



The Communicator

the monthly newsletter of the

UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF HAVERHILL

UUCH: a faith community transforming lives and the world

What's Happening This Month, February, 2015

The Green Sanctuary Committee's Seed Sale begins February 1. Spring must be just around the corner! See p. 3.

We will welcome Matt Meyer back on Sunday, February 1. He will lead the worship service with his popular singing and percussion program.

Mind*Body*Spiritual Wellness Support Group meets Fridays, February 6 and 20 at 7 pm in the Murray Room.

Choir Schedule: All who like to sing are welcome to join the choir. Rehearsals are approximately twice a month on Sunday mornings at 9:15, and the choir sings at least once a month. Rehearsals this month are on February 8 and 15, in the organ loft. Our visiting organist, Fred MacArthur will be directing.

Parish Council will meet Tuesday, February 10 from 7-9 pm. All committee, event and task force chairs should plan to attend, or send a representative.

Ladies Circle Meets on February 14 at 1 pm. for a program about chocolate, provided by the NECC Speaker Series. See p. 5.

Our "Soup on Sundays" Fundraiser continues through February. Following coffee hour, purchase your soup to go. There will be three varieties available each week, including vegetarian and gluten-free.

Myths, Movies and Minestrone ("M3") will present the third film in this PBS series on Sunday, February 8 at 12:15. This installment is called *The First Storytellers*, and it deals with memories and rituals. A light lunch will be served. See p. 4.

March Communicator Deadline is February 15 by 9 am. Submissions from committees, groups or individuals are welcome (350 word limit—less if you include a graphic). Articles should be of some spiritual or intellectual depth, and should be sent as Word attachments, with no formatting or colors.

The Welcoming Congregation Committee will present a film on Sunday, February 15 after coffee hour. Called "No Dumb Questions," this 24 minute film deals with transgenderism. Discussion will follow, as we support the UUA's 'Standing on the Side of Love' efforts. See p. 5.

Our Lenten Vespers series begins Wednesday, February 18 (Ash Wednesday) at 6 pm, and runs through April 1. This quiet, candle lit, meditative service lasts half an hour and is followed by a light supper. All are welcome.

Our Young People will once again 'Stand on the Side of Love' by holding their popular 30-Hour Fast from Noon on Friday, February 27 to 6 pm on Saturday, February 28. After experiencing the effect of hunger for a day, their fast is broken with a festive meal. Please note that if anyone needs to enter the premises during those hours, they should contact Sally Liebermann.



Things Seen and Unseen

by Rev. Frank Clarkson

Have you noticed it yet? Sometimes I don't until mid-February, but this year, I've seen it already. I'm talking about the amount of daylight, now increasing by about a minute each day. The gradually increasing light reminds me that things are happening, that things are changing, even when I don't see it. It may seem that winter in New England last forever, but you know that's not true—it will be gone sooner than we expect.

These mid-winter days and nights are particularly good for certain things— for eating warm soup and for baking bread; for finding a cozy spot in which to read, write or reflect; for gathering with others in a small group. Though some of us struggle with the dark and cold, though many of us complain sometimes about the weather, aren't you glad you live in a place with seasons?

I hope you think of our church as a warm and welcoming place, in these months and all the year 'round. Many Sundays this winter we are offering some kind of program after worship and coffee hour, sometimes with a light lunch. It's a lovely way to make connections and feed your mind and soul. You'll find information about these offerings on our church calendar (uuhaberhill.org/events/calendar) in the e-News and *Communicator*. And Vespers, a quiet half-hour service followed by a light supper, starts again on Wednesday, February 18 and continues through April 1.

"To everything there is a season," the book of Ecclesiastes reminds us. What is, for you, the invitation of this season? Is it time to take up a new spiritual practice? Is it time to catch up on sleep or take better care of your body? Is it to come to church more often, or make a new friend, or find a new way to serve? If you'd like to reflect on these things with another person, I hope you'll reach out to me. That's why I'm here!



Intern Insights

by Julie Lombard

Standing on the Side of Love is an interfaith public advocacy campaign of which I have been a fan for years. It seeks to harness love's power to stop oppression. It's sponsored by the UUA. "*Standing on the side of love*," surfaced as a rallying cry for people of faith in Massachusetts during their early efforts for fully inclusive marriage. The message was fully embraced as a response to the 2008 shooting at the UU church in Knoxville and the campaign has been growing ever since.

Folks involved with this campaign believe that no one should be dehumanized and fall victim to exclusion, oppression or violence. It works to bring a voice to public debates such as immigrant justice and LBGTQ equality. The campaign elevates religious influence on public attitudes and policy through community activism, networking and outreach. All are welcome to join.

The website links you to specific ways you can support important issues at hand. With a click of your mouse you can support, take action, spread the word, and share a story: <http://standingonthesideoflove.org>

Some of you already know of my connection to Refugee Resettlement in Concord, NH. The refugee family I helped resettle opened my eyes to the many challenges immigrants face. Recently I told a story of a woman who came off the airplane in January from Africa wearing flip-flops. What I didn't tell you is her family would later become the target of hate crimes in Concord. As a result, a peace rally formed in front of her family's home where the governor and police chief spoke in support of the family to the interfaith crowd. It's unthinkable that someone used a Sharpie marker to write a hate-filled message under her bedroom window calling her "third world scum."

Being a part of that peace rally and talking with her afterwards convinced me that love is the only thing that will overcome the hate in our world. I hope in a month where love seems to be the prevailing theme, you feel called to stand beside me on the side of love.

Caring Ministries Update

Thank You!

There have been so many individuals who have pitched in with support and caring. We have provided many rides both for medical and spiritual needs. Many folks in our wider circle of care stepped up for both child and pet care, providing meals and errands. We were able to visit several of our shut-ins and checked in with several folks whom we haven't seen recently. Although we are trying to keep track, we know we have missed many random act of kindness. Please consider this a heartfelt thank you to all—you know who you are.

The anonymous gift cards which have been received in our mailbox are much appreciated. These are used at Frank's discretion when a need arises for a member of our community. We are glad to have these donations—please consider donating any unwanted cards you may have received over the holidays. Someone can use them.

We so appreciate the boxes of tissues which have shown up in the pews at church. Hopefully they will help keep us healthy. A special thanks to Bonnie Floyd who provided the small trash bins to deposit the used tissues in and to all who have been so thoughtful in disposing of them.

Emergency Contact Information

You will have received a form in a recent Order of Service to use to share Emergency Contact information. Please fill it out and return, either to our mailbox outside of Lisa's office or in the Caring Ministry box provided on the round table in the Murray Room. There are additional copies of the form available there. This information will be accessed by the church staff or the Caring Ministries Committee only in the event of an emergency. Please let the person you designate know that the church has your permission for us to contact him or her.

Reminder

The pink pew cards are available if you need some help (it really is ok to ask) or if you are willing to be a part of our Wider Circle of Care.



Green Sanctuary Committee News

by Emily Hitchcock

The Green Sanctuary Committee is having its second annual Seed Sale Fundraiser! We have created beautiful decorations for the seed packets with the youth! Sales will begin February 1 after the service. We have added many new types of seeds this year. We will sell herbs, flowers, and vegetables, including two varieties of tomatoes! If anyone would like to participate with the seed sale project, the Green Sanctuary Committee is always looking to welcome new members. Our next official meeting is on January 11 right after the service. Please contact Tad Hitchcock at tadhitchcock55@gmail.com with any questions or suggestions.



Myths, Movies and Minestrone

by Diane Brokvist

The Third Episode in this series, *The First Storytellers*, will be screened on Sunday, February 8 at 12:15 pm. At their deepest level, myths teach us how to live-with ourselves, with others, and with the mystery at the heart of life. What do our souls owe to the ancient myths and how do the myths help us to see the beauties of life? Join us on this wonderful adventure and find the answers and ask the questions that will resonate from watching this series. Lunch will be available before the start of the episode.



Save the Date! Our Church Auction is Coming! Saturday, March 7 at 6 pm!

Our church auction is an amusing fundraiser, a delicious potluck meal, and a great way to connect with other people! So please mark your calendar for Saturday, March 7 at 6 pm, and invite your friends. Start thinking about items you could donate. Do you have a special talent to share— teaching, baking, entertaining, crafting, handiness, etc.? Do you have any hand-made or valued items to offer for bid? Coming soon... auction information in the Murray Room.



Save the Date! Green Sanctuary Committee Film

The Green Sanctuary Committee will present an environmental film called “Chasing Ice” after coffee hour (12:15 pm) on Sunday, March 8. Gourmet hot chocolate will be served.



Deadline for Committee Budget Requests

The Board of Trustees and the Finance Committee are busy working on a budget for the upcoming year. Hopefully you have gotten your budget requests in by the January 30 deadline, but if not, please fill out a Budget Request Form (available in the office or via email) and email it to Paul Floyd pfloyd7308@gmail.com during the first week of February.

Save the Date! Nicaraguan Dinner Saturday, March 1

The Nicaragua Team is busy preparing for our April trip which is fast approaching! We invite you to a Nicaraguan themed lunch after church on March 1. You can meet the team of travelers, learn more about the CDCA (Centro de Desarrollo Americano) and support the team by buying lunch. Thanks for your support and we hope to see you there!

“No Dumb Questions” Film

The Welcoming Congregation Committee will sponsor this 24-minute, award winning film on Sunday, February 15 after coffee hour. It is our way of supporting the UUA's yearly 'Standing on the Side of Love' efforts. It is about three sisters ages 6, 9 and 11 struggling to understand why and how their Uncle Bill becomes a woman. We haven't addressed the issues that transgender people face as a community and hope this film and discussion following will be a doorway into this important topic. We will also have a reprint of a short column from the Boston Globe on this topic available. We hope you will join us.

Ladies' Circle Meeting

by Valerie Osborne

The Ladies' Circle meeting is at 1:00 pm on Saturday, February 14 in the Murray Room. Perfect for Valentine's Day is the program: "Chocolate, the Perfect Drug."

Mike Cross, Ph.D, instructor of chemistry at Northern Essex Community College, will explain which chemicals elicit biochemical reactions in the human brain, making chocolate the perfect drug. During the presentation you will also learn how to taste chocolate for quality - and how to eat it, too! Dr. Cross believes education should be fun and exciting, and often incorporates demonstrations and magic tricks in his teaching.

Ladies of the congregation and their invited guests are welcome to attend. For more information call Ladies' Circle president Trudy Blyth at 978 374-6660.



Second Sunday

by Abbe Wertz

February's Second Sunday donation will go to the Anchor of Hope Diaper Bank, a Haverhill agency that provides diapers free to families in need. A 2010 Huggies study shows that one in three families in America struggle to provide diapers for their children. 22% of all children under 5 years of age in the United States live in poverty and 34% of families surveyed cut back on basics to purchase diapers. There are few resources that provide diapers, and they can't be purchased with food stamps. Thank you for your support of the Anchor of Hope Diaper Bank which assists families with small children in this small but very important way! To find out more about them you can find them online at www.aohdiaperbank.org

A Word about Stewardship

From the Stewardship Team: Mike Johnson, Merry Newhall, Laura Morley, Abbe Wertz and Rev. Frank Clarkson

If ours is a thriving church, it's because of the ways you share your time, talent and resources here. Look around and you'll see many examples of folks giving of themselves: feeding the hungry, working for justice, caring for our building, teaching children, serving as leaders, writing notes and visiting folks.

One of the reasons to belong to a church is to have a place to give of yourself; a place to practice being openhearted and generous. This extends, of course, to your financial support. Do you know that most of what it costs to keep the church going comes directly from your donations? You make it possible for us to pay our staff, maintain the building and support programs here and in the wider community.

We depend on your financial contributions, and the simple truth is, we need everyone to do their part if we are going to be a healthy and thriving church. If you are part of this community, we ask you to be intentional about your financial support here. Later this month, you'll receive a packet in the mail with information about the importance of generosity and stewardship. Please take the time to read it and think about how generous you can be in supporting your church. Thanks!

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.

Brown Bag Lunch every Thursday at Noon. Come join us in the Ladies Parlor for an hour of conversation and fellowship. No reservations needed!

Choir Rehearsal (note schedule on p. 1) some Sundays at 9:15 am. All are welcome!

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!

Lectio Divina meets fourth Sundays at 9:30 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.

Finance Committee meets first Wednesdays at 7 pm.

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.

Hunger Roundtable meets second Tuesdays, 10 am.

Mindful Meditation Practice is Mondays (except Monday holidays) at 7 pm, led by Betsy Robertson.

Communicator (monthly newsletter) deadline is always the 15th of the preceding month. There is no issue in August.

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

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 Abbe Wertz.

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. Contact Joy Schuetze at Joy.Strings@verizon.net

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)

Green Sanctuary Committee meets on second Sundays at Noon.

New Moon Coffeehouse is on third Saturdays at 8 pm (except December).

Membership Committee meets third Mondays at 6 pm.

Caring Ministry meets fourth Sundays at 11:30 am.

Various other committees meet periodically throughout the year. Watch e-News, Sunday announcements and the website calendar for meeting times for: Building & Grounds/Gardens, Leap of Faith, Ministry, Music, Parish Council, Parish Nurses, Permanent Funds, Religious Education, Stewardship, Welcoming Congregation and Worship Committees.

Church Leaders and Staff Contact Information

Board of Trustees Chair: Abbe Wertz: abbewertz@yahoo.com

Board of Trustees Vice Chair: Cori Thurlow: cori.thurlow@gmail.com

Rev. Frank Clarkson: frank@uuhaverhill.org

Ministerial Intern: Julie Lombard: lombardpottery@comcast.net

Director of Religious Education: Sally Liebermann: dre@uuhaverhill.org

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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