

MUUFLETTER for March 2017

Newsletter from Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



SUNDAY SERVICES SCHEDULE

March 5 - "Singing the Living Tradition: Celebrating Our 7 Principles In Word and Song"

Join our **Worship Associates** in a hymn service to explore and celebrate the UU 7 Principles.

March 12 - "The State of Our UUnion" led by Rev. Erika Hewitt

At last fall's auction, a group of members (led by John Adams) pooled their money to "buy" a sermon topic. They requested hearing Rev. Erika's reflections about ministry, shared ministry, and the minister-congregation relationship.

March 19 - "Beauty" led by Rev. Mark Glovin

As we knock on spring's door, we'll celebrate our human capacity to experience beauty. We'll honor our ability to perceive it and to create it. We'll wonder why we forget to or find it so difficult to take the time to put ourselves in its path. This multi-media service is an invitation to experience it all and to live lives of beauty.

During this service, we'll be treated to music by guest musician **Anni Clark**, a Maine native, who's been captivating listeners for over 20 years. Learn more at AnniClark.com.

This is "Share the Plate" Sunday. The recipient will be MUUSAN, the Maine Unitarian Universalist Social Action Network.

March 26 - "On (Not) Getting Lost and Asking for Directions"

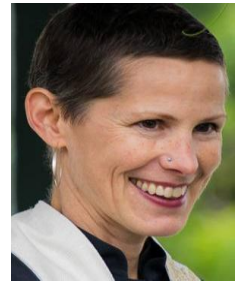
Rev. Erika Hewitt

April 2 - Join guest minister **Danielle DiBona**, who served our Fellowship as Interim Minister a few years ago!

From our Minister:

Sunday, February 19, 2017

Dear Diary,



This morning I attended church, even though I'm on vacation. I woke up feeling the pull to be with My People, and the nice thing about being a UU is that you can find "your people" almost anywhere on a Sunday morning.

It's been years since I worshiped at First Unitarian Church of Portland, Oregon — one of the largest UU congregations in the country — so when I arrived at their campus (which takes up an entire city block), I got lost. One person saw me looking confused, and he looked the other way. A different couple smiled, greeted me, and helped me find my way to the sanctuary. It was good to remember how important those tiny gestures are: hospitality between strangers is part of the worship experience.

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Once I chose a seat, I opened the order of service to read an invitation to use social media during worship if my phone was on silent. (I did, and it was.) That message, and the video screens for hymns, reminded me that sometimes “church” needs to reflect the world around us rather than being a step back in time. I had only a minute to chat with the woman next to me before a 15-person bell choir began their introit, followed by a song by the 50-member choir.

My spirit, hungry for music and other food for the soul, was impatient as the welcome (graceful though it was) swelled to include multiple announcements. It was interesting to notice how announcements — which are entirely about *doing* and *action* and *planning* — keep us from the twin processes of *being* and *becoming* that are so central to worship.

When worship was over, I found my way to the social hall; first, though, I noticed the restroom signs, which welcomed those who are gender non-binary. I felt grateful that the Midcoast Welcoming team had done this in our space, last fall. When I arrived at coffee hour, I was astonished to see the entire perimeter circled with tables inviting interaction: social justice, social outings, adult religious exploration, welcoming newcomers, and events in the wider UU world. It was exciting to see how many people put their faith into action, and make their values manifest in the Portland community.

Unitarian Universalist congregations are so different from one another; they have different ways of celebrating and expressing our values, and knitting their members together in community. I’m glad I went to church today — not only because worship was wonderful, but because I needed to remember what it’s like to be a guest. I needed to feel what it’s like to arrive with an empty spiritual tank, and leave with it full.

May I, and all of us at the Midcoast Fellowship (an hour+ north of “the first Portland”), keep creating a religious community that welcomes the stranger, proclaims our values, fills the spirit, and inspires us to transform our world. --- Erika

President’s Corner:



Hello Everyone,

As the Board prepares for a retreat this month (lead by Karen Bellavance-Grace from the New England Region of the UUA) I have been meditating on some topics that I feel are important to focus on at the meeting and for the coming year.

One, in particular, is to continue to support and focus on growing our involvement and visibility in our community. What is our community? Of course, Damariscotta and Newcastle, but also Lincoln County, Maine, New England and the United States.

Here are a few examples:

We are active and visible in the Twin Villages through hosting the quarterly community suppers, standing up for the Black Lives Matter movement, screening “The Sharps’ War” and participating in the interfaith celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr.

We are involved in the life of our socially-active Lincoln County non-profits through our Share the Plate donations as well as members and friends of MUUF volunteering throughout the county.

At the state level, we actively support and are members of MUUSAN (our Share the Plate recipient this month), march in the Portland Pride Parade and Sandy Barth (VP) and I are attending bi-monthly potluck dinners with other midcoast UU board leaders to strengthen our bond and share joys and concerns while brainstorming ideas for our futures.

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We rely on our friends at the New England Region of the UUA for advice, support and leadership. Also, we have the opportunity to represent MUUF at the upcoming New England Assembly in April (more on that in the April newsletter).

How, you may ask, are we able to be involved at the national level? Going to the General Assembly in June allows us the opportunity to connect with UU folks from all over the country and countries from around the world! This year, it will be held in New Orleans from June 21 - 25th. Also, by signing the Declaration of Conscience (see note in next section of this newsletter) at the request of the UUA and UUSC, you will become part of a strong voice, "standing on the side of love, protecting the most vulnerable among us, and defending core values that are under attack".

So, our little fellowship in Damariscotta has dropped the stone into our Skidompha "pond", now let's continue to support the rings of energy and growth as we take our message of love, truth and justice to every corner of the globe.

When you are out and about in our community, mention our fellowship - you may be surprised to find out that people already know about us. It may also lead to interesting conversations, a shared experience or folks asking questions and wanting to learn more about our wonderful Midcoast UU Fellowship. Give it a try!

In faith, Carol

Declaration of Conscience

An invitation from UUA President and UUSC President and CEO has been emailed to members calling all Friends of Faith and Conscience to:

Sign your name to the Declaration of Conscience to commit to putting Unitarian Universalist values into action to resist hate, fear and bigotry. Get regular

email updates, opportunities and stories from this joint initiative of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. If you are interested in signing the declaration and receiving more information, please connect with the link below.

<http://connect.uusc.org//103112/2017-01-17/gpgn2>

Hospitality Schedule

Refreshments

- March 5** - Bob Lightfoot (Red Pod)
- March 12** - Tiffany Vencile and Rosie Davis (Blue)
- March 19** - Jennifer & Dick Ober (Purple Pod)
- March 26** - Sandra Barth (Indigo Pod)
- April 2** - Kate Pennington (Green Pod)

Greeters

- March 5** - John Adams
 - March 12** - Lee Warren
 - March 19** - Janet and Bud Elwin
 - March 26** - Robin Hall
 - April 2** - Jean Howe
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Community Supper Volunteers Needed!

Have you been looking for a volunteer opportunity to help the community? Please join us for the Community Supper held at the Second Congregation Church in Newcastle, on Wednesday, March 31st, from 4:30-6:30. We are always looking for volunteers to make side dishes, casseroles, and other food items, as well as volunteers to help serve the meal. Set up begins at 4:30 pm, we serve promptly at 5, and finish around 6:30. Please speak to Tiffany Vencile or Rosie Davis to let them know you can help with food, serving, or both. You can also email Tiffany at willeywonka@hotmail.com

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Committee on Ministry Asks for Your Comments

"In our Fellowship, what would you hope your fellow members would promise to you?"

"What would you be willing to promise to others in return?"

At the service about "Our Love Languages" on February 12, Rev. Erika asked us all to think about what we would hope that our fellow MUUF members would promise to us and what we would be willing to promise in return. She handed out slips of paper for us to record our responses so that they can be shared with the Committee on Ministry. We will be using these responses as we work toward creating a congregational covenant.

Thank you to everyone who has already submitted a response to the two questions. We will be collecting responses through the month of March and would love to hear from as many of you as possible. If you will not be at the Fellowship this month, you may email your response to any of the Committee on Ministry members (Kate Pennington, John Adams, and Kevin Himes).

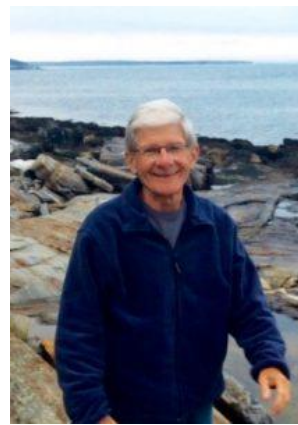
Snow Cancellation Policy

Fellowship cancellations will be posted on our Facebook page: [facebook.com/UUMidcoast/](https://www.facebook.com/UUMidcoast/) website: uumidcoast.org and an outgoing announcement on Midcoast UU Fellowship's phone announcing cancellations when they happen. The phone # is: [207 315-1628](tel:2073151628). The announcements will be updated by 8:30 AM on Sunday morning. This is the last posting for this season and hopefully the info will not be needed.



President Carol presenting Hannah Harter-Ives with the check for CHIP (Community Home Improvement Project) - "our Share the Plate" recipient for February. Hannah is a Board member of CHIP, Inc and a Fellowship member

From Our Caring Team



Ross Fenster, a regular summer attendee since MUUF' was in Edgecomb, died Sunday, February, 12 at the age of 73 at his home in Ridgefield, CT. He was born in Buffalo, NY and lived in Ridgefield with his wife, Jane Leff, since 1991. They moved into a new home in a

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retirement community last Fall. They have a summer home in Pemaquid and hosted a Dine Around fund raising dinner last year.

He enjoyed hiking, traveling, and mountain climbing. Ross was an active member of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury, where he held many leadership positions and enjoyed the strong senses of community and friendship that grew to be important aspects of his life. In addition, he regularly volunteered at Regional Hospice, Dorothy Day Hospitality House, and the Morris Street School. His greatest joy was spending time with his children and grandchildren.

A memorial service was held at his church on February, 25. Donations in his memory may be made to Regional Hospice and Palliative Care, 30 Milestone Road, Danbury, CT 06810, or to The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury.

One of the new knitted prayer shawls was sent to Jane as a token of the Fellowship's loving thoughts, prayers, and sympathy during this difficult time for her.

Tom Allen, a resident of Hodgdon Green, has not been feeling well for the past two weeks. A former ski instructor, he was looking forward to another mono-ski adventure later in March. A volunteer from the Maine Adaptive Sports and Recreation Association assists him in that adventure. Let's hope Tom can do it again this year. If you would like to visit, call Hodgdon Green first to see if he's up to a visit (563-5123).

MUUSAN News

MUUSAN is **Share the Plate** recipient this month. The Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network (MUUSAN) is a statewide advocacy and public policy network anchored in our Unitarian Universalist faith and animated by its principles. This legislative ministry links Maine's 25 Unitarian

Universalist congregations to promote just, humane laws and policies in keeping with our UUA Seven Principles. We welcome as partners and collaborators all those who share our values.

MUUSAN Network Meeting March 11th

Fasten your seat belts: our state legislature is now in full session. Be briefed on what's at stake with UUs from across the state at the next Maine UU State Advocacy Network on Saturday, March 11th, 10 am to noon at the UU Community Church, 69 Winthrop Street, Augusta. Bring a brown bag lunch and stay for a special discussion at noon featuring seasoned Maine journalist Doug Rooks to learn about the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact that ensures the candidate who wins the most popular votes is elected president. Julia Fitz-Randolph will be attending and welcomes others to carpool.

Welcoming Congregation Update

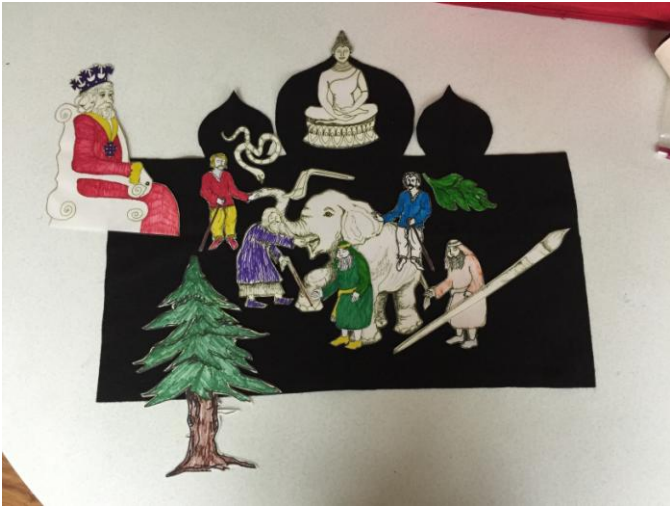
The Welcoming Congregation Committee has submitted our application to the Unitarian Universalist Association's office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Ministries (LGBTQ Ministries) to ask that we receive official recognition as a Welcoming Congregation. We are waiting to hear back from the LGBTQ Ministries office and will report back to the congregation as soon as we have news.

"The Poets and The Assassin—Daughters of Iran" April 3rd at 7:00 pm, Lincoln Theater

A play by Reza Jalali (keynote speaker at the interfaith MLK service), performed by students at Bates College, and sponsored by People United Against Racism.

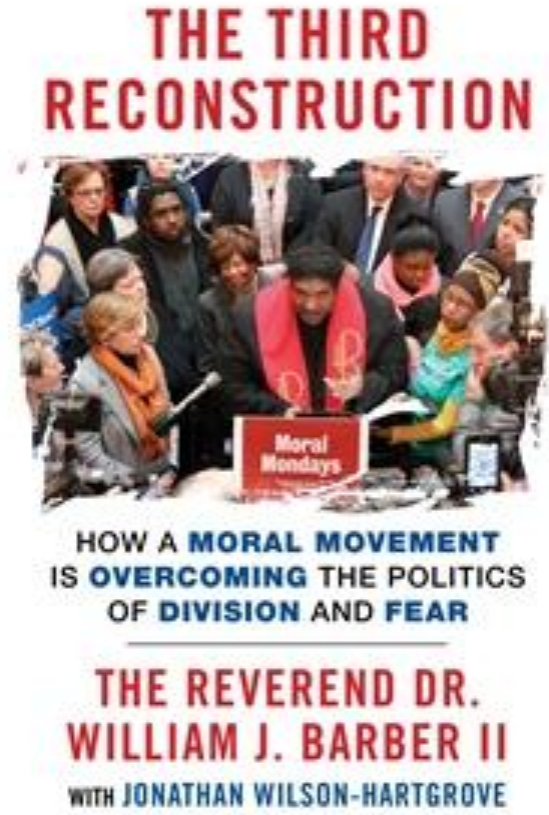
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From Carney, our Religious Exploration Director



**Wise people and the elephant
(one of the RE Spirit Plays during the past month)**

This year's Common Read:



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