

# UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF HAVERHILL

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December 1, 2012

## THE COMMUNICATOR

### From the Minister

*Rev. Frank Clarkson is generally in the church office on Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays. Friday is his sermon writing day and Monday is his day off. You can reach him by phone at 978-372-5173 or by e-mail at [frank@uuhaverhill.org](mailto:frank@uuhaverhill.org).*

The darkening days of December bring the holy days of Hanukkah, Christmas and the Winter Solstice, all celebrations of light at the darkest time of year. Advent is the season that precedes Christmas, and is a time of preparation and contemplation. I always love its call to be still and expectant at a time when the wider culture is in a full-blown frenzy of shopping and celebrating. We offer Vespers, a quiet half-hour of worship in our candlelit sanctuary, on the four Wednesdays of Advent--November 28 and December 5, 12 and 19, at 6 PM. A simple meal follows in the Murray Room. If you're looking for a time of quiet and beauty in the middle of the week, please join us.

If you have been thinking about joining the church, I hope you'll talk to me. We will welcome new members to the congregation in a brief ceremony at the start of worship on December 16. Whether you've been part of UUCH for a while, or have only recently been joining us for worship, if you are thinking about making the commitment and joining the church, I'd love to have that conversation with you. So let me know!

The church staff has ongoing conversations about how we can improve the ways we communicate within the UUCH community. There is a lot of information to share, and we are exploring the best ways to do that. We currently use a variety of methods, from bulletin boards and signup sheets to the church website, weekly e-news and this newsletter, the *Communicator*. It appears that fewer and fewer people read the monthly *Communicator*, which takes a considerable amount of staff time and effort to produce, so the Board of Trustees has decided to do an experiment. For the first three months of 2013, we won't publish a monthly newsletter. We'll rely on existing methods of communicating, especially the e-news, and we'll see how this works. Please let us know if you miss the *Communicator*, or if you don't. We'd like to hear about what you think works best. During this time, we'll also explore other ways we might share information with you in timely and effective ways. If you have ideas about what we might try, or ways to improve what we're currently doing, please share them with me or office administrator Lisa Compton.

May these December days bring peace to our hearts, and to our homes; to the wider community and to our world. Thank you for being part of this lovely and loving congregation.

Yours in faith,  
Frank

## **Greetings from Religious Education**

I hope that this writing finds you well and warm and looking forward to the winter holidays. I hope that you will find many opportunities to enjoy December days and evenings at UUCH. Our children will learn about the ways that people celebrate Christmas and Hanukkah and the winter Solstice. They will learn to make fleece hats that will warm the bodies and hearts of friends in the city. Our Junior Youth will study Christianity and worship with our neighbors at Calvary Baptist Church. On Wednesday evenings UUCH will host Vespers at 6pm, a quiet interlude and opportunity to experience our candle lit sanctuary as daylight fades. Our church family will celebrate Christmas with our annual Living Nativity Sunday Service and will gather on Christmas Eve for a traditional service of "Lessons and Carols." Ours is a church rich with tradition and ongoing opportunities for service and learning.

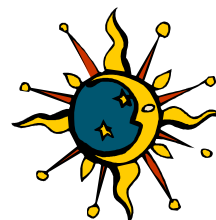
As this calendar year comes to a close, our Senior Youth are completing their Coming of Age program: a milestone that marks the completion of their time in youth Religious Education classes at UUCH. It is another time-honored tradition at UUCH that our Senior Youth lead worship on "Coming of Age Sunday" with Reverend Frank. All church members and friends are warmly invited to attend this meaningful and memorable service on Sunday January 13, 2013.

So that all volunteers, parents and family members may attend worship, UUCH will offer childcare during the C.O.A. worship service. To do so safely and efficiently we are asking families to RSVP for childcare in advance. If you wish to take advantage of this offer, kindly let me know no later than December 15 and we will be able to include your children in our plan. We hope that all of our parents are able to attend this service to hear the hopes, beliefs and aspirations of our young people as they articulate what it is that they find sacred and inspiring in this world.

At this time of year, we are often asked to count our many blessings. Please join me in a prayer of gratitude for our spirited and dedicated volunteers. They make our Religious Education program fun, safe and inspiring all year! These tireless souls care for our infants and toddlers, they retell Bible stories to our children and wonder about ancient peoples, they study different religions and they walk alongside young people as they search for meaning. They sleep on church floors, travel to workshops and trainings, plan for hours, play, color, cook, clean, shop, sew, Skype— they contribute countless hours of time and imagination, often spending their own money and using their own resources to make projects and activities possible. On behalf of our children and youth, thank you to all of you and may you be well, happy and peaceful this holiday season, and always.

Warm holiday wishes to all!

Sally Liebermann, Director of Religious Education



## **Many Thanks from Religious Education!**

Thanks to Abbe Wertz for donating a copy of *The Child in our Hearts* to our RE library. Parents and loved ones are invited to borrow this lovely book written by a local Dad who shares the story of his family and the adoption of their children.

Thank you to Erika Lowrey, Chris Shramko and Barb Scott for coordinating the Santa Parade concession stand with our youth. Thanks to Abby Wasserman, Zachary Monaco, Aidan Wertz, Connor Wertz, Jess Liebermann, Jaden Scott-Ryan and friends for assisting with set up and sales! And thanks to all who donated baked goods for sale at the stand~our youth group earned \$140 to fund RE events (we now can buy new T-shirts for our 30 Hour Famine event!!)

Thank you to the Colton-Robertsons, The Smyth-Wertzes, The Liebermanns, The Zaleskis, The Tashjians and the Scott-Ryan families for another successful unloading of the Betsy Conte Food Drive! After the Santa Parade, thousands of pounds of food were unloaded, sorted and distributed to nine city agencies that serve those at risk of hunger. This coordinated effort included Moms, Dads, children, aunts, friends and neighbors who worked together in the fading light and dropping temperatures to sort and pack the donations collected along the parade route.

Thank you to Abby Wasserman and Zachary Monaco for assisting in R.E. class on Thanksgiving Sunday! Thank you to all!!

## **Office Outreach ([office@uuhaverhill.org](mailto:office@uuhaverhill.org))**

Please bear with us as we begin a study of the security needs of this funny old building that is used in so many different ways by many groups, both from within our UUCH congregation and the greater Haverhill community. It has become clear that the current system of handing out keys and alarm codes is not resulting in as safe an environment as we should be providing. A theft has occurred, alarms have been set off at times when no one should have been in the building, doors get left unlocked, and the alarm is sometimes left unset. I have quite a bit of security training from my days as a museum director, and I know that the best approach is a multi-pronged one. Depending on the situation, components can include locks, alarms, tracking systems, personal vigilance, signage, preservation of sensitive information (for example, not lending a key or telling an alarm code), but especially training for all who have access to the building. For example, certain internal doors need to remain locked at all times— do you know which ones they are? Do you understand the two components of our alarm system? Do you know that the back door (our main access route) has to be pulled tightly shut manually in order to lock properly? There are many other quirks to this building about which we need to better educate those who have access to it. We welcome suggestions as we move forward with this study!

Lisa Compton  
Office Administrator



## **Fair Trade Holiday Gifts for Sale**

Fair Trade gift items from Central and South America will be available for sale during coffee hour on the four Sundays before Christmas. Plan to get some holiday shopping done, while supporting women in the Colores del Pueblo collective to earn a living wage.

## **Boston Gay Men's Chorus Tickets on Sale Now in Time for Holiday Gifts!**

We have committed to a concert at UUCH on Saturday, March 2, 2012 at 8 pm (doors open at 7:15). The BGMC Committee begins selling advance tickets today, and the actual tickets will be printed by December 15, in time for gift-giving. The cost of a ticket is \$30.00. We have a limited number of tickets because of building codes, but we hope to "fill the hall!" This is a fundraiser for our church, as well a wonderful outreach to the musical, religious and GLBTQ communities. The concert will be advertised through the media widely, so get your tickets early! This is a great opportunity to hear some great music sung by a top choral group— so spread the word!

For tickets or more information, please do not call the church office, but rather contact any member of the BGMC Committee:

Diane: [thirdstep2@hotmail.com](mailto:thirdstep2@hotmail.com)

Sandra: [sfdv@msn.com](mailto:sfdv@msn.com)

Megan: [msheama@verizon.net](mailto:msheama@verizon.net)

Pat: [patrick.bowe@me.com](mailto:patrick.bowe@me.com)

Tom: [tomellis.lc@gmail.com](mailto:tomellis.lc@gmail.com)

## **Social Justice Committee Film Showing January 11, 2013 at 7 pm** **The Price of Inequality**

The Social Justice Committee, The UUCH Book Group, and Adult Spiritual Exploration will host a documentary film and discussion of Joseph E. Stiglitz's new book, *The Price of Inequality*. The Daily KOS writes that this work "is the single most comprehensive counter-argument to both Democratic neoliberalism and Republican laissez-faire theories. While credible economists running the gamut from center right to center left describe our bleak present as the result of seemingly unstoppable developments — globalization and automation, a self-replicating establishment built on "meritocratic" competition, the debt-driven collapse of 2008 — Stiglitz stands apart in his defiant rejection of such notions of inevitability. He seeks to shift the terms of the debate.

It is not uncontrollable technological and social change that has produced a two-tier society, Stiglitz argues, but the exercise of political power by moneyed interests over legislative and regulatory processes. "While there may be underlying economic forces at play," he writes, "politics have shaped the market, and shaped it in ways that advantage the top at the expense of the rest." But politics, he insists, "is subject to change..."

## **Knitting from the Heart**

Knitting from the Heart will continue to meet in the Ladies Parlor on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month (except Christmas Day) from 6:30-8:00pm. All levels of knitters and crotchetters are welcomed to join in. There is always someone available to help. The group has an "Open-Group" format. This means, there will always be those of us that attend regularly and others that may "stop in"... all are welcomed! We are knitting for charitable causes. If you would like to knit at home and donate 8" square blocks for inclusion in afghans for orphans please feel free to do so and contact Yolanda at [soulfulknitting@yahoo.com](mailto:soulfulknitting@yahoo.com). The goal of the group is to get together and knit in community and promote the work that we do to support others.



## **Life Line Screening Coming to UUCH January 7, 2013**

Protect your health by finding out your risk of having a stroke by participating in the Life Line Screening that will be held at UUCH on Monday, January 7, 2013. Through ultrasound, the carotid arteries can be evaluated for the build up of plaque, which is the leading cause of stroke. There are a variety of other screening tests available as well, including heart rhythm, abdominal aortic aneurism, peripheral arterial disease and osteoporosis risk assessment. There are separate prices for each test (most are \$60; the osteoporosis assessment is only \$35), and combination packages which provide a discount are also available (four tests for \$139; five tests for \$149).

Register soon, as the greater Haverhill community will be notified of this opportunity in a few weeks, and spaces are limited. By registering either at the special number 1-800-324-9458, or by faxing in a pink registration form to 1-866-628-4857, not only will church members (and members of their families) receive a \$10 discount off their screening(s), but the church will also receive a \$10 donation from Life Line Screening for each person tested who signs up through the special phone/fax numbers. The pink registration forms, which contain further information, are available in the Murray Room, or can be mailed to you if you request one from the office. In a few weeks, you will find one inserted in your Sunday Order of Service as a reminder.

On a personal note from your Parish Administrator, I have participated in a Life Line Screening before (and administered it at the church where I was Office Manager). I found it to be a worthwhile experience, as did other parishioners. These tests are not normally part of routine physicals, as insurance typically does not cover them. The fees Life Line Screening are charging are below market value, and UUCH gets a \$10 per person donation on top of their fee for the use of the facilities. So, please consider a gift to yourself, and support Life Line Screening in their gift to the church.

For more information, visit [www.lifelinescreening.com](http://www.lifelinescreening.com). And please remember: do not register through their website, but rather at the special phone/fax numbers above. That is the only way you will receive your \$10 discount, and UUCH will receive our \$10 donation.

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Church of Haverhill**

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**Office Administrator** Lisa Compton  
office@uuhaverhill.org

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**Web Site:** [www.uuhaverhill.org](http://www.uuhaverhill.org)

*Happy Holidays  
from*

*The Universalist Unitarian Church of Haverhill!*

*Join us at our Annual Carol Sing and Potluck Supper  
Saturday, December 15 at 6:00 pm*