

# MUUFLETTER for December 2017

## 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*

**December's theme:  
MYSTERY & MIRACLE**

**Dec. 3: "Soiled Stories"** by our guest minister Aram Mitchell from Renewal in the Wilderness, back by popular demand. He preached to us in January.

**1:30—3:30 p.m. — Community Sing** led by Rev. Erika Hewitt. Paperless singing of simple songs and chants; open to teens & adults

**Dec. 10: "The Thing That Makes It Worth the Journeying"** - Rev. Erika Hewitt Our minister has borrowed this title from Stephen Sondheim's musical "Into the Woods" as a springboard for reflecting on our journey of shared ministry. What makes our relationship, as congregation and minister, worth the journeying? And what might be possible in the years ahead?

### **Dec. 17: Telling the Christmas Story**

Merry, merry! Joy, joy! Join Rev. Erika Hewitt and Carney Doucette for our second annual intergenerational "pageant from the pews." (That means we tell the story and you act it out!) Our **SHARE THE PLATE** offering will be given to local heating assistance. Coffee hour includes a cookie exchange! **Please bring a dozen cookies to share, and plan to take some home in return.**

*Following the service, please stay for a congregational meeting to vote on calling Rev. Erika Hewitt as the Fellowship's first settled minister.*

**Sunday, Dec. 24 at 10:30 a.m. — "Blue Christmas" service** - Rev. Erika Hewitt This quiet, reflective service of hope and healing is for anyone who has experienced the loss of a family member or friend, job difficulties, or other personal struggles. People of all faiths — and no religious faith — are welcome. (Childcare only; no religious education.)

### **Sunday, Dec. 24 at 4:00 p.m. Candlelight Christmas Eve service**

*Rev. Erika Hewitt and Kevin Kiley*



We'll hear the nativity story, reflect on the meaning it holds for us over two thousand years later, and experience the magic of Christmas Eve.

Our Christmas Eve

SHARE THE PLATE offering will be used to create a Minister's Discretionary Fund within the congregation: a special budget to help those in need, throughout the year.



### **Minister's Column**



Would you like to join me this month in a mindfulness challenge?

Having spent the past weeks observing my spirit, it's clear that I'm craving some quiet, centering space in my life. Leading up to Christmas, my intention is to carve out time every day, even if it's just a few minutes, to meditate as a gift to myself (and, let's be honest, those around me). That's not easy to do (says everyone who ever tried to sit in meditation on a regular basis) but it's important, which is why I don't mind admitting that I need help to follow through on this intention.

To provide support and companionship while I meditate, I've begun to use the Insight Timer app. I love being able to choose free guided meditations, or to simply set a timer before I disappear into silence. I'm learning about what helps me meditate, and what gets in the way. I love discovering new things about this ancient spiritual practice.

In December, my goal is to sit in meditation every day — whenever it works, and wherever I find myself. What would happen if I made time to meditate as reflexively as I make time for Netflix and social media?

*continued on page 2*

## Minister's column ... *continued*

I want to find out. If you'd like to join me (on your own) and compare notes, I'd love to hear what you're learning and experiencing.

It feels fitting that I'm setting this mediation intention during Advent — the four Sundays leading up to Christmas Day — because Advent is a season of watchfulness: we keep vigil for the promise of things to come. We speak (and sing, and meditate, and pray) about the promise of the Not Yet Manifest.

Whatever is coming into being in your life - whether it's a new expression of spirituality or a more concrete arrival - may our watchfulness be rewarded with meaning.

*In faith,*

Rev. Erika Hewitt

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### "Contact the Minister" reminders:

- Rev. Erika Hewitt is available by email, text, and phone every day except Tuesdays & Wednesdays (although you should contact her anytime if you have a pastoral emergency): [erika@UUminister.com](mailto:erika@UUminister.com) and 207/650.5757

- While Erika monitors our congregation's Facebook page and its messages, she strives for personal privacy on her personal Facebook page by not accepting friend requests from Fellowship members & friends.

- Please do not use Rev. Erika's email address to send large group messages, articles, petitions, and the like.

**Thank you for understanding!**

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### "Mystery and Miracle" questions to ponder:

- Albert Einstein wrote, "The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion that stands at the cradle of true art and true science." When have you most recently experienced that sense of awe and wonder?

- Often when we try to answer a question, we end up asking more questions — the Mystery gets larger, not smaller. Which of your Big Questions has led to more questions?

- Among the many Big Questions that you've ever wondered about, which question is the biggest and most important to you?

- If you were guaranteed an answer to just one question, which would you ask? Would you really want an answer?

- Which of the following things, in your opinion,

qualify as "miracles"? —> The Universe, the Earth, love, snowflakes, the brain, childbirth, thinking, healing, a stone statue crying real tears, a baby found alive five days after a tsunami, a mother chimpanzee caring for a baby tiger, a person surviving an airplane crash, a flower pushing through an asphalt road.

- Think of something that you know as a miracle. It might be the birth of your child, the Earth and our place on it, a moment of connection with your favorite place in nature. Fill yourself with that memory, and the smallest details of it. What is it that makes this moment miraculous?

- What approach do you take when confronting or experiencing the Unknown? Are you similar to — or very different from — the speaker in this poem by Elizabeth Coatsworth?

*Through the windy night something*

*is coming up the path*

*towards the house.*

*I have always hated to wait for things.*

*I think I will go*

*to meet whatever it is.*

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## Hospitality Schedule

**Dec. 3** - Kate Pennington (Green Pod)

**Dec. 10** - Rosie Davis (Red Pod)

**Dec. 17** - Tiffany Vencile (Blue Pod)

**Dec. 24** - (Rosie)

**Dec. 31** - Dick & Jennifer Ober (Purple Pod)

**Jan. 7** - Indigo Pod

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## Greeters

**Dec. 3** - Rosie Davis

**Dec. 10** - David Bailey

**Dec. 17** - Sally Sapienza

**Dec. 24** - *Your name here*

**Dec. 31** - *Your name here*

**Jan. 7** - Robin Hall

Greeting each week is one of the most important volunteer roles in making our guests feel welcomed by our congregation. If you would like to become part of this already awesome team please email me at: [Rosiesdavis@gmail.com](mailto:Rosiesdavis@gmail.com)

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## BUDGETED PLEDGES: 2 /3rds of the way there

Treasurer Dick Ober reports that pledges now total \$40,470 - but 25% of you have yet to submit yours. We can eliminate the budgeted deficit for 2018 with the missing pledges!

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## Message from the President

Hello Everyone,

November was a busy month for our fellowship. Starting with an very successful Service Auction at Mobius on November 5th where we broke bread (delicious) and raised nearly \$2,000 - bringing our fundraising total above the \$3,500 planned for 2017. Thank you, Jennifer Ober, and all volunteers and participants who made this happen!

Our Annual Meeting on November 12th involved a hefty number of members, 27, who were eligible to vote on important items. Thanks to all of you, we adopted a new fellowship covenant, approved our budget for 2018 and added two new board members, Bob Whitmire and Michael Mason (replacing Diane Jenson who stepped down in July and Kay Miller who will step down at the end of the year). We also approved the new Board Officers: Caity Bogdan, President; Rosie Davis, Vice-President; Sandy Barth, Secretary; and staying on as Treasurer, Dick Ober. Bob, Michael and I will be trustees at large.

To cap off the day, the Board announced that Julia Fitz-Randolph was the recipient of the Founder's Award. She was completely surprised and all the folks present responded with love and support for all that she does for our fellowship and community through her extraordinary dedication to Social Justice causes that touch us all. Congratulations again, Julia, you are so deserving of this recognition!

As this is my final President's Report for the newsletter, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on what we, as a fellowship, were able to accomplish this year by trusting each other to do our best. Thank you to everyone in the fellowship for trusting your Board members to always be making decisions with the future and life of the fellowship in the forefront of our thoughts. And finally, thank you to each Board member, for supporting one another, listening, caring and sharing the weight of the work with enthusiasm and energy.

What a year it has been and can't wait to see what 2018 brings!

In faith, Carol

## Hospitality/Membership Corner

We continue to work on enhancing the Fellowship's hospitality and membership's efforts as an integral part of our mission and covenant. We give a warm welcome to recent new members Kenneth Vencile, Pam Cunningham, and Bill Child. If you have been attending for awhile and may be interested in becoming a member, see Sandy Barth or another board member to sign the Membership Book. Only members will be able to vote for "Calling" Rev. Erika as our permanent minister at the December 17th meeting.

Because December is such a busy month, we have put several activities on hold until after the New Year. The Circle Suppers will resume in January. Please let Sandy know if you might be willing to host one. We instituted a Sunday afternoon hike in October. Four of us walked the Rutherford Island Preserve on a lovely afternoon. *(see photo on page 4)* We will try to resume in January depending on weather and post-storm damage. Many local land trust trails were impassable and will have to be checked out before we schedule another hike. Sandy is compiling a list of those interested in the Sunday after-service walks.

We are committed to offering opportunities for getting together other than for Sunday morning services and especially look forward to getting to know new attendees and new members. We would like to schedule events specifically for new attendees and new members periodically throughout the year, so stay tuned.

As always, continue to be mindful of the ways you can practice a warm, welcoming, hospitable orientation. Thank you for your efforts.

*Sandy Barth [sbarth1942@gmail.com](mailto:sbarth1942@gmail.com).*

**RE note: Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education for K-2** - Reminder to parents to please sign up by December 15 if you plan to participate. You can email Carney at [midcoastuure@gmail.com](mailto:midcoastuure@gmail.com) with the name and ages of the children participating.

## People United Against Racism

**WINTER HOURS:** Join your neighbors of different faiths on Mondays from Noon to 12:30 in Newcastle's Memorial Park to bear witness to the values of respect, acceptance, diversity and pluralism.

## The Promise and the Practice — THANK YOU!

As part of our worship service on November 12th, dedicated to centering the voices and lived experience of Black Unitarian Universalists, our SHARE THE PLATE offering invited you to give towards a congregational pledge of \$500 to Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (or BLUU). We're thrilled to announce that **the entire pledge was met!** As a Fellowship, your contributions totaled \$500 as a sign of faith and stewardship for the ongoing work of creating racial justice within our own movement. **Thank you for your generosity.**



## Religious Exploration



**Carney Doucette, DRE**

**Sunday morning RE in December** will begin on Dec.3 with the Story of the Heifer Project and how you can give a unique gift that helps a family.

Sunday, Dec. 10 – Faith in Action – Making gingerbread houses for the Community House.

Sunday, Dec. 17 – Multigenerational Worship Service – All children attend

Sunday, Dec. 24 – Community-wide “Blue Christmas.” No RE

*Come to the 4 p.m. Family Christmas Eve service!*

Sunday, Dec. 31 – Enjoy time at home in your pajamas or come and attend worship. No RE this morning.

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**You are invited to:**

**Children’s Holiday Shop  
at First Universalist Church in Rockland!**



The Children’s Holiday Shop will be on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the UUR church on 345 Broadway. Parents and caregivers, bring your children with their lists of who they are shopping for, and their quarters. They will shop for presents from a wide-selection of gently-used items donated by the congregation. Our “elves” will help them shop and wrap their gifts. *All items are 25¢.* Adults can wait upstairs, and enjoy conversation and hot chocolate. For the youngest children, we help them shop for their parents first, and then the parents can assist with other gifts. Near the end of the time, we open the shop for all ages. Please bring or invite others to

participate. This is a great way to re-purpose items, and the children love the opportunity to shop and wrap gifts for their loved ones. If you have questions, contact Carney Doucette, [midcoastuure@gmail.com](mailto:midcoastuure@gmail.com).



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### Winter Solstice Evening Service at First Universalist Church in Rockland

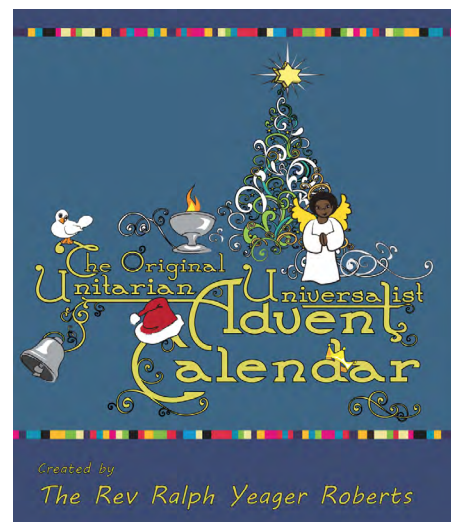
Join Lois Anne and Carney Doucette as we welcome the returning light during a Winter Solstice Service on Wednesday, December 20 at 5:30 p.m.

This service is for all ages and will last about 45 minutes. We will enjoy a meal together afterwards. Bring a finger food potluck item. We will supply a vegetable soup, hot cider and tea.

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### A Family Project – Assemble a UU Advent Calendar

For the season of Advent, here is a resource from the UUA that your family will enjoy. Assemble an advent calendar and enjoy the fun facts each day leading up to Christmas Eve. Click on “advent calendar” to go directly to the project.



# **Timeline for Calling Reverend Erika Hewitt**

- 1) Nov. 12 - Announcement of the Fellowship's intention to "call" Rev. Erika - the formal announcement as part of the Annual Meeting**
- 2) Nov. 19 - After- church meeting (around 12 noon) - first opportunity to ask questions of the Board and Committee on Ministry re: Calling Erika - all invited**
- 3) Small "cottage" meetings on the following dates and places - everyone will be encouraged to attend one, especially if they missed the Nov. 19th after-service meeting**
  - Dec. 1st (Friday) - 2 pm at Sandy Barth's, 340 Lynch Road, Newcastle**
  - Dec. 7th (Thursday) - 7 pm at Glen Davis' Office, Bristol Road, Damariscotta (plenty of parking in rear - no other activity there in the evening)**
  - Dec. 13th (Wednesday) - 2 pm at David & Sylvia Bailey's, 236 Academy Hill Road, Newcastle**
- 4) December 10 - Erika will preach on "Being Called" from her perspective and things she wants us to be aware of**
- 5) Dec. 17th - Business Meeting after the service to Call Erika (a pageant is scheduled for that day, so hopefully there will be good attendance) - if the service has to be cancelled d/t weather, it will be rescheduled for January**

**Note: only members will be able to vote - this will be announced for the next few weeks, allowing anyone who is contemplating joining to do so before Dec. 17th**





**ABOVE:** *The first Sunday afternoon MUUF walk included Bill Child, Jill Linzee and Phyllis Loney on the Rutherford Island Preserve in So. Bristol led by membership chair Sandy Barth .*

**RIGHT:** *The MUUF crew at our final 5th Wednesday of this year hosting the Community Supper at the Second Congregational Church. From left, Caity Bogdan, Tiffany Vencile (the leader), Rosie Davis and son Mason, Sandy Barth, Bill Child and Tim Goltz.*



## Help MUUSAN support the People's Veto to restore Ranked Choice Voting!

Every dollar will be matched up to our \$2,500 goal! Now we are called again to witness to our Fifth Principle on democracy. The legislature's recent actions to deny the will of the People on Ranked-Choice Voting mean that we must advocate once more for a vision of democracy that brings civil discourse back into campaigning and strengthens the inclusion of all into the democratic process.

## Snowy Sunday? Use Zoom!

During the winter, your Fellowship leaders may decide to cancel worship in the interest of safety. If that happens on one of Rev. Erika's Sundays (please check our website &/or newsletter), she 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:

1. Go to [www.Zoom.us](http://www.Zoom.us)
2. Click the blue heading "Join a meeting"
3. Enter Erika's designated number:  
749-979-5863

To join by telephone only:

1. Dial 646 558 8656 or 408 638 0968
2. Enter meeting ID: 749 979 5863



Ranked-Choice Voting needs us. Help MUUSAN mobilize UUs and friends for the People's Veto to restore RCV. Please donate generously to MUUSAN's *Faithify campaign!*

*Faithify* is a UU crowdfunding platform that makes your giving so simple. Our goal is \$2,500 (every dollar locally matched) by December 20.

Read more on the MUUSAN website or Facebook page. To donate, go to [Faithify.org](http://Faithify.org)