

MUUFLETTER for September 2017

Newsletter from Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

SUNDAY SERVICES SCHEDULE 10:30 am



September's theme: OUR WHOLE SELVES*

**What's a theme? See Rev. Erika's column for details!*

September 3: To Be Known by Rev. Jordinn Nelson Long, guest minister. Rev. Jordinn, who serves our UU congregation in Fairhaven Mass. preaches on the work of welcome as embodied by church and why it matters.

September 10 and 17: 2-part sermon series on gender

September 10: Part 1 — "Toward a New Understanding of Being Female," by Rev. Erika Hewitt.

As Unitarian Universalists, we understand gender as non-binary: there are more than just two genders. However, a full appreciation for gender identity begins by exploring the far ends of that continuum.

September 17: Part 2 — "Toward a New Understanding of Being Male," by guest speaker Daryl Fort. Service led by Rev. Erika Hewitt. All are welcome at a facilitated discussion following the service.

Daryl Fort is a gender violence prevention activist, speaker, and educator who's worked with the military, professional athletic teams, and non-profit organizations. He spent 14 years as a political and public policy advisor to former U.S. Congressman and Governor of Maine, John Baldacci.

Our "Share the Plate" recipient for September is **"SAGE Maine,"** dedicated to improving the quality of life of older GLBT adults living in Maine through advocacy, education and social support and hosts a drop-in center in Damariscotta the first and third Wednesdays of every month at Spectrum Generations Coastal Community Center.

September 24 - "Connecting to Spirit through Bodywork" As UU's we all have our own truth. Join our own **Tiffany Vencile** as she shares her truth and philosophy on how she connects to higher source through her work as a massage therapist.

Our Fellowship Picnic is coming up on Sunday, September 10, 12:30 p.m. Rain or shine! We will have the opportunity to deepen our relationships through good food and play! **More details on page 4.**

MUUFles Returning from Hiatus!

The MUUFles will be returning from hiatus at the end of September. Are you interested in singing but aren't currently getting the emails? Contact Caitly Bogdan at caitlin.c.bogdan@gmail.com to be added to the email list, all experience levels welcome!

FROM OUR MINISTER



Welcome to a new congregational year! Here's something exciting: your Worship and Religious Exploration leaders have decided to frame this congregational year in monthly themes. While this is a

first for our Fellowship, we're joining a growing number of Unitarian Universalists who are discovering new depth and spiritual value in shaping their congregations' **lives around monthly themes**.

Every month, your Worship Associates and I will try to craft worship services that explore or reflect the month's theme. Your Religious Exploration leaders will do the same with our children and youth programming. We hope to offer you reflection questions, and other ways to engage these themes in your life and in your spiritual growth.

The **themes for the coming year** are....
(drumroll, please):

SEPTEMBER — Our Whole Selves
OCTOBER — UU Roots
NOVEMBER — Forgiveness
DECEMBER — Mystery & Miracle
JANUARY — Sources of Wisdom
FEBRUARY — Love
MARCH — Aging
APRIL — Stewardship of the Earth
MAY — Religious Literacy
JUNE — LGBTQ Pride
JULY — The Arts in Our Spiritual Lives

Here, then, are some questions to consider as you prepare for September's theme of Our Whole Selves:

- What does it mean to you to be accepted or seen as your "whole self"?

- Are there parts of you that you regularly deny, hide, or ignore? If so, what fear (or fears) underlies that separation?
- One way to invite wholeness into our lives is to integrate the different parts of ourselves. Is there a part of you that's hard to integrate into the rest of your life? What makes that integration challenging?
- Celebrating our whole selves might relate to balance. Do you feel like your life is balanced (or balanced *enough*)? Or is there a place in your life where you wish for greater balance?
- Is there anything missing from your life? If so, have you made peace with that missing piece — or are you actively trying to seek it? How do you discern which approach to take?
- In your intimate relationships, do you believe in allowing others to have access to every single aspect of yourself? Or do you believe that there will always be parts of ourselves that will, and should, remain unknown?
- What would help you love and accept yourself even more than you do right now?

I'd love to hear how this theme resonates with you over the course of September. May our conversations and our contemplation deepen our spiritual journeys — and may we continue to be loving companions to one another along the way.

**In faith,
Rev. Erika**

Pastoral Care Workshop

As our congregation and its needs grow, Rev. Erika is seeking helpers to make visits to Fellowship members and friends who are homebound, lonely, or in need of a friendly connection. If you'd like to learn more about this pastoral care role (note: different than providing meals or rides) please join Rev. Erika at a mini-workshop on **Monday, September 25th from 7:00 to 8:45 p.m.** Location TBA, but refreshments are guaranteed! (Questions? Please call Erika: 650-5757.)



New RE Year

by Carney
Doucette, DRE

The new Sunday morning RE year will begin on Sunday, September 10. This year, we will continue to have a Spirit Play story circle followed by an activity related to the story. Stories will be selected based on the monthly theme. For September's theme, *Our Whole Selves*, our stories will be:

September 10 – Creating Covenant – we will create a covenant for our RE program

September 17 – The Wonderful Happens

September 24 – Breathing Meditation

Registration updates will be going out to registered RE families. Please feel free to invite friends to come along and get involved in our religious explorations program. Also, we will need RE assistants throughout the year, and hope that many in the congregation will agree to assist periodically and get to know our young people.

Children's Offering Begins September 10

We are trying on new project that will help our children put their UU faith in action! Here's how it will work. Each Sunday, starting September 10, there will be a clear vase on the altar where anyone can put money (loose change, some money saved from a work project, etc.) Children will bring their offering every time they come, and put the money into the vase as they come forward for the Time for All Ages. We will watch the money grow through the fall. During RE, the children will choose a recipient for the money. The children will learn ways to make decisions in a group and practice the UU value of generosity. There will be three cycles of the offering (Fall, Winter and Spring) this year.



Message from the President September 2017

Hello Everyone,

As the summer winds down, visitors to Maine head home, children return to school and many of us ask, "where did the summer go?" Well, the gathering last Sunday with Rev. Erika and the fellowship offering blessings to the backpacks and bags of many of our members (of all ages), I was reminded that the spirit of summer is still in the air!

We have such a spirited fellowship openly willing to try new things, laugh together, weep together and trust that we are there in earnest to support our friends. I've heard from many visiting ministers and other sermon-leaders how much fun it is to preach in front of our fellowship where we embrace their lead and joyfully participate. Remember when we were asked to take off one shoe so we could all participate in feeling uncomfortable together? We did and I had to giggle when folks hobbled up for Joys & Sorrows to share stories. We are committed - and I mean that in a good way!

As many of you know, my father died yesterday soon after I stood at the bowl of water and placed a stone in it for him. I was comforted by so many of you and felt filled with love. Thank you.

Let's continue on this shared path of religious exploration and support each other through the highs and lows of our lives; taking chances together, questioning together and growing individually and together.

Nurture spiritual growth, engage in justice and love joyfully, without limits... together.

In faith, Carol

New RE Year-continued from page 3

Before September 10th, talk to your children about this project and ask them to bring some “change” in for the offering. Some families have each child set up 3 jars for any money they receive or earn. One jar is for spending on anything they like; another jar is for saving; and the other jar is for giving away. The children get to distribute the money any way they like as long as they put something in each jar every time they receive money. Check out the [UU World Family Page on Money Talks](#).

Fellowship Picnic Reminder

When: Sunday, September 10th, 12:30 p.m.
(come no earlier than 12 noon)

Your hosts: Carol & Chris Robins, 228 Heath Road in Whitefield. It's only a 25 minute drive from Damariscotta.

What to bring:

- Potluck item with a label. Something for the grill if you want. The Robins will be providing roasted chicken and a vegetarian lasagna along with coffee and tea. Carney will bring pink lemonade and seltzer. (make sure your dishes are labeled with your name)
- Your place setting to save on using plastic ware & paper plates. Napkins & cups provided.
- Lawn chairs
- Bathing suit & towel – there is a swimming pond and sauna – get ready to relax!
- Yard games (or your favorite board game if it is rainy) – lots of open playing areas for kick ball, badminton, wiffle ball, Frisbee. Carney will bring a parachute for some special large group games.
- Plenty of off-street parking

Action: Please RSVP to Carney, so we can plan more effectively. Simply email midcoastuure@gmail.com with yes, we are coming and the number of adults & children. And even if you didn't RSVP and decide that you want to go, come along and join the fun!

Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Education for K-2 update

There has been some interest expressed in making this program available for our children here at MUUF. We need at least 6 children who can participate in the 8-sessions. A copy of the curriculum is available to review on Sunday mornings. Ask the RE lead guide if you would like to look at it. Carney will be available to talk to you about this program on Sunday, September 10 both during the morning and at the fellowship picnic. If you are interested in having your child participate, please email Carney at midcoastuure@gmail.com. Let's see if we can make this happen!

MUUSAN Network Meeting September 9th

Join UUs from across Maine at the next statewide **Maine UU State Advocacy Network** on Saturday, September 9th, 10 am to noon at the UU Community Church, 69 Winthrop Street, Augusta. Representatives from Yes on 2, the campaign to expand Medicaid for 70,000 most vulnerable Mainers, will discuss education and mobilizing strategies needed to pass the referendum on the November ballot. This is the only MUUSAN meeting before the election! Julia Fitz-Randolph is attending and welcomes others to carpool.



Meeting with the Minister

If you'd like to spend time with Rev. Erika in an informal setting, please join her at the Newcastle Pub on **Monday, Sept. 18th from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.** Erika will buy a few rounds of appetizers, but asks that you **please RSVP to Erika by Friday the 15th** so we can hold space for you: Erika@UUminister.com or 650-5757.

Our Congregational Covenant

Your Committee on Ministry (John Adams, Tim Goltz, and Kate Pennington) thank everyone who, over the course of many months, contributed to the three editing rounds of our proposed covenant.

We now have a final version, which we're asking you to reflect upon:

Midcoast UU Fellowship Covenant (Final Draft)

Building community is an ongoing spiritual practice of our Fellowship. We join together to celebrate life in all its beauty and wonder, lifting up each other's joys, and mourning each other's sorrows.

Strengthened by our common humanity, and inspired by the seven Unitarian Universalist Principles, we promise to:

- Be a brave and welcoming community.
- Bring compassion and kindness into our interactions and our search for justice.
- Share in the struggles and joys of our spiritual journeys.
- Challenge each other to live our values.

We hold each other in loving community, even as we acknowledge our imperfections. Seeking to nurture healthy relationships with one another, we strive to:

- Communicate directly with honesty and respect.
- Speak up when we are hurt, listen when we cause hurt.
- Be open to hearing when we have caused hurt.
- Invite healing through forgiveness and making amends.

- Grace one another with the spirit of love.

We all share responsibility for upholding this covenant. Let our connection to one another be a part of our connection to the world and the universe around us.

Reflection Questions for Our Covenant:

- In what ways do you or other Fellowship members already practice some (or all) of these?
 - Are there words or phrases that are especially interesting to you?
 - How do you imagine this covenant could strengthen relationships within our Fellowship?
 - How do we — *all* of us — keep this a “living” covenant, rather than allowing it to become stale?
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MUUF Book Club - Amina's Voice

The Social Justice Committee is sponsoring an ongoing Book Club Series, with a focus on presenting diverse voices. The next selection is a young adult novel called *Amina's Voice* by Hena Khan. This book follows a young Muslim girl through the trials and tribulations of middle school friendship and navigating family relationships across different generations.

If you are interested in participating, contact Caity Bogdan at caitlin.c.bogdan@gmail.com, or use the signup sheet at service. Scheduling for the discussion group will be done according to availability for those interested.

Hospitality Schedule

Sept. 3 - Rosie Davis/Tiffany Vencile
Sept. 10 - Dick & Jennifer Ober (Purple Pod)
Sept. 17 - Sandra Barth (Indigo Pod)
Sept. 24 - Kate Pennington (Green Pod)
October 1 - Bob Lightfoot (Red Pod)

Enhancing Fellowship Hospitality and

Membership As a new church year begins, it's appropriate to think about strengthening some of the things we already do fairly well. With a new Mission Statement and Fellowship Covenant, we all need to be mindful of putting those into practice. Sandy Barth has agreed to spearhead a revitalized Membership Program and is looking for a few others to join her in handling the logistics of this effort. Please speak to her, email her at sbarth42@gmail.com or phone at 563-5565.

Sandy was pleasantly surprised by a comment some out-of state visitors made this summer. They said that they were UU's and had been visiting area UU churches while they were here. They said our congregation was definitely the most welcoming and they felt the most at home here. We need to constantly be thinking of how we would be feeling if we were first-time visitors (or second or third) and keep out that hand of friendship and welcome.

What you can do to help this effort of enhancing hospitality and membership:

- 1) Wear your nametag at every Sunday service.
- 2) Intentionally sit beside a visitor at a Sunday service.
- 3) Attend MUUF events that include both members and non-members.

There will be other reminders in the months to come of how we can best show our hospitality and make new friends in the process.

MUUF Caring Team

The Caring Team supports Fellowship members and friends who might occasionally need help such as a ride, a prepared and delivered meal, or an errand. We are currently updating and regrouping. If you would like to be a part of this effort, if you have questions, or if you have been on the Team and want to continue, please speak with Robin Hall, email her at robin.hall518@gmail.com or call her at 207-380-7369.

Talk on Universalists and Unitarians of Maine

On Wednesday, September 20, 6:30 [p.m.at](#) the First Universalist Church in Rockland come explore the unique qualities of Universalism and Unitarianism in Maine with author and retired UU minister, Peter Richardson.

Universalists were born of the great Maine frontier. Unitarians came to the Maine frontier, a profound difference. Why were there three times as many Universalist congregations founded in Maine than Unitarian? Why aren't there 409 congregations in the state now? It isn't only because liberal religion is a difficult religious discipline. We have had congregations in 286 Maine cities and towns. Each one has a story. We will tell a few of them to know more about ourselves. Peter is the author of several UU books and is the son of founding MUUF members Elford and Eleanor Richardson.

Change in Editors for Newsletter

As Sandy Barth takes on more responsibility for the Membership Program, she is stepping down as the bimonthly Newsletter editor, Jennifer Ober has kindly offered to be the bimonthly editor and David Bailey will continue. Jennifer has been a big help with putting this edition together.

See pictures on following page



**RE Summer Play: Mason, Finn, Caitlin,
Dylan**



Backpack Blessing at August 27th Service

The End