



UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF HAVERHILL

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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.

We know that life is fleeting, but we don't always believe it. I sometimes assume that things will just continue on, as they have been. But that is almost never the case. Changes come, whether we are ready for them or not.

The change of seasons is a good reminder that the earth is forever spinning and tilting, that seasons come and go. Though we're just entering summer now, you know these warmer days won't last forever. The English poet Robert Herrick put it this way:

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

As a sometime gardener, I regularly see the transitory nature of life portrayed in plants, which come into bud and then flower, and then, before you know it, fade and go to seed. It makes me sad to think that a whole year will go by before I'll see those particular flowers again. But that's the way it is. And there's a gift in this too--a constant reminder to take in that beauty now, while it's here. It's obvious but true--the time to stop and smell the roses is when they are blooming.

The invitation, as always, is to be present to the here and now, to what is before us. It's one thing to savor a flower on a summer day. It's quite another to be present to a sad situation or to a difficult relationship. But what's the alternative? To numb ourselves and sleepwalk through life? No, the way to the abundant life is by being open and attentive to both our joys and our sorrows. The poet Mary Oliver puts it this way: "This is the first, the wildest and the wisest thing I know: that the soul exists and is built entirely out of attentiveness."

The good news is that you can build your capacity for attentiveness, the way exercise builds muscle. This summer, I invite you to practice this. Make a point of paying attention. Notice what is around you, and what is inside you. Consider keeping a journal, or drawing in a sketch book. Be mindful of your thoughts and feelings, and explore them with curiosity instead of judgment.

I am so grateful for all of you who are part of this church community. None of us can see all the connections that exist among us, but from what I do see, I know they are good and many, and a real blessing. The community is a living thing, and so is always changing--new people are coming in, and others are, in one way or another, taking their leave. When we are together, and when we are apart, may God bless us and keep us. May this summer invite you into attentiveness and delight. Be well, and take good care.

Yours in faith,
Frank

Why a Liberal Faith Compels Me to Action **A Testimonial by Nancy Rusk**

[Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of testimonials offered for publication by UUCH congregants. All are welcome to submit articles that answer in some way a "why" question.]

It's 5:30 AM Good Friday morning. I am doing my morning reflective reading which this month is our book group's choice of Kate Braestrup's *Beginning Faith*. Non coincidentally (I don't believe in coincidences) today's reading is her retelling of the centurion's experience of watching Jesus die on the cross. The centurion watches and is compelled to give voice to his recognition of Jesus as the son of God. While I am not a subscriber to a Trinitarian belief system, I do believe in Jesus as a prophet for the oppressed- a liberator. As indeed were Moses, Mohammed, Gandhi, King, Romero and others. Even Occupy Boston could be seen as a modern day prophetic and times-changing voice for liberation of the oppressed.

Our liberal faith allows us the freedom to question the authority of traditional beliefs and the trends of culture, unjust systems, and more. Our liberal faith allows the freedom to open up the lens and take in the whole picture. We see in technicolor those who are hidden from view, beliefs that place one in power over another, systems that do not work for the whole. But awareness is only part of the picture. Questioning authority without taking the next step of responsible action does not create lasting change. The freedom of our liberal faith compels us toward taking responsibility and for being today's prophetic voice calling out for the liberation of the oppressed and giving voice to the inequality of privilege. Our voice is not only a gift, it is the responsibility of being a member of a liberal religion. For me this recognition of freedom leading toward taking responsibility leads to meaning. Being a UU gives me significant meaning. Being a member of UUCH compels me to not only worship in house but also demonstrate my faith to the greater community, in my work, and in political activism, taking stands that ally me with the oppressed. I am grateful for UUCH, my church family, who provides me with loving sustenance, treasured friendships, healthy challenges, a place for contemplation and meditation, an outlet for my creative side, nourishment that compels me to new understanding, opportunities for growth, and support in political and service oriented work that strives toward releasing the bonds of oppression. I am grateful for this church community that supports me in my attempt to live consistently with my values.

Haverhill Farmers Market

We are reminded that the Haverhill Farmers Market has opened for the season, and will run on Saturdays through October 27 from 9:00 am—1:00 pm. It is located at 40 Bailey Blvd (next to the police station). There are over 25 vendors this season so it has never been easier to buy "seller made, seller grown" local products. Please take time visit the market and support your local farmer!! For more information visit their website at www.haverhillfarmersmarket.org.

Ferry Beach Sign-up and Scholarships

Last call for applications for scholarships for the Ferry Beach weekend October 19-21! Send a note or an email to Lisa in the office by July 18 if you wish to apply. Scholarship are offered of \$100 per adult (full fee is \$120, including lodging and four meals), and \$45 (full scholarship) per child. A generous member of UUCH is making this possible.

Office Outreach (office@uuhaverhill.org)

Thank you to all who have helped me by keeping to publication deadlines! Because there will be no issue of the Communicator in August, the next deadline will be August 25th, for the September issue. I know there will be a lot to include as we begin the new church year, so the sooner I receive material, the better.

We frequently receive requests to publish materials which may be of interest to our congregation, but are not directly related to our own church affairs. Social service agency information, events at other churches, fund-raisers for humanitarian causes, and camps/retreats are examples of this. Until we can develop a better system, these items can be found on the bulletin boards in the Murray Room, but due to space considerations, we cannot include them in our Order of Service, e-News or Communicator. So, watch the bulletin boards!

Summer office hours will be Tuesday through Thursday from 10:00—1:30, with some exceptions. Feel free to call first before you stop by. I would love company this summer! E-News will continue throughout the summer, and the deadline remains Thursday by 9:00 am.

For the fun of it, here is a bit of church trivia: where in the building do a lamb, a robin and two wild boars reside together (hint: it is not in a basket of toys in the nursery)?

Lisa Compton
Office Administrator

Worship Services, Summer 2012 at 9:30 AM

June 24	Led by Frank Clarkson, music by Emma Clarkson
July 1	Led by Suzanne Spaihts-Mohns
July 8	Led by Nancy Rusk, music by Claudia Keyian
July 15	Led by Pam Pearson, music by Claudia Keyian
July 22	Led by Cil Dullea, music by David Hudson
July 29	Led by Joanna Fortna, music by Claudia Keyian
August 5	Led by Sarina Ryan, music by Claudia Keyian
August 12	Led by Suzanne Spaihts-Mohns, music by Claudia Keyian
August 19	Led by Sally Liebermann
August 26	Led by Frank Clarkson
September 2	No Service—Labor Day
September 9	Services resume at 10:30 am

Be a Weed Whacker

Perform your own summer service – be a ‘Weed Whacker’! The front of the church always looks overgrown by Labor Day. The Building and Grounds Committee asks; “Are there some good sports who will weed for an hour during the summer months?” That way we’ll look spiffy for the new church year. All you have to do is choose a cool part of a day. You can even leave the weeds by the ramp on Ashland Street and we’ll cart them off. Just be sure to leave an email with Lisa or with Cil Dullea so that you are thanked properly.

Men's Spirituality Group

For about four months, a group of men from the community have been coming together to discuss their hopes and vision for creating a Men's Spirituality Group here at UUCH. To date, we have had incredible discussions and created a draft mission statement. It looks like this:

The intentions of the Men's Spirituality Group:

- Provide a supportive space for male UUCH members and friends to explore and express spirituality in their lives.
- To meet on a regular basis in a sacred space at the Church and be open to all male members and friends.
- To encourage each other to share experiences and insights as they relate to spirituality.
- To listen with compassion and be mindful of the words that are shared.
- To honor confidentiality for all participants. "What is shared here, stays here."
- To explore the meanings of the UU's Seven Principles and Six Sources and ways of integrating them into daily life.
- All participants are responsible for the well being of the group. Be open and honest where there is a need to improve and move forward.
- To discover and further explore spirituality for oneself.
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We plan to meet the first Wednesday of every month. Do refer to the Church Calendar for dates and times as they are subjected to change. Over the summer, please stop by— all are welcome. Contact Tom Ellis @ 978-372-2284 or email tomellis.lc@gmail.com.

Information about Our Website **www.uuhaverhill.org**

If anyone has not explored our UUCH website, please take a few minutes to see the wealth of resources available there. Upon opening the site, the home page easily directs one throughout the many pages. Upcoming events, a full calendar, upcoming sermon topics, texts of sermons past, links and information about the New Moon Coffeehouse, past Communicators, contact information, and links to wider UU and UUA resources can be found here!



Salsa Classes This Summer on July 19 and 26!

A series of two classes will be held— come to the Murray Room and learn to salsa, or perfect your skills! No partners necessary, but bring one if you like. July 19 and 26 at 7:00 PM. There is a reduced price for UUCH members of \$3.00 per class~ a modest fee for getting good exercise and enjoying some Latin rhythms! This course is being sponsored by the Columbian Cultural Committee of the Merrimack Valley, whose mission it is to educate area residents about the various cultural and ethnic groups that reside here. Megan Shea has kindly offered to oversee this program.

Covenant Committee Update

Recently the Covenant Committee held its first meeting, and is excited about their mission. They plan to explore ways to keep our Covenant alive, and further integrate it into the life of our UUCH community. It has already been added to our website (www.uuhaverhill.org/welcome/about_us). The members of this new committee are Bets Robertson, Megan Shea, Nancy Rusk and Tom Ellis. There will be meetings throughout the summer to plan for relevant activities for the fall. If anyone has questions or suggestions, please contact any committee member.

News from the Caring Ministries Team

The Caring Ministries Team exists to help coordinate care for people in this church community when they find themselves in need. We're grateful that this is a community where so many are willing to help one another. In May we distributed a survey, so that we can develop a network of people we can call on when someone needs a ride, companionship, or a meal. So far we've received about 25 responses to the survey. Thanks to everyone who took the time to fill one out! If you would like to let us know how you can help, copies of the survey are available on the table under the clock in the Murray Room. Please place completed surveys in the Caring Ministries mailbox outside the office, or mail them to the church in care of Caring Ministries.

Over the summer, if you find yourself in need of help, or if you learn of someone in our community who is, please let us know. Feel free to contact any of us directly. In a pastoral crisis or emergency, please call Rev. Frank, 978-372-5173, ext. 2. When he's away, you'll find information on Frank's voicemail about how to reach the minister who's on call. We wish you a safe and happy summer!

The Caring Ministries Team
Trudy Blyth, Cil Dullea, Carolyn Hart, Terry Koukias,
Delight Reese and Rev. Frank Clarkson

News from Religious Education

R.E. will be contacting families with registration information in July. Please be on the watch for email regarding Classroom & Volunteer Registrations. Please note that Sally is now using a new email address and will receive correspondence at dre@uuhaverhill.org. Sally is off for the summer but will check email and phone messages periodically. Please contact the office with any requests for immediate information.

THANKS!!!

July 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Sunday Worship 9:30 am Meditation Group 5:00 pm	2	3 Men's Spirituality Group 6:30 pm	4	5	6	7 Community Meals 2:30—5:30 pm
8 Sunday Worship 9:30 am Meditation Group 5:00 pm MoonPool Coven 6:00 pm	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Sunday Worship 9:30 am Meditation Group 5:00 pm	16	17	18	19 Salsa Class 7:00-8:15 pm	20	21 Community Meals 2:30—5:30 pm
22 Sunday Worship 9:30 am Meditation Group 5:00 pm MoonPool Coven 6:00 pm	23	24	25 Buildings & Grounds Comte 7:00 pm	26 Salsa Class 7:00-8:15 pm	27	28
29 Sunday Worship 9:30 am Meditation Group 5:00 pm	30	31				

August 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Men's Spirituality Group 6:30 pm	2 Private Organ Demonstration 2:00 pm	3	4 Community Meals 2:30—5:30 pm
5 Sunday Worship 9:30 am Meditation Group 5:00 pm MoonPool Coven 6:00 pm	6	7 Mindful Meditation Practice 7:00 pm	8 Board of Trustees 7:00-9:00 pm	9	10 Wedding Rehearsal 4:00 pm	11 Private Wedding 1:00 pm
12 Sunday Worship 9:30 am Meditation Group 5:00 pm	13	14 Mindful Meditation Practice 7:00 pm	15	16	17	18 Community Meals 2:30—5:30 pm
19 Sunday Worship 9:30 am Meditation Group 5:00 pm MoonPool Coven 6:00 pm	20	21 Mindful Meditation Practice 7:00 pm	22 Building & Grounds Comte 7:00 pm	23	24	25 Communicator Deadline
26 Sunday Worship 9:30 am Meditation Group 5:00 pm	27	28 Mindful Meditation Practice 7:00 pm	29	30	31	

**Universalist Unitarian
Church of Haverhill**

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(Summer hours: Tue, Wed, Thurs 10:00-1:30)

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If you no longer wish to receive the Communicator please check this box and return to 16 Ashland Street, Haverhill, MA 01830. Or email us at office@uuhaverhill.org. Thank you!

