



The Communicator

the monthly newsletter of the

UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF HAVERHILL

What's Happening This Month, March, 2014

UUCH is a faith community transforming lives and the world.

UU 102 Film Series March 14 at 7 pm

This adult education series explores world faiths. The film postponed due to weather, "From Jesus to Christ," will be shown, followed by discussion.

New Moon Coffeehouse March 15 at 8 pm

Folk singer/songwriter Richard Shindell is featured. Refreshments are served at intermission. Tickets available at the door. **The February 15 program featuring Chelsea Berry**, which was postponed due to weather, is rescheduled for March 29 at 8 pm.

Lenten Vespers Begins March 5 at 6 pm

Every Wednesday evening from Ash Wednesday until Easter, please join us for this beautiful, quiet, candlelit service, which includes music, readings and mediation. A simple soup supper follows.

Brown Bag Lunch with the Ministerial Intern every Thursday at Noon. Come join Julie in the Minister's Study for an hour of conversation and fellowship. No reservations needed!

Annual Service Auction Saturday, March 8, 6 pm.

Come join us for an evening of fun, laughter, good food, good fellowship, and fundraising. There will be many wonderful items and services to bid on, and a good time is to be had by all!

Social Justice Committee Movie Presentation

The new movie "The Next American Revolution" by Gar Alperovitz will be shown Friday, March 28 at 6 pm. All are welcome. Discussion will follow.

The Center for Development of Central America Coffee Hour Presentation March 23

We welcome Sarah Junkin Woodard (mother of Jessica!) again to bring us up to date on the work of the CDCA, which our own Nicaragua trip will further support in 2015.

Meet the Organ Demonstration March 9 at 12 pm

Following worship and coffee hour, join Claudia Keyian (our Music Director) and Lisa Compton (our Office Administrator and former organbuilder) in the organ loft for an insider's peek into the organ! We will see how it works and blow some pipes. Everyone ages 8 and up are welcome. This is rescheduled from February, when heating issues precluded presenting the program. Space is limited; sign-up sheet is in the Murray Room.

Second Sunday Donation on March 9

This month, our collection will go to the Portland Street Playground Renovation Project, sponsored by Team Haverhill (see article below).

April Communicator deadline March 23 by 9 am

Articles (limited to 350 words) are welcome for submission from groups, committees, task forces, and individuals. Testimonials are also welcome. Articles should be of some spiritual or intellectual depth, rather than coming event announcements. Reports from groups on their activities are also welcome.

Concert by the Fonda (cello)-Kaaaj (classical guitar) Duo, March 16 at 3 pm

All are welcome to hear this talented duo from the Netherlands in a concert of music of Schubert, Bach, Dowland, and others. Tickets (\$15 adult, \$10 student) available at the door. A reception will follow in the Murray Room.

League of Women Voters Celebrates Women's History Month at UUCH on March 11 at 7 pm

This free program of music will look at influential women composers from the 1100s to the 1940s. Performing piano and voice solos/duets will be local musicians Alice Donovan and Sally Heiter. Refreshments will follow. Contact: Valerie Osborne, 978 374-6253.

From Our Stewardship Chair

by Megan Shea

“Roots hold us close, Wings set us free”

UUCH has deep roots in our community, nurtured for over 100 years by a caring and generous congregation which continues to evolve and grow today. We have given wing to the hopes and dreams of many with the support of our faith community. We are most proud when Coming of Age youth find the confidence and voice to express their passion and convictions. All that we do certainly gives us assurance that we are “A faith community transforming lives and the world.”

The Annual Stewardship Campaign is a key element in sustaining UUCH. We are reminded often of the trinity of support (Time, Talent and Treasure) that gives wing to our dreams and nurtures the roots that keep us true to our mission. All three are important and valued, but the treasure portion sometimes gets lost in translation. Money discussions are difficult, but in order for your time and talent to make a difference, financial resources are essential.

The Finance Committee offered an overview of the budget in February. The 2015 budget is based on the realities we are facing – a historic building that needs attention, a growing congregation needing support and the end of the cell tower fund that supported the church mortgage payments. The budget has a modest 2% increase projected for 2014-2015, but the Stewardship goal is \$155,000, due primarily to the shifting of financial burdens to our collective financial generosity – the Annual Stewardship Campaign.

Board members are making their pledges right now. Committee members will be asked to make their pledge during upcoming meetings. We hope to encourage guests/friends to pledge as well. We need support from everyone to make our goal.

Our House Gatherings have broadened the conversation beyond dollars and cents, and given voice to our UUCH experience. House Gatherings are planned for the first two weekends in April. Expect a personal invitation in March and please join in the conversation and our collective generosity. Our UU Church of Haverhill has a *Spirit of Life* that is truly amazing ...

Intern Insights

by Julie Lombard

Yes, even an avid lover of snow like me can reach a breaking point. Has this winter inspired you to dream of blooming flowers? I saw some forced forsythia the other day and knew spring is not far off now. The sounds made by the pre-mature March winds beginning to blow their full force confirm this; as March winds enter like a lion and leave like a lamb, it makes me aware that change is on the horizon. Soon we'll be turning our gardens and putting the snow shovels away. Yet before that happens, we must go through a period of great change.

Lent is the season to prepare us for change like Easter, much as Advent is the season that prepares us for Christmas. This change is not a quick fix-- it's an adaptive change. One we will be glad we didn't rush through by the time it's over. We may desire this journey's end, but we must admit that we're not there yet. I urge you to fight the frustration of our current mid-winter status by taking stock of the many blessings around us; the days are longer and the sun rays are stronger. Let this daylight be the music that we dance to as we wait for winter's end. This reminds me of the hymn by Rev. Ric Masten (#311) *Let It Be a Dance*. “Let it be a dance we do; everybody turn and spin, let your body learn to bend, let it be a dance. Feel the rhythm, fill the need, to reap the harvest, plant the seed, let it be a dance.”

What if we could take the things we like least and turn them into activities we might enjoy? Might we find joy this winter's end, might we warmly welcome another stewardship season, and might we discover the sweetness of the final half of a sabbatical? Yes, this spinning will lift us and renew our spirits. Consider yourself cordially invited to join me in this dance. We may look like a bunch of Whirling Dervishes as our skirts fly and our spirits rise.

News from the Welcoming Congregation Committee

Who: Leslea Newman, author of [Heather Has Two Mommies](#) and [October Mourning...](#)

What: will be speaking

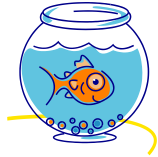
When Thursday, March 13 at 7 pm

Where: Methuen Public Library

From Our Board Chair

by Sarina Ryan

I have a confession to make- I have an attitude. I have an “attitude of gratitude!” William Arthur Ward said, “Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.” Ward’s quote prompted me to think about all the things at UUCH for which I am grateful.



I am grateful for the babies and children who are part of our growing congregation. Those little squeals and laughs and coos are priceless and enhance Sunday worship. Our youth constantly amaze me with their poise, energy, intellect, and passion to help out where and when they are needed. They understand that they are a vital part of this faith community.

All the people who serve on committees and organize our yearly fundraisers and events share their time and talents and, by example, show us that “service is our prayer.” They create the positive energy that benefits our congregation and reaches out to the greater community. Our members and friends do transform lives and the world. Let us not forget our cooks! They serve food to the needy, create the best potlucks, and at Coffee Hour, provide a veritable buffet of delights that accompany good conversation with good people.

Our staff, minister, ministerial intern, and governing board constantly give us their best. Each person supports and keeps this church running smoothly. My time at UUCH can fill me with joy, serve as a balm, or let me know I am not alone. I am so grateful to all of you.

Melody Beattie said, “Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for the future.” Was she writing about us? I think so. We honor our past by maintaining our beloved building and carrying on traditions. We work together and do whatever it takes to provide a rich and meaningful environment for everyone, and we are crafting a vision for the future that will serve generations to come. Oh, yes... I do have an attitude- an attitude of gratitude!

From Our Leap of Faith Team

by Jim Ryan

This past church year we were recognized by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) as an “aspiring congregation” and chosen to participate in their “Leap of Faith” initiative. Leap of Faith is a process where growing congregations enter into learning communities with larger congregations. Back in August a team from UUCH went to a weekend conference and connected with our mentors, All Souls Church of New London Connecticut. The two teams quickly developed a wonderful rapport and soon we traveled to each other’s congregations.

Working closely with our mentors, we have identified a number of key challenges that we need to address as part of our “leap.” To address these challenges here at UUCH, we have formed a Leap of Faith Home Team. We have been focusing on two main areas:

1. Strengthening Our Identity

Things we are working on include:

- Finding ways to celebrate our greatness and future
- Looking for new ways to promote what we stand for
- Telling our story to the community
- Strengthening our philanthropic culture

2. Improving How We Get Things Done

Things we are working on include:

- Enhancing how we communicate
- Holding people gracefully accountable
- Strengthening our internal systems
- Taking a strategic approach to budgeting and fund raising

We will be engaging more of you into this process, for this is a congregation-lead effort. If you have any questions or ideas about the Leap of Faith initiative, or would like to be more directly involved, please contact me at (Jim Ryan) jryan2445@gmail.com



A Testimonial: Stewardship

by a Friend of UUCH

When I was five years old, the milestone of entering first grade was further marked by my parents' determination that I was old enough to receive an allowance. A raise was due each birthday, and I can remember an October when my birthday pleasure was heightened by the arrival of the princely sum of one quarter. I kept four jelly jars in my top dresser drawer, into which I dutifully divided my nickels and pennies. One pot was for Spending (chewing gum), one for Savings (which mysteriously disappeared behind the bank window), one for Giving (birthday cards), and one for Church (I wasn't sure WHAT that was for). Upon reflection, I realize that 50% of my meagre income was budgeted for gifts or service to others.

I was taught early to be thankful for what I have, rather than long for what I lack. Sometimes, it is hard to feel grateful. But then I see the folks gathered at the Drop-In Center, or contemplate the staff and volunteers who selflessly provide all manner of services for these needy people. It is a good reminder that there are many less fortunate than I am.

I live on a fine, green earth, filled with furry, finned and feathered friends, rainbows and snowflakes, majestic mountains and sparkling seas. But I am a steward of this earthly home, and must share in its care. I have dear family, colleagues and friends who nurture me, and I in turn do my best to support them. I have the opportunity to live in Community—my neighborhood, my city, and the greater world. I have a responsibility to contribute to Community.

In first grade, I could afford to give away half of what I had. Life looms larger and more expensive now, and I can no longer do so. As UUCH's stewardship campaign moves forward during this most challenging of years, please carefully consider your ability to contribute financially to this loving, caring, welcoming faith community as it transforms lives and the world.



Second Sunday Collection News

by Abbe Wertz

Thank you! So far our Second Sunday donation program has supported low income heating assistance in Haverhill and the Anchor of Hope Diaper Bank. We are so happy to be putting our UU Principles into concrete actions and supporting the good works happening within our Community.

The Second Sunday donation for the month of March will go to the Portland Street Playground Renovation project sponsored by Team Haverhill. Team Haverhill is an independent, volunteer action group dedicated to making Haverhill a better place to live, learn, work and play. The Portland Street Playground, located between 4th and 5th Avenues (very near UUCH), has been identified by Team Haverhill and the City of Haverhill as a key area of concern. The renovation project will provide a safe, appealing place for the community to enjoy, and will include a new playground area for children and a basketball court. Team Haverhill is also working with members of the community to form a team of volunteers to keep the playground clean and safe. We are happy to do our part to encourage this kind of dedication and commitment to our community and we applaud Team Haverhill for taking on this project. To find out more about Team Haverhill go to <http://teamhaverhill.org>.

A reminder: if you are writing a check that you want to be accredited towards your yearly pledge, please remember to write "pledge" in the memo line. If you would like, you can add a donation to the Second Sunday collection by noting "donation" in the memo line and the specific amount you'd like to donate.

A Thank You!

from Stacey Sherman

Soup on Sunday was a very successful fund raising event! I was so pleased with the support for this event and hope to continue this new tradition in years to come. Thank you to all who purchased soup and huge thanks to the soup makers. This event would not have been successful without your wonderful soups and the time spent in their preparation. Soup on Sunday raised a little over \$700!

From Caring Ministries

Someone to Your Table: Easter and Passover are often celebrated with family and friends. Some members of our community are unable to join family and friends and so Caring Ministries asks you to consider inviting **Someone to Your Table** for these approaching holidays. If you can offer a seat at your table please contact Stacey Sherman at 978-373-1227.

What Happens Every Month

This is a list of recurring gatherings in our community. To make changes or add an event, or if you have a question, contact Lisa Compton at office@uuhaverhill.org.

Drumming Circle gathers first Sundays at 12:15 pm in the Meditation Chapel.

Choir Rehearsal

Rehearsals are Sundays at 9 am, and the choir sings periodically at Sunday Worship. All are welcome; ability to read music is a plus, but not required.

Ladies Circle meets second Saturdays at 1 pm. All women of the church are invited to join this group that serves the church and knows how to have fun! This month, the program is a silent movie accompanied by piano (and refreshments!).

UUCH Book Group meets second Sundays at 9 am. This year's book series continues with the next section of A House for Hope: The Promise of Progressive Religion for the Twenty-first Century, by UU's John A. Buehrens and Rebecca Ann Parker.

Lectio Divina meets fourth Sundays at 9:15 am in the Meditation Chapel. This ancient spiritual practice offers a contemplative way to engage with scripture.

MoonPool Coven gathers on first and third Sundays at 6 pm. Led by Rick Baillargeon and Marylou Johnson, teaching about and experience of pagan spirituality is offered.

Social Justice Committee meets third Sundays following coffee hour.

INC (Interfaith Network of Compassion)

Meets at UUCH on third Thursdays at 12 pm to network about issues surrounding hunger ministries in Haverhill. Representatives from many area food pantries and other agencies attend.

Interfaith Special Needs Worship, led by Rev. Wendy Von Zirpolo, is held in the Murray Room on second Mondays at 6 pm.

Mindful Meditation Practice is Mondays at 7 pm, led by Betsy Robertson.

Board of Trustees meets second Wednesdays at 7 pm. Meetings are always open to visitors; if there is an item that needs discussion, it must be placed on the agenda in advance. Contact: Board Chair Sarina Ryan.

Wednesday Night Singers meets first and third Wednesdays at 6:30 pm, and sings in worship once a month. This choir depends on a steady attendance commitment. Ability to read music is a plus.

Alcoholics Anonymous meets in our downstairs hall at 7 pm on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Merrimack Valley String Orchestra meets every Thursday at 5:45 pm while school is in session for rehearsal in the Murray Room. Two public concerts take place here every year. The orchestra is open to all string players.

Community Meals

First and third Saturdays, volunteers shop for, cook, serve and clean up after this free meal for the entire community. This rewarding outreach program serves 50-75 folks each week. We encourage family groups or other committees to work together to produce a meal! Contact: Kristie Colton (kenozagals@mac.com) or Abbe Wertz (abbewertz@yahoo.com)

Various other committees meet periodically throughout the year. Watch e-News and Sunday announcements for meeting times for: Building & Grounds/Gardens, Caring Ministries, Committee on Ministry, Finance, Green Sanctuary, Leap of Faith, Membership, Music, Parish Nurses, Permanent Funds, Sabbatical Team, Stewardship, Welcoming Congregation and Worship.

Church Leaders and Staff Contact Information

Board of Trustees Chair: Sarina Ryan smrtilton@yahoo.com
Board of Trustees Vice Chair: Nancy Rusk namaste_1953@yahoo.com
Rev. Frank Clarkson: frank@uuhaverhill.org
Ministerial Intern: Julie Lombard: lombardpottery@comcast.net
Director of Religious Education: Sally Liebermann: dre@uuhaverhill.org
Music Director: Claudia Keyian: claudia@claudiamusic.com
Office Administrator: Lisa Compton: office@uuhaverhill.org

Or call us on the telephone: 978-372-5173

Website: www.uuhaverhill.org

To view the church calendar, please visit
www.uuhaverhill.org/events/calendar

Facebook folks: please visit our new church Facebook page at www.facebook.com/uuhaverhill, and “like” us so church news and pictures show up in your news feed!

And if you’re on Instagram, follow us there so you see photos of our congregational life:
<http://instagram.com/uuhaverhill>

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