

MUUFLETTER for August 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

June's theme: LGBTQ Pride

August 4: A Produce Communion. Join Courney Belolan and other Worship Associates to honor and celebrate the summer fruits of the Earth. We will thank the Earth for providing for us, and reflect on our agricultural connections to spirit and community. If you have a home garden, please bring some fruits or vegetables to share.

August 11: "Restoring Justice, Restoring Faith"

Guest minister **Rev. Paul Langston-Daley**. Patti Anderson, worship associate. Restorative practices is the science of relationships and community*. How are we together? How do we respond to conflict? How do we strengthen our relationships, and restore our faith in one another? This culture in which we live is designed to isolate us and hold us in fear. Restorative practices helps us to change that narrative, to understand that conflict can sometimes bind us closer together, and that centering relationships is the one way to save ourselves, to release our fear and to find joy. (* from iirp.org) (see bio on pg. 2)

August 18: Joys and Sorrows, Hopes and Fears

As an expression of our covenant we will lean into vulnerability with one another, and ourselves. The worship associates will lovingly lead the fellowship through an exploration of the emotions that underlie our day to day existence. Our SHARE THE PLATE offering will be given to FARMS.

August 25: "Giving Money to Strangers"

Rev. Erika Hewitt. In July, Rev. Erika conducted an unusual social experiment: she stopped strangers on the street and offered them a dollar... for what? Come find out — and hear what giving money to strangers has to do with our Fellowship.

This service will include our annual Backpack Blessing: regardless of your age, you're invited to bring a backpack, school bag, briefcase, bookbag, etc. to be blessed by the congregation. We'll also share our new Beloved Community ritual in lieu of Joys & Sorrows, which will return on Sept. 1st.

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Minister's Message



One day this summer, UU colleague—who shall remain nameless—began grumbling to me about a leader in the congregation they serve. (Ours was a private conversation, so the venting felt appropriate.) My colleague described this congregational leader struggling to communicate clearly, and neglecting to follow through on the tasks they volunteered to do. (This is obviously normal human behavior that we're all guilty of sometimes, but if it becomes a pattern, it can hinder a Board or a committee—or even an entire congregation.)

I sympathized with my colleague before adding, "Maybe that's the point of what we do." "What do you mean?," they asked.

"It's not fair to expect the people in our congregations to automatically know how to communicate directly, or to take faithful risks, or to operate in a system of trust and teamwork," I explained. "It's wonderful when they do, but along with all of the other reasons we exist in the world, our congregations are like laboratories for connection and growth. If we're doing congregational life right, we teach one another how to be better leaders inside the church -"

"— so they can be better leaders outside of the church," they finished my sentence, nodding. We began listing all of the places that Unitarian Universalists might "show up" differently - braver, more compassionate, more empowered - in their lives, as a result of being transformed by congregational life: the office, the neighborhood meeting, the extended family gathering, the town hall hearing.

In our Fellowship, we often recite our mission - the "burning coal" that fuels us: to nurture spiritual growth, engage in justice, and love joyfully, without limits. I love that mission, and use it as a North Star in my ministry with you.

Regardless of formal mission statements I also believe that **an implicit and ongoing central purpose of congregational life is to learn how to build life-giving, trust-building relation-**

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SUNDAY SERVICES, continued

Join us following the service at the home of Chris and Carol Robins for our annual all-ages picnic! See page 5 for details.

Minister's column ... *continued*

ships that fuel us and feed us. Those of us who have made this Fellowship our ongoing choice, and our home, have experienced this transformation in our own lives.

For the next couple of months, your Board members and I will be asking you to reflect more deeply on how the Fellowship has transformed your life. How have you been changed? How has that enriched your life, and the life of those around you?

As always, I give thanks for serving you: the shining, vibrant, thriving Fellowship that's my ongoing choice as well as my joy.

In faith, Rev. Erika

Note: I'll be teaching our UU congregations in the Milwaukee region from August 15 through the 20th. During that time, please contact Board President Rosie Davis with any urgent needs.

August Gatherings with Rev. Erika

Rev. Erika invites you to spend time with her this month in two different settings. You're welcome to bring a friend! (Note that Erika will not offer social gatherings in September. If you've been meaning to join us, jump now.)

Pub Social

Thursday, August 8th, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Join Rev. Erika at the Newcastle Pub (she'll buy appetizers for the table) to chat about your summer, or to get to know someone you don't know. All are welcome, but to make it easy on the pub staff please RSVP by August 6th: erika@UUminister.com. (If you forget to RSVP, drop by anyway!)

All-Ages Show and Tell

Thursday, August 22nd, 7:15 to 8:30 p.m.

Have you read a book that you loved this summer? Did you create something (a painting, a sweater, a quilt) with your own two hands? Do you play an instrument? People of all ages are invited to join Rev. Erika at Skidompha (exact room TBA) for this sharing of something important to you, or something that helps us get to know you in a new way. (There will be snacks!)

Message from the President



Greeting friends,

How is it August already? July has flown by. It has been a fun and busy time for me with my brother, Jon and his partner, Leanne, visiting from the UK. I feel so blessed for family time. A time to reconnect with each other, a time to strengthen relationships and a time to love joyfully.

I am VERY excited for our fellowship's annual picnic on August 25th at the Robins' house (please see information in this newsletter). It will be a great time to connect with each, share a pot luck meal with each other and simply have a fun time. Your Board and Rev. Erika will be setting off the Stewardship season at the picnic and it will be an event that you don't want to miss! I do hope to see you there.

Thank you so much to Chris & Carol, for opening their beautiful space to us.

*In faith,
Rosie*

Hospitality Schedule

August 4 - Red Pod - Rosie, Bob & Deb Lomas

August 11 - Blue Pod - Tiffany, Joelle & Kay

August 18 - Purple Pod: Jennifer & Dick, Robin, Bob & Joan

August 25 - Indigo Pod - Lindy, Rob & Molly

Sept. 1 - Green Pod - Kate, Phyllis, Deb Arter, Tim & Karen

Reverend Paul Langston-Daley

Rev. Paul Langston-Daley has served as settled, interim and consulting minister in congregations of all sizes. He brings his personal experience as a transgender man to this work along with an extensive background in organizing, social justice, and guiding congregations through conflict.

He holds an M. Div. from Andover-Newton Theological School and a Masters Degree in Restorative Practices and Youth Counseling from the International Institute for Restorative Practices. Rev. Paul serves Bell Street Chapel (UU) in Providence RI half-time and lives in New Bedford, MA with his wife, and their dog Bayla.



RE stories for August

Carney McRae Doucette,
Director of
Religious Exploration

Dr. Seuss UU Style

- August 4 I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today
- August 11 McElligot's Pool
- August 18 The King's Stilts
- August 25 The Lorax
- September 1 Oh the Thinks You Can Think!

Summer Picnic

Our summer picnic was postponed because of extreme heat and threat of thunder showers. So, the children enjoyed ice cream sandwiches while watching the video, Horton Hears a Who, as a treat for that Sunday. We won't reschedule the picnic in August because there is a congregational picnic on August 25. We will join the entire congregation for that event! The Religious Exploration Committee has a goal to create some family-friendly RE opportunities beyond Sunday morning over the coming year. Stay tuned for more in future newsletters.

MUUF Immigrant Justice Initiative

The local Lincoln County Community ecumeniical group that met for the first time in June has been busy for the past two months. The Fellowship has had good attendance at the the Community meetings and has been participating in events sported by that group. Good attendance on July 14th at the John Schindler & Friends concert in Boothbay Harbor raised approximately \$6000 for ILAP (Maine's Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project). In addition to that fund-raising, the Fellowship's Share the Plate donations for July also went to ILAP. The community group has been collecting clothing, toiletries, and suitcases/duffle bags during July for distribution to the recent Asylum Seekers. MUUF has had a great response and the items will be packed up along with contributions from local churches on Thursday afternoon, August 1st, for storage in Portland and distribution later in the fall. The next meeting of the Community Group is also Thursday, August 1st. Sandy Barth will keep the Fellowship updated on further activities of that group.

Additional Greeters Needed

Our available Greeter List has been depleted this summer and we need more Greeters. It's a great way to meet newcomers to the Fellowship and to put names with faces. It's also a vital role in our Fellowship's mission to be a Welcoming Congregation. There are a lot of visitors to Lincoln County in the summer, and we need to live up to our reputation of being hospitable. If interested in helping to Greet on Sunday mornings, contact Sandy Barth at 563-5565 or by email at sbarth1942@gmail.com. The expectation is to greet about once every six weeks from 10 - 10:30 am. A sign-up sheet is circulated in advance.

A Note From Your Treasurer:

In the midst of our country's struggle with the issue of immigration, and in response to the need of support for the recent influx of asylum seekers in Portland, Maine, our Board of Trustees chose Maine's **Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project (ILAP)** as the recipient of our **July Share the Plate** collection. I'm proud to say that our Midcoast UU Fellowship donated the significant sum of \$352 to this important organization!

ILAP started out in 1993 as a volunteer lawyer project providing assistance to about two dozen asylum seekers in Maine each year. Since then, they've grown as new immigrant communities have come to Maine and have moved to new areas of the state, and as our immigration laws and policies have become more complex and more difficult to navigate without an attorney. ILAP now has established a presence in Portland, Lewiston, and Milbridge. Increased use of technology, volunteers, and education and outreach help ILAP reach more immigrants throughout the state. Each year, ILAP attorneys and legal staff and more than 250 volunteers provide legal assistance to over 3,000 clients, and conduct education and outreach on immigration law issues for about 1,700 people.

ILAP states that, with our financial support, "our immigrant neighbors are able to achieve safety and stability for themselves and their families, access educational and employment opportunities, build networks of support, and become powerful advocates for social justice in their communities." Thanks to all who donated!

from Bob Whitmire
Worship Associate

The wait is over! Your Worship Team knows that you have teetered on the edge of your chairs, breathed past bated breath, jiggled legs, tapped tabletops, wondering, wondering: *When will we learn the Themes for the 2019-2020 worship calendar?* Well, wait no longer. Bate no more breath. Cease the jiggling. After much effort producing many flip-chart pages of nearly illegible scribbles, (trumpet fanfare please!) *your minister and worship associates present:*

September — Generosity
October — Covenant
November — Thanks & Praise
December — Awe
January — The Unexpected
*February — Forgiveness
*March — Sabbath
*April — Resilience
May — Thresholds
June — Liberation
July — Sacred Texts

*Rev. Erika on sabbatical

In July, Rev. Erika invited you to hike with her. Here's a photo of one of our hikes, at LaVerna preserve. We heard woodthrushes, saw osprey parents guarding their nest, and stacked stones at low tide.



Please join us for our **Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship's Annual Picnic**.

Date: Sunday 25th August 2019

Time: 12:30 P.M. (please note that there will not be coffee and refreshments after fellowship this day).

Place: The Robins' Residence - (come no earlier than 12 noon)

Your hosts:

Carol & Chris Robins,
228 Heath Road in Whitefield (only a 25-minute drive from Damariscotta).

What to bring:

- Potluck item with a food label. (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, whiffle ball, Frisbee.



Action: Please RSVP to Rosie by Sunday, August 18, so we can plan more effectively. You can email me at: rosiesdavis@gmail.com