helping people understand advanced health care directives, living wills, and dying well.

March 18:

"We Are All in This Together"

Worship Associate Sally Sapienza will lead a service about aging and ageism, with a special ceremony honoring the elders in our congregation. *Our SHARE THE PLATE offering will be given to SAGE Maine.*

March 25: "Healthy, Holy Sexuality"

Rev. Erika Hewitt

One of our religious values, as Unitarian Universalists, is an expansive understanding of how sexuality intersects with relationship: our relationship with our own bodies, and our intimate, consensual relationships with other people. Today we'll explore those ideas and celebrate the children & families in our congregation who have taken part in this winter's Our Whole Lives curriculum.

April 1: "Is This a Joke?"

Easter service led by Rev. Erika Hewitt

From Our Minister

"Preach the Gospel at all times. When necessary, use words." —attributed to St. Francis of Assisi



Rev. Erica Hewitt

Last week, a UU minister reached out to me with a request to guest preach in our Fellowship this summer. My colleague — let's call them "Rev. Love" — has been here before (to great acclaim) and wanted to return (of course I said YES).

Here's the first joy: Rev. Love has only one Sunday available to travel and preach for a UU congregation — and they chose us.

But here's the second joy: Rev. Love explained, "I came to you first because your people were my favorite and the experience of prep and preaching there was so wonderful. "Thumbs up."

This email from Rev. Love (which did Rev. Erika's heart proud) is an affirmation of all of you. It's a stellar endorsement of your Worship Associates — Bob, Courtney, Tiffany, and Sally — who put their time, love, and energy into holding the space for powerful worship to happen, week after week.

However, Rev. Love's email is also an extraordinary statement about *you*, the entire

(continued on page 2)

(From our Minister - continued from page 1)

congregation. It tells me that when I'm out of the pulpit, you welcome and receive our guest speakers with genuine hospitality. You respond to a guest's presence with appreciation, and you make them feel valued. When they bring their unique ministerial style to our sacred space — which often entails the unknown — you respond to them with grace and trust. As a result, the best preachers in our region *are asking to come spend their Sundays off with you.*

It should come as no surprise to you that you, my people, are *my* favorite — but please allow yourselves to glow with the affirmation that you're also another minister's "favorite."

Keep being your graceful, hospitable selves. If hospitality — which might also be the phrase expressed in our mission statement as "loving joyfully, without limits" — is the "good news" that we might call our gospel, you're doing fabulously.

In faith,
Rev. Erika

Save the Date!



*Second Congregational Church
Newcastle.*

Join the **Maine UU State Advocacy Network's (MUUSAN) next meeting on Saturday, March 10th** from 10 am to noon at the UU Community Church, 69 Winthrop Street in Augusta. Connect with other UU congregations for an update on how the holy work of showing up is having an impact at our state legislature.

Contact Julia Fitz-Randolph jfitzra@aol.com for more information or to carpool.

“Aging” questions to ponder:

- Regardless of your chronological age, do you think of yourself as any particular age? If so, what is it? Did anything special or noteworthy happen in that year of your life?
- If you could be any age you choose, what would it be? Why?
- What's your view of aging? Can you sum it up, or is it too complicated? What do you think influenced you toward this view?
- What has been your experience of aging over the past decade of your life? What surprises has it held?
- What frightens you about aging?
- What comforts you about aging?
- How were elders treated in your family when you were growing up? How was aging regarded?
- Can you think of ways you have changed as you've aged (physical, emotional, spiritual, etc)?
- Has anyone served as a model for you with regard to ways to grow older? What about them do you admire? What has that person taught you? What qualities in them do you want to imitate?
- What goals and/or dreams do you have for the years left to you? How do you want to live the rest of your life?
- How can we approach aging in a life-affirming way?



President's Corner

Dearest Fellowship & Friends,

I hope that it has continued to be a restful and safe

Caity Bogdan winter for everyone. We had to cancel service once this month due to weather - as a reminder the congregation's phone message will be changed, and an email will be sent out when this happens. We may try to get the word out in other ways as well, but these are the two ways you can always find out. Hopefully warmer times are coming and we won't have to worry about this anymore!

There has been some discussion this month about things happening around our larger UU community. The Northern New England District Spring Assembly is occurring April 13-14 at the UU Church of Nashua in New Hampshire, and General Assembly will be June 20-24 in Kansas City, Missouri. The Fellowship is able to send two delegates to each of these events, and if you are planning to travel and interested in taking on these roles, please send me an email. These events are also a good reminder that there are many other events across the region and the UUA, that are publicized over the email lists for these organizations. If you are interested in getting more involved or at least hearing about what is going on, I recommend subscribing to these lists. You can find these by going to the websites for these organizations.

Northern New England District UUA:
<https://www.uua.org/new-england/districts/northern-new-england-district>

New England Region UUA: <https://www.uua.org/new-england>

UUA: <https://www.uua.org/connect>

Finally, your board is interested in hearing what is going on with you! Our doors (emails?) are always open to you, but on March 4th we are starting a new tradition of a Coffee Hour with the Board. At least three board members will stay after service for about an hour or so and be available to answer questions, talk about what's going on, and just generally hang out. We are planning for this to become a regular event, but we hope you will join us for this first one!

In Faith,
 Caity Bogdan

By-laws Revision

For 2018 the MUUF Board is taking on the project of a complete by-laws revision. In the 35 years since the original by-laws were drafted, there have been some minor revisions and additions but no major overhaul. Many changes have occurred in the Fellowship and the by-laws should reflect the current status of the Congregation.

Board members Michael Mason and Sandra Barth have agreed to take on the basic responsibility for this project but anyone else from the congregation is welcome to join them by contacting one of them. Much of the work will be done by e-mail with occasional face-to-face meetings and input from the entire Board. The plan is to have a "polished" set of draft revised by-laws by early Fall with a vote at the Annual Meeting in November.



MUUF RE News for March

Carney Doucette, Director

Our Spirit Play stories for March will reflect on our theme of Aging.

Sunday, March 4 – Love You Forever

Carney Doucette

Sunday, March 11 - My Little Grandmother Often Forgets

(daylight savings – remember to spring your clocks ahead)

Sunday, March 18 - Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge

Sunday, March 25 – A Window of Time

SEEKING MEDICAID EXPANSION STORIES

MUUSAN (Maine UU State Advocacy Network) is working with partners to ensure legislative funding of Medicaid expansion for 70,000 low-income Mainers who have not been covered. Are you one of those who should receive coverage? If so, how might coverage affect your life? To share your story, please contact Betsy Parsons at admin@muusan.org or 207-775-0173. Thank you!

Commissioning of Board Members



(from left to right) Sandy Barth, Bob Whitmire, Dick Ober, Caity Bogdan, Rosie Davis, Carol Robins (Michael Mason absent)

(Background) Kevin Kiley, accompanist

(Foreground) Autumn Vencile, future Board member

“May the Spirit of Love guide you in the coming year, may a spirit of joy infuse the work you engage, and may your service bless the world.”

UU FIELD TRIP!

Tuesday, March 27th

Are you curious about what the Unitarian Universalist Association is like? Are you interested in visiting its headquarters, and meeting other UUs from New England?



On Tuesday, March 27th, some of your Board members will be traveling by bus — the 8:30 a.m. Concord Coach* out of Portland — to Boston. First we'll attend a worship service led by Rev. Erika, joined by other UU folks and staff. We'll share lunch in the neighborhood, then receive a guided tour of the UUA's new headquarters. We'll browse in the InSpirit bookstore before catching the bus back to Portland. (We currently plan to arrive back in Portland by 6:15 p.m.) Please note that the UUA headquarters are fully accessible, but the rest of the trip may involve walking.

If you're interested in joining us, please contact Rosie Davis by no later than Monday, March 12th: rosies-davis@gmail.com.

*The Concord Coach is a 2-hour bus ride each way. The bus has a bathroom, wifi, and an optional movie. We'll arrive at Boston's South Station, which is a 6-block walk — or a short cab ride — to UUA headquarters. The round-trip fare is \$39 but if that cost is prohibitive to you, Rev. Erika is offering travel scholarships to anyone who'd like to come. Please contact her at erika@UUminister.com.



Sandy Barth

Hospitality/ Membership Corner

Rev. Erika did meet on February 11th with some of the newer folks attending the Fellowship.

A few people mentioned they had conflicts after the service and would not be able to stay. Erika described how Unitarian/Universalism is different from other religions in that it is based on covenant and not on beliefs and creed. It is one of the most inclusive faiths. Several attending mentioned that they grew up without religion and were now looking for community and a positive faith.

Signing our Membership Book is a formal way of saying you believe in our principles, are willing to take an active role in the Fellowship and will support it monetarily (according to your means). While you can sign the Membership Book at any time, there will be a formal welcoming of new members during a service later in the Spring.

The February Circle Supper was postponed from February 20th to March 13th. That Supper hosted by Kevin Kiley and his mom is full, but we are looking forward to having more. Let Sandy know if you might be interested in hosting one of these fun get-togethers and we'll get sign-up sheets posted.

The weather forecasts are getting more positive, so we will look forward to resuming some Sunday afternoon walks. Let Sandy know if you want to be added to the list she has of interested people and if you have any suggestions of places to visit. One place that is very picturesque and easy and safe to walk in the colder months is Ocean Point in East Boothbay. If you are not familiar with it, it is worth the visit and the traffic is pretty tame this time of year.

We look forward to seeing your warm and welcoming faces on Sunday mornings.

Sandy Barth (sbarth1942@gmail.com)

Caring Team



Charlie Hall

"The MUUF Caring Team supports members and friends who might need occasional help such as a ride, a prepared and delivered meal or an errand. Contact Robin Hall, 207-380-7369, robin.hall518@gmail.com."

"I received a heartwarming card along with this photo of Charlie several weeks ago when I was feeling under the weather. Robin Hall is doing a fantastic job heading up our Caring Team. She has such a big heart."

Jennifer Ober

MAINE INTERFAITH ADVOCACY DAYS

March 19th and 20th, Augusta

A two-day event designed to bring people of all faiths together in our state capital to worship, learn, and advocate effectively with Maine's legislators on the issues of immigration, poverty, health care, and climate justice.

For more information and Registration visit www.tinyurl.com/AdvocacyDays2018

Share the Plate Recipients



(Carol Roberts and Lindy Gifford)

January 2018
People United Against Racism



Bob Whitmire and Mary Hanley

February 2018
New Hope For Women

March 2018

Our Share the Plate partner for March is SAGE Maine, dedicated to improving the lives of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender older adults. The Damariscotta Drop-In gatherings meet the First and Third Wednesdays from 1 to 3 pm at Spectrum Generations, 521 Maine Street, Suite 8. All are welcome!

Winter hours in effect for weekly Anti-Racism Vigils

Every Monday from 12:00 to 12:30 pm (just 30 minutes), members of our Fellowship join other Interfaith citizens at the Memorial Park adjacent to the Second Congregational Church to bear witness to the values of respect, acceptance, diversity and pluralism. Everyone welcome. (Signs provided.)

Hospitality Schedule

- March 4 - (Blue Pod) Tiffany, Adam or Hannah, Joelle & Kay**
- March 11 - (Purple Pod) Jennifer & Dick, Robin, Bob & Joan**
- March 18 - (Indigo Pod) David & Sylvia, Lindy, Stephanie & Isaac**
- March 25 - (Green Pod) Kate, Phyllis, Deb, Tim & Karen**
- April 1 - (Red Pod) Rosie, Bob, Diane, Annie & Billie**

Snowy Sunday? Use Zoom!

During the winter, your Fellowship leaders may decide to cancel worship in the interest of safety. If that happens **on January 14th or 21st**, Rev. Erika will open her "Zoom room" at 10:30 a.m. on that Sunday for a brief online gathering.

Zoom is a videoconferencing platform. You have the option of using your computer to see Rev. Erika on video, or just use your phone to call in and listen/talk. Erika will lead a chalice lighting, joys and sorrows, a meditation, and group discussion. It'll be shorter and less formal than a worship service, but Zoom will allow us to connect before we go back to our shoveling/jigsaw puzzling/hot chocolate guzzling.

To join by computer:

Go to www.Zoom.us

Click the blue heading "Join a meeting"

Enter Erika's designated number: 749-979-5863

To join by telephone only:

Dial 646 558 8656 or 408 638 0968

Enter meeting ID: 749 979 5863

MAINE INTERFAITH ADVOCACY DAYS **Lift Every Voice!**

A two-day event designed to bring people of all faiths together in our state capital to worship, learn, and advocate effectively with Maine's legislators on the issues of immigration, poverty, health care, and climate justice.

Monday, March 19 - 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
South Parish Congregational Church
9 Church Street, Augusta

- Keynote by the Rev. Jim Gertmenian
- Five (repeated) workshops with policy experts and faith leaders:
Expanding Access to Health care - Child Poverty - the Opioid Crisis -
Race and Immigration -Caring for the Environment
- Panel Discussion: "Mobilizing Faith Voices and Faith Votes," will cover ways local congregations can support our democracy through voter registration and non-partisan voter education

Tuesday, March 20 - 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Cross Office Building
11 Sewall Street, Augusta

Equipped with information and inspiration, participants will spend time at the State House in Augusta speaking directly with their Representatives and Senators about pending legislation. Grounded in our shared traditions of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation, we will strengthen our voices of faith and mobilize for action.

For more information and Registration visit www.tinyurl.com/AdvocacyDays2018

\$20 registration includes buffet lunch
(Monday), lunch voucher for the Cross Cafe
(Tuesday), morning refreshments, and materials

Sponsored by:
Maine Council of Churches
Maine Episcopal Network for Justice
Preble Street Faith Action Network
Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network
(MUUSAN)

Questions?
John Hennessy at jhennessy@episcopalmaine.org
Jane Field at jfield@mainecouncilofchurches.org

