

MUUFLETTER for May 2017

Newsletter from Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



Calendar for Upcoming Events

May 7 - Following the Service - MUUF Mission Workshop

June 4 - Following the Service - Building a Fellowship Covenant

June 17 (Sat.) - March with MUUSAN and MUUF in Portland's Pride Parade

June 21 - 25 - UUA General Assembly in New Orleans, LA: <http://www.uua.org/ga/offsite>

SUNDAY SERVICES SCHEDULE

May 7 - All of Us Need All of Us to Make It

The title — which sums up our Unitarian Universalist theology — comes to us from UU minister Theresa Soto, but Rev. Erika is preaching. Please join her for an important conversation that over six hundred other UU congregations are engaging in this week.

May 14th - The Bystander Dilemma

Repeat guest speaker Maryah Converse has tried to live in service of greater good for the interdependent web of existence, but the stakes are suddenly higher. Today she reflects on what it's like to weigh a big decision against her Unitarian Universalist values.

Maryah Converse is a writer, an Arabist and a "raised Unitarian Universalist" since middle school. She was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Jordan during the last Bush Administration, was studying in Cairo during the Arab Spring, and now works for a financial empowerment nonprofit in New York City.

May 21st - Rev. Erika Hewitt preaches

May 28th - Flower Communion Service led by the Fellowship's **Worship Associates**

June 4th - Midcoast UU Fellowship member **Courtney Belolan** preaches!

Welcome New Members

We are so glad that you recently joined our congregation and look forward to spending many Sundays with you.

Sally Sapienza

Bob and Joan Whitmire

Duncan Halm

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From our Ministers



Our Unitarian Universalist tradition attunes itself to oppression, and all the ways that we're complicit in it, as well as lifting up ways to dismantle oppression. We do this because we believe that, in the words of Rev. Theresa Soto, "All of us need all of us to make it."

One example of this is our Welcoming Congregation work: as a Fellowship, we've committed ourselves to the ongoing work of learning how to be affirming and accepting of people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans*, and gender non-conforming. We do this as a means of countering the violence, hatred, fear, marginalization, hate-based legislation, and ongoing oppression of those people.

Our Welcoming process required us to stop telling ourselves that "we're already welcoming," and instead ask LGBTQ folks how they feel welcomed and affirmed. That's because allies listen. They set aside their privilege, and de-center themselves. Instead of defining and deciding for themselves what the work entails, allies ask, "What do you want us to know? How can we help? What don't we know yet, that you can teach us?"

This setting aside of privilege is why, across the country and around the world, our UU congregations are calling a time-out on their usual business and, congregation by congregation, using the term "white supremacy" to name the dehumanizing water that we swim in — not just in the culture around us, but in our own movement. We're using this term because the people of color in our movement have asked us to. Specifically, Black Lives of UU (or

BLUU) have called all Unitarian Universalists to hold a conversation about the white supremacist culture in our country and in our movement.

Allies listen. Allies set aside their own preferences, and make room to be uncomfortable. Allies do not put themselves at the center of someone else's oppression.

These are the words of my colleague Rev. Krista Taves (who is white):

"We've been trained to see white supremacy as an overt expression of racism, replete with burning crosses, white hoods, Confederate flags, lynchings, and angry white people shouting racist epithets. This allows liberal whites to distance themselves from racism and believe that we aren't part of it. But white supremacy is way bigger than the way we've been trained to understand it. White supremacy is a way of thinking that devalues the experiences, insights and lived reality of people of color. The consequences of this thinking have the real-life impact of denying people of color a real voice with real power. Rarely is this culture explicit or even conscious in liberal white communities; it's implicit and unconscious.

It's brave to call white supremacy what it is. In fact, it sets us apart from most liberal institutions, which are in complete denial about the power of racism to shape their decisions and their processes."

Allies listen. Allies set aside their own preferences, and make room to be uncomfortable. Allies are willing to decenter themselves — including their discomfort. Allies ask, "What don't we know yet?"

As Krista says, "Our Universalist heritage says that no one is left behind. Let's anchor in that

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promise. If you want to journey into wholeness, if you want to live into the transformative pain and possibility of this one incredible life you are living, if you want to experience a community that doesn't shy away from calling truth to power, then resist your urge to run away or to distance yourself from the work. Stay with us. Bend into the task at hand. Dare to be vulnerable.”

On the journey without ceasing,
Rev. Erika Hewitt

Message from Rev. Erika

“Attention is the most concrete expression of love. What we pay attention to thrives. What we do not pay attention to withers and dies.

What will you pay attention to today?”

– Karen Maezen Miller,

Hand Wash Cold: Care Instructions for an Ordinary Life

Ministry is about presence; it's about attention. I told your Trustees recently that in recent months I have not been able to stay within my half-time ministry with you — which is another way of saying that I have not been able to pay attention, and to nourish, all of those who are in my care.

One way that you can help me practice presence and attention to those who need me most is to attend to the following **“When and How to Contact Rev. Erika” Guidelines**. Thank you for understanding that these boundaries help me discern how to balance serving you half-time and serving my other responsibilities.

week by week

- I respond to Fellowship communication, regardless of the medium, on all days except Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

- One worship service represents at least twelve hours of my allocated 20 hours; one meeting represents at least four hours. Thank you for trusting that I'm actively serving you even when you don't see me.
- If I'm not with you on any given Sunday morning, I'm usually working in another UU congregation, and unavailable for the day.

phone

- For those who are able, text messages get the most immediate reply from me: 650-5757. Emojis welcome! So are voice memos.
- Please do not include me in group texts to your family and friends.
- If you'd like to talk to me about your life, call me. If you're upset, call me. If you'd like me to listen to your needs or your spiritual discernment, *call me*. I silence my phone when I go to sleep, so you won't disturb me if you call at midnight or at dawn.
- If you leave me a non-urgent voicemail on Tuesday or Wednesday, I'll return your call on Thursday or later.
- Since I serve many needs within our Fellowship in very limited hours, I'm not the best person to call if you're seeking someone's phone number, the sermon topic, or wondering when the Book Club meets. Please use our newsletter, website, &/or a fellow member of our community to find the information you need.

email

- Email is the least effective way to get a response from me. When I do respond, it tends to be brief, due to how many emails I receive every day. (Your half-time minister has three ministries, and three different email addresses.)
- I use email for scheduling and exchanging

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information, not conversations about things

that matter to you and to your heart. If a topic has an emotional charge, let's talk about it voice-to-voice.

- As a way to be present to our communication, please do not CC me on personal group emails to your family and friends.
- I value your individual thoughts and opinions. I ask, with thanks, that you don't email me petitions, newsletters, jokes, articles, or other material.

social media

- Although I use Facebook for both personal and professional reasons, I do not "friend" those who are part of our Fellowship.
- I frequently check our Midcoast UU Fellowship Facebook page for messages, and reply to them as I'm able.
- If you want to connect with me on social media, you can follow my WorshipWeb Curator page — facebook.com/UUWorshipWeb — or my (more personal) Instagram account, [rev.erika.hewitt](https://www.instagram.com/rev.erika.hewitt).

If you have questions about any of these guidelines, I'd be happy to discuss them with you. I appreciate your understanding the spirit behind these requests: by observing these necessary boundaries, you enable me to serve our Fellowship's members as thoughtfully as possible.

Hospitality Schedule

May 7 - Kate Pennington (Green Pod)
May 14 - Bob Lightfoot (Red Pod)
May 21 - Tiffany Vencile and Rosie Davis
May 28 - Jennifer & Dick Ober (Purple Pod)
June 4 - Sandra Barth (Indigo Pod)

MUUF Mission Workshop

The Board is working on updating the MUUF mission statement but needs YOUR help! There will be another workshop on mission in which a board member will work those who attend through some exercises to help explore what our congregation is passionate about, good at, and provides that no one else in the community does. Your input is important because the mission will help the Fellowship and the Board direct our time and resources for the next five years.

The workshops are different but not sequential so you are invited both if you did attend the previous workshop (thank you for your input!) or if you had a conflict. This workshop will take place after service on May 7th and is scheduled to take 1 hour.

Please join us and help with this important work for our Fellowship!

Book Discussion Group - Bad Feminist

The Social Justice Committee is sponsoring a series of four book discussion groups this year, and the first selection is *Bad Feminist* by Roxane Gay. This collection of essays provides a poignant view of intersectional feminism and racial justice issues, interspersed with humor and Scrabble. The discussion group date is May 21, so everyone is

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encouraged to get a copy and start reading. If you need help acquiring a copy, or have any other questions, please contact Caity Bogdan (caitlin.c.bogdan@gmail.com).



Welcoming :

A Commitment, Not an End Point

At the November 22, 2015, Annual Meeting, the members of MUUF voted to formally move forward with our efforts to be recognized by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) as a Welcoming Congregation. Becoming a Welcoming Congregation is an intentional process of education and outreach around LGBTQ (lesbian gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning) issues.

In February of this year, we submitted our application to the UUA documenting our achievements in the areas of education, congregational life, and community outreach. We are thrilled to announce that MUUF has now been officially recognized by the UUA as a Welcoming Congregation!

The letter from the UUA recognizing MUUF's achievement is included in this month's newsletter.* Please take a few minutes to read the letter and to pat yourself on the back for all that we have accomplished together. As Michael Crumpler from the UUA reminds us, though, being welcoming is a commitment, not an end point. In the months and years to come we must continue to promote inclusivity; to say our welcome out loud, in print, and online; to build our welcoming skills as congregational leaders and greeters; to deepen our understanding of identities that differ from our own; and to engage in justice ministry.

The Welcoming Congregation Committee has been reactivated after a quiet winter, and we invite newcomers. Our next meeting Sunday, May 28, following the service.

(* see last page for the letter from UUA)



President Carol Robins presenting Karen Kleinkopf with the check for FARMS (Focus on Agriculture in Rural Maine Schools) - our "Share the Plate" recipient for April. Karen is the co-founder of FARMS and a Fellowship member.

Building a Fellowship Covenant – June 4 Gathering

The Committee on Ministry is leading the effort to craft a congregational covenant for our Fellowship. A covenant articulates the values that guide the relationships within our Fellowship, and the ways we aspire to live those values.

The Committee began the process in January 2017 by asking for input from MUUF members and friends about what they identify as important values in the life of the Fellowship and how we might live them. Next, the

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Committee asked people what they would hope fellow members would promise to them, and what they are willing to promise in return.

The Committee is now using that input to create a first draft of a covenant, and we invite all to join us after the worship session on Sunday, June 4, to share responses to this initial draft. We intend this draft to serve as a jumping-off point for deeper discussion about our values and mission. We also recognize that not all who are interested will be able to stay for the June 4 discussion. The June 4 gathering is a starting point, and there will be further opportunities for members to participate in the process in future.

—Kate Pennington and John Adams, for the Committee on Ministry



President's Corner:

Hello Everyone,
Most of you have heard about the UUA and UUSC's Declaration of Conscience, which they have asked us to sign as individuals and as a congregation. Here is the opening paragraph; the entire declaration can be found at the **UUA.org** website. "At this extraordinary time in our nation's history, we are called to affirm our profound commitment to the fundamental principles of justice, equity and compassion, to truth and core values of American society." If you haven't already, I hope you will consider signing it as an individual. Again, you may sign it on the website and only takes a couple of minutes. So, how to vote as a congregation? After I spoke with a number of UU board leaders in Maine and Rev. Erika reached out to fellow ministers, it became clear that the board

may vote on behalf of the congregation to sign the Declaration of Conscience. So, I wanted to let you know that at the April 20 board meeting, the board discussed and voted on signing the declaration. With a vote of 5 in favor; 0 opposed, two absent, we moved to sign the agreement. I did so a couple of days later, joining hundreds of other UU congregations across the country.

This topic of the Declaration of Conscience will continue to be on everyone's minds and in their hearts as we head to General Assembly in late June. There, delegates will be voting for a new UUA president, and with all three candidates being women, the UUA will elect its first female president! Julia Fitz-Randolph and I will be the delegates from MUUF who will be voting at GA for the next president. We will be there representing YOU so read about the candidates (one click from the **UUA.org** home page) and let us know who you believe is best prepared to lead us into the future.

*In faith,
Carol*

Religious Exploration Corner by Carney Doucette, DRE

RE Sundays in May

**We are wrapping up our RE year with
Spirit Play stories focused on
diversity and our first principle:
Respect all beings.**

May 7 – Butterfly Friends

May 14 – Tango Makes Three

May 21 – Flower Communion Story

**May 28 – Multigenerational Service:
Flower Communion**

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Guest at Your Table

Remember to keep feeding your *Guest at your Table* box with coins whenever you sit down at your table. Reflect on stories of people who are defying hate. And remember you are supporting the UUSC (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee). Return your boxes on May 21st.

RE Summer Guide Wanted

The Religious Exploration Committee is reaching out to find just the right person who can be our RE Summer Guide. This person, a high-school student or adult (perhaps someone who is retired) will continue to lead a circle time and activity for children for our 11-week summer session. There will be a stipend of \$25 per Sunday. We are looking for someone who can provide consistency throughout the summer. Carney Doucette will provide training. If you know of someone who enjoys working with children and might be looking for a small amount of compensation, please contact Carney.

Story Worship Workshop at Ellsworth UU

Join Carney on Saturday, May 20 – *Story Worship Workshop* from 10

a.m. to 3 p.m. at UU Ellsworth - Participants will learn how to engage emotional understanding to enhance meaning through stories that teach and inspire. Please talk to Carney as soon as possible if you would like to go.



Isaac organizing plaque acting for seder service on April 9th



Autumn shares lunch with her "Mystery Friend" Jennifer Ober on April 9th



Finn shares lunch with his "Mystery Friend" Deb Lomas on April 9th

Meet UURockland at 4-H Camp in Tenant's Harbor

You are invited to join UU Rockland at their annual church retreat at Blueberry Cove 4-H Camp in Tenant's Harbor on June 3 & 4. This is a multigenerational event where everyone has fun being in community together in a relaxed beautiful setting, rain or shine! Come just on Saturday or stay overnight and join them for worship outside. A link to the brochure is here: [Retreat brochure](#). You can register on-line with this link: [Registration](#)

If you have questions, contact Carney Doucette.

Board Seeking Membership Coordinator

The board is seeking a volunteer to act as Membership Coordinator for the Fellowship. As we continue to see new faces each week and add new members to our Fellowship it is important that new visitors be welcomed and provided resources on how to continue attending or join the Fellowship. However, there is currently no process for this to occur, or point person to manage it, so the Board is seeking a volunteer to fill this void. The Membership Coordinator will be charged by the board to be the face of the Fellowship to visitors, to organize materials and the process for joining the Fellowship, to help with the administrative tasks of signing on new members and to communicate with the Fellowship to introduce new members.

The Membership Coordinator will work with the Board to make sure that visitors and new members are welcomed and help our Fellowship continue to grow. This is an exciting and critical part of our shared ministry. If you are interested in volunteering for this position, please contact Carol Robins at carolrobins4@gmail.com



Recent Fundraiser

"Fun was had by all at the April 30th MUUF Fundraiser where we had a

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delicious meal (including wonderful homemade desserts) and wonderful live music by the talented Jud Caswell. Special thanks to Jennifer Ober, who oversaw all the planning for the event, Tiffany Vencile, who prepared much of the food, and David Bailey, who invited Jud and secured the hall. Thanks to the many other MUUF volunteers who enthusiastically signed up to make this evening a success!"



The Harter - Ives family looking over the dessert table

The Caring Committee

Tom Allen is at the Maine Veteran's Home in Augusta. He's missing Damariscotta and would enjoy receiving emails or notes from Fellowship members. **email:**
TomAllen2214@gmail.com. Address:

310 Cony Road, Augusta, 04330.
Tel:622-2454.

Jennifer Ober has been at Miles and Cove's Edge with severe back pain. She's hoping to be home soon but will need healing time.

Sue Carlson is heading to the hospital in the next week for knee replacement surgery. She and Roz will need some help for awhile with rides, grocery shopping, etc.

In Remembrance

William (Bill) Thompson

Bill died peacefully on April 24th at the age of 90. He will be remembered for his intellectual curiosity, imagination, humanistic approach to life, and love of music and literature. With these abilities he was a valued addition to the Fellowship's Sunday Program Committee for a period of time.

He had an extensive education including a B.S. in Engineering from Yale and a M.F.A. in Architecture from Princeton. He had an active career as an architect including a year as a Resident Architect at Colonial Williamsburg.

He and his wife Katie founded the Sheepscot Valley Children's House in 1983. She died in 2005. He is survived by daughters Katharine and Cammie as well as stepdaughters Susan Thompson, Karen Paul and stepson Chris Hobbs.

Bill was a member of the Fellowship. Donations may be made to the Sheepscot Valley Children's House, PO Box 449, Wiscasset, ME 04578.

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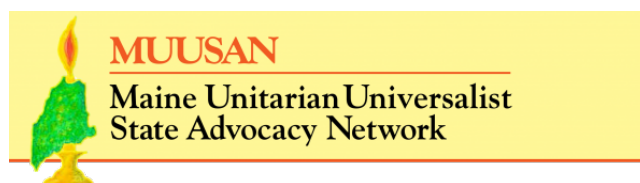
Alfred (Al) Eipper

Al died peacefully at his home in East Hampton, MA on April 17th at the age of 97. He was an active scientist throughout his life and had an extensive education and career in the sciences. He attended Harvard and received a B.A. in psychology in 1941. He was in the Coast Guard during World War II. He received a M.S. in Wildlife Conservation from UMO in 1948 and then went to Ithaca, NY where he earned a PH.D. in Fishery Biology in 1953. He stayed at Cornell where he was an Associate Professor of Fishery Biology.

After five years in Harvard, MA, where he was the Power Plant Activities Leader of the Northeast Division of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, he and wife Molly built a home on the Damariscotta River in Walpole in 1980. In 1983 they were founding members of the Midcoast UU Fellowship. They both had an intense loyalty to the Fellowship and hosted the monthly meetings of the Program Committee for many years. They also were founding members of CONA (Citizens Opposed to Nuclear Arms).

To be closer to family, they joined the Lathrop Community in Easthampton, MA in 2001. Al continued with his career-long interests in the interrelated problems of population growth and climate change. Molly, a talented artist, died in 2006 following a long illness. He is survived by daughter Margo Guertin, and sons Steve and Eric, 12 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. Al asked that donations be made to the National Resources Defense Council.

See last page for the letter from UUA



Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network Spring Conference & Annual Meeting

The Intersection of Faith and Advocacy

Saturday, May 13, 2017

**9:30 AM - 3:00 PM, UU
Community Church of
Augusta**

(69 Winthrop Street, Augusta 04330)

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER: The
Hon. Tom Andrews
President and CEO, Unitarian
Universalist Service Committee
Former Congressman, Maine's First
District**

**Free but please RSVP:
admin@muusan.org**

**Carpool with Julia Fitz-Randolph at
jfitzra@aol.com**

April 27, 2017

Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

PO Box 1021

Damariscotta, ME 04543

Dear Julia and Members of the Social Justice Committee at
Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship:

Congratulations!

I am delighted to inform you that the Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship's application to become recognized as a Welcoming Congregation has been approved! Sincere congratulations on taking this powerful step, doing collective work to educate yourselves on LGBTQ issues, and committing yourselves to vital ongoing ministry in this area.

It was a pleasure to learn about all you have accomplished and the powerful work you have done. Your work during "Phase Two" of your WC process to lead a transgender workshop for area churches and to host a silent vigil following the Orlando shooting, makes clear that your congregation understands that being recognized as a Welcoming Congregation is a commitment rather than an end point. I recommend you continue to be active in the social justice movement by understanding how white supremacy intersects with the LGBTQ experience and work toward deconstructing the gender binary and uplifting gender non-conformity. To ensure this excellent work continues, I encourage you not to waste any time publicizing your extravagant hospitality as a Welcoming Congregation in Unitarian Universalism. Congregations can lose energy after they see the poster on the wall.

As you continue to make your congregation an even more welcoming one, I hope you will see the UUA as a resource for you—please reach out should any questions arise or if we can be of service or support. I encourage you to visit our website often, as we are continually adding new resources that will help you on your journey toward inclusive community.

You can expect to receive two newly designed Welcoming Congregation posters in the mail. In the meantime, you have approval to use the Welcoming Congregation logo on your website and other materials.

Thanks again for your congregation's life-giving, essential work!

With Peace Through Justice,

Michael J. Crumpler

LGBTQ and Multicultural Programs Manager

Unitarian Universalist Association

uua.org

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