

# MUUFLETTER for April 2019

## 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*

### April's Theme: Elders & Ancestors

**April 7: "This Body Will Be a Corpse"** Angela Lutzemberger, guest clergy, service led by Rev. Erika Hewitt.

Taking death and change to heart throughout life—long before we think or imagine it's our end of life—is an essential and transformative practice. That practice prompts our genuine opening, letting go, and coming into a more direct relationship with reality.

Angela Lutzemberger is an Interfaith Chaplain who's worked in Hospice care for 8 years. A practitioner of Tibetan Buddhism for 25 years, Angela has also taught meditation and general Buddhist tenets for over a decade. In 2018 she founded the nonprofit Good Ground Great Beyond, the mission of which is to become a memorial park, contemplative hermitage, and sacred space for a public open air cremation pyre available for use by surrounding Maine communities.

**Noon to 1:00 p.m.: Join Angela and Erika for a workshop.** Angela will discuss death planning as an exercise in increasing individual and relational awareness regarding what matters and holds meaning. We'll explore the implications of communicating our thoughts about death and death care to our loved ones. We'll also examine the core component parts of good and comprehensive end of life and death planning.

**April 14: Lindy Gifford, "Listening for the Ancestors"**

The native peoples of North America, or Turtle Island, have much to teach us about how we might heal and repair our relationships with ourselves, each other, and the earth - and more and more, they are stepping forward to model that for us. I have been listening with fascination as they speak of the ancestors' guidance as what enabled them to survive centuries of colonization and genocide and even now, to reawaken some lost portions of their culture. But what does that mean for me and other descendants of white settlers, if anything? And who are my ancestors? I hadn't given them much thought until recently, when I have unexpectedly begun to feel their presence. What might our ancestors be telling us, if we were to listen very carefully?

Lindy Gifford was raised Unitarian Universalist and has been a member of the Midcoast UU Fellowship for about fifteen years. She served as the Director of Religious Exploration from 2011

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### Minister's Message



Of all the places I've lived, it's Maine's people who taught me how to strike up a friendly conversation with strangers. After living here for nearly seven years, it's now second nature to say

hello to someone standing nearby and still be chatting five minutes later (note: this does not happen in most places in the country).

On my last day in the San Francisco Bay Area in late March, I took public transportation (called BART) to the airport. As I hauled my 100 pounds (!) of luggage onto the platform, a woman wearing a hulking backpack spotted me and called out, "You're going to the airport, too." Together, we staggered onto the subway car—and began chatting.

Feather was on her way to a peace gathering in Colombia. As we talked, a man eavesdropping next to us finally commented on our travels. "Where are you going?," I asked... and Rodney described the homes that he builds out of shipping containers, pulling out a portfolio of renderings for us to admire. (I learned a long time ago that most people are far more interesting than we give them credit for; these two proved it anew.)

The three of us — different ages, different races, and complete strangers — forged a momentary and wondrous friendship. But as Feather, Rodney, and I talked, every other stranger on the packed car studiously examined their smartphones. We were the outliers: people willing to risk connection, however short-lived, however potentially awkward.

We finally had to say goodbye to Rodney at his stop. Feather and I journeyed together all the way to adjacent Delta gates, where we hugged goodbye (and, of course, took a selfie).

I'm grateful for this experience on BART: a reminder that while not every new friend

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## ***SUNDAY SERVICES, continued***

to 2014 and currently serves on the RE committee. In 2015 she attended a two-year chaplaincy program and was ordained an interfaith chaplain by ChIME, the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine in Portland. She is a free-range, community chaplain, working mostly with non-profits, such as The Restorative Justice Project of the Midcoast, Maine-Wabanaki REACH, the Abbey of Hope (an interfaith cooperation circle in Portland), and People United Against Racism. She makes her living as a publishing consultant, graphic designer, and creative coach and recently started a new consulting business, Manifest Identity.

### **April 21: "The Hope Expressed in You"**

**Rev. Erika Hewitt**

"There is a hope that's been expressed in you: the hope of seven generations, maybe more." This lyric from a Susan Werner song suggests that the path of redemption isn't just for our own selves, but for those who came before us. On this Easter Sunday, we'll reflect on what it means to live out the Universalist belief in the salvation of all souls. Special music will be provided by John Adams and David Bilski.

### **April 28: Sages, Saints, and Scoundrels,**

**Rev. Kimberly Debus** It's easy to put our Unitarian and Universalist forebears on pedestals, but how noble were they really? How do we simultaneously celebrate their wisdom, good works, and faults... and our own? Rev. Debus (DEE-bis) works as a community minister based in New York's Capital Region, inspiring an artful and art-filled faith. She is an also adjunct consultant with the Central East Region, and is currently providing sabbatical ministry at First Parish Church in Kennebunk. She has previously served congregations on the North Fork of Long Island and Key West.

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### **Speakers wanted for June 2 Service**

The Welcoming Congregation Committee will lead the service on Sunday, June 2, with the theme **Own-ing Homophobia**. We are looking for a few speakers willing to talk about their journey from homophobia and heterosexism to LGBTQ pride. Please contact Kate Pennington or Julia Fitz-Randolph if you would like to speak.

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### **Pride Parade - June 15**

Mark your calendar for Saturday, June 15. MUUF will once again march in the Pride Parade in Portland, along with other UU congregations. Details about car-pooling and logistics will be in the June newsletter.

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

needs to stay in our lives forever, connection is a sweet gift—and evidence of our interdependence.

What would happen if we did this more often? If we turned toward one another more, and leaned into the risk of feeling silly or getting "trapped" in a boring conversation?

As spring lures us upwards toward the lengthening days, may you take the risk of connecting: of looking up and into the eyes of another person—perhaps unknown to you; of preaching (without words!) the good news that, in the words of my colleague Rev. Theresa Soto, *all of us need all of us to make it anew.*

*In faith, Rev. Erika Hewitt*

## **Message from the President**



Greetings friends,  
Spring is here at last and it's beautiful. I love hearing the sound of the birds and the scent of the fresh Maine air. I am lucky to live in such a beautiful place.

I am excited to be attending the Northern New England District (NNED) Annual Conference on April 4th and 5th. I'll be attending a Reggie Harris Performance for powerful music on Friday, a workshop on Saturday led by Regional Staff and inspiring worship Saturday afternoon. I'm looking forward to meeting new people from our sister congregations and enjoying some spiritual growth for myself. I'll report back next month!

*In faith, Rosie*

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## **Hospitality Schedule**

**April 7** - Indigo Pod - Lindy, Stephanie & Isaac,  
Rob & Molly

**April 14** - Green Pod - Kate, Phyllis, Deb Arter,  
Tim & Karen

**April 21** - Red Pod - Rosie, Bob & Deb Lomas

**April 28** - Blue Pod - Tiffany, Joelle & Kay

**May 5** - Purple Pod: Jennier & Dick, Robin,  
Bob & Joan

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## **Reminder**

April **Talking Tree Earth Conversations**, hosted by Molly Wilcox, will be on Apr. 7 and 21, at 3 p.m. at Rising Tide Co-op.

## RE Stories & Activities for February



Carney McRae Doucette,  
Director of  
Religious Exploration

### April RE Sunday Mornings

Theme: Elders and Ancestors

April 7 – Window of Time; Mystery Friends activity begins

April 14 – The Elders are Watching

April 21 – Ostara & decorating eggs

April 28 – Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge

### Mystery Friends Begins April 7

Thanks to those who are participating in our Mystery Friends Activity over the next 6 weeks. Bags will be put out each Sunday for notes and small gifts.

### OWL graduates

Congratulations to Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education (OWL) grades 4-5 graduates: Caitlin Lomas, O'Doshie Davis; and YuJi Smith. Thank you to the parents who took turns bringing the children to UU Rockland for the sessions.

### Invitation for a Retreat with Rockland UU Church

The First Universalist Church in Rockland holds an annual retreat at Blueberry Cove 4-H Camp in Tenants Harbor. They are extending an invitation to Midcoast UU Fellowship to come join them. The retreat is on Saturday, June 1 & Sunday, June 2. This is a great way to meet people, relax, play and enjoy nature. We rent the facilities for the entire weekend, so you can come for a day, stay overnight or just come for a few hours. Together in community, we create this magical weekend. We usually plan a few formal activities and then let the rest happen in the moment. Kayaking and canoeing if the tides are right; lounging in the sun or playing soccer in the field, strumming instruments or cooking a special treat in the kitchen, early morning yoga or a nature hike in the woods, worship service outside, and lots of food created by us all. Look for the brochure in next month's newsletter.



## Pre-Teen Convention, in Rockland



Above: The gathering Below: During worship



Above: Drumming Circle  
At left: Outdoor Worship at Blueberry Cove  
More RE photos on page 5

## Hospitality/Membership Corner

We are happy to welcome two new members to the Midcoast UU Fellowship. Todd Steel is a fisherman who splits his time between South Bristol and Florida. So if we don't see him for awhile, we'll assume he's in Florida. Emmy Swanton has recently moved from the Augusta area to Damariscotta Mills. She formerly attended the UU Community Church of Augusta.

As Rev. Erika said recently, it's always great to see visitors who keep returning. We want every visitor to feel a warm welcome, and we look forward to having them return.

If anyone would like to host an April Circle Supper, it's not too late. Just let Sandy know, and we'll put out a sign-up sheet. Since the weather is taking it's time to warm up, getting together for a meal is a good way to keep us warm while waiting for real Spring.

Please continue to seek out new faces during Coffee Hour and continue to be your warm, welcoming selves.

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

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## MUUF Immigration Justice Initiative

The Immigration Justice Group will continue to meet monthly, generally on the 4th Sunday. The April meeting will be on Sunday, April 28th after the service. For now we will be focusing on two efforts:

1) Helping the Mid-coast New Mainers Support Group where we can. This is a Brunswick based interfaith group that has been actively settling families in the Bath area. They are currently a little overwhelmed with the needs of one nine-member family. Sandy plans to continue attending the Group's monthly meetings at the UU Brunswick church on 3rd Thursdays from 6:30 - 8 pm and invites others to join her.

2) You can help support Maine's Somali Bantu / Immigrant Community in the Lewiston area. Their New Roots Cooperative Farm has a booth every summer and fall (July - October) at the Damariscotta Farmers Market You can register for a half-share or full-share CSA at their farm this month (April) or by going to this link on their website:

<http://newrootscooperativefarm.com/our-csa/>

Your CSA produce can be picked up each week (Fridays) at the Damariscotta Farmer's Market. Jill Linzee is our contact person with this immigrant community.

Other immigrant justice resources are available at the Maine UU State Advocacy Network:

[www.muusan.org](http://www.muusan.org)

In the future we may decide to broaden our approach by inviting other non-UU congregations in the area to join our efforts.

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

## Early Days of the Midcoast UU Fellowship by our first president, Roger Duncan

*Part 4 of a 4 part article*

Submitted by Sandra Barth

Original MUUF member

Rev. Barth has made special contributions. Not only has he been an indispensable member of our program committee and helped in liaison with other UU ministers, the Northeast District, but he has conducted Sunday services in the form of discussions where we could see each others' faces rather than the backs of each others' heads and where participation was carefully guided.

Refreshment was provided every Sunday by various ladies of the congregation in turn, for over coffee and cakes some of our most interesting ideas are shared. Under the leadership of Mary Duncan, Molly Eipper, the enrollment in church school grew to ten by 1985. Our activities have been reported in local papers and we ran advertisements in our local papers.

We have been accepted by the Unitarian Universalist Association and by the Northeast District as formal members. We have contributed our "fair share" to their support and sent a delegate, Eleanor Richardson, to the 1984 General Assembly. We have been well represented at District meetings and workshops. We have established our legal position with the State of Maine and the IRS. Our existence has been recognized by churches of other denominations by invitations to ecumenical services.

Financially we were liberally supported.

As we looked to the future, we saw the need for strengthening our church school, our music program and our social responsibility program.

As we look back on our second year, we can view with amazement what we have accomplished. We have drawn together a group of people with mutual, liberal religious interests who have stimulated far beyond what might have been expected and in whom has grown a remarkable loyalty to an infant institution. Sunday has become again a day for shared friendships and new ideas. Just as two candles burn more brightly together than separately, so we are stronger for being together.



## Greeters

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



*Above:  
Rev. Elizabeth giving the blessing  
for OWL*

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*At right:  
Caitlin making OWL cupcakes  
for final OWL session*

