



UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF HAVERHILL

Volume 9, Issue 4

November 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.

For quite a while we've been hearing how many months or weeks it is until election day. And finally, we're here! For many of us, tired of robocalls and negative advertising, dismayed by the tenor of discourse on TV and social media, November 6 couldn't come soon enough. Whoever is our next president, this is a good time to ask, "What might we do, as people of hope and faith, to build a more civil society?" On the Sunday before election day, I'll begin this conversation, in a sermon called "Voting as a Spiritual Practice." I hope this might get us thinking about how we can do a better job of reaching across the differences that divide us. I love the church for its promise as a place where we don't agree on everything, and can engage our differences in healthy and helpful ways. So I hope you'll want to have this conversation.

Two weeks later, on November 18, I'm planning to extend the conversation to include how we might manage the tensions in our lives and in our anxious society. My sermon for that day is called "Keep Calm and Carry On." You may have seen the poster this comes from! I sense that many of us could benefit from ways to be more centered, balanced and focused, and hope the sermon will help.

There have been a number of deaths in our community in the past few weeks: Irma Pasquale's sister, Tina Jablonski's mother Lilo, elders Ruth O'Brien, Natalie Veasey and Frank Wright. Thanks to all of you who offered your condolences to me on the recent deaths of my friend Don and my aunt Marie. In these weeks, when I have been more closely companioned by death than at any other time in my ministry, I am deeply grateful for the community that gathers here each Sunday, and so glad to belong to you. There is a beauty and a solace that I find in our worship together. It's here on Sunday morning--do you feel it? I sense it in our singing and in our silence, in the connections we make with one another, in the candles lit silently and in the cup of coffee shared with a new friend after the service. You are the church, and you are beautiful. Do you know that?

The end of the month brings our national day of giving thanks. This year, as I count my blessings, I'll think of you, and the community we are building here together. As the hymn says, "For all that is our life, we give our thanks and praise." Thank you for being part of this loving and lovely church. I look forward to seeing you here.

Love,
Frank

Greetings from Religious Education

During the autumn months we returned to church and our children and youth have been busy learning new church routines and becoming familiar with their curriculum. On any given Sunday our Nursery room is buzzing with toddlers and preschoolers and their family members. Our elementary aged children are hearing stories from the Bible and wondering about the imaginations and perspectives of people who lived 2000 years ago. Our Junior Youth have selected several religions that they will study this year and are looking forward to visiting our neighbors both at Temple Emanu-El and at Calvary Baptist Church before Christmas. Our Senior Youth are working with their leaders toward completion of their Coming of Age program, reflecting upon their own experiences and how they make meaning of their life experiences and events in the world around them. In addition to classroom settings, we offer many experiences to work and play together as we celebrate the autumn and winter holidays with spirit and reverence.

Sunday November 18 is Santa Parade Sunday! Our youth host a fundraising concession stand on Kenosha Ave. Please watch for requests for donations of baked goods for sale! We off-load food donations from the Betsy Conte Food Drive collected along the parade route later in the afternoon. Families are invited to assist in this fun, frenzied adventure in unloading, sorting, packing and delivering food stuffs! (Details to follow; all participation takes place here at UUCH.)

Our mid-week Vespers Services will begin on Wednesday, November 28 at 6:00pm. We hope you and your loved ones will join us for a time of reflection and contemplation. We gather for music, readings and silence in our darkened sanctuary. This is a warm and welcoming opportunity for children of all ages to experience a worshipful space and interlude during busy weekday schedules. Vespers are followed by a simple meal in the Murray Room that offers time for nourishment and conversation.

Sunday December 9 is Fleece Hats Sunday! Our children and youth work with adult volunteers to make fleece hats and scarves for donation to local programs that serve our neighbors in need. We will send hats to our own Community Action Drop-in Center, Ruth's House and Emmaus House. Please plan to join us at some point to support this warm and festive project.

Sunday December 23 is Living Nativity Sunday! All infants, children and youth are invited to worship as we retell the Nativity Story with invitations for all to participate. On this special Sunday, we enjoy a visit from Santa at coffee hour. Following years of tradition, Santa will bring the gift of a book for each of our children.

Monday December 24 is Christmas Eve and we hope you will join us for our annual Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols. The service begins at 5:30pm and is followed by a warm and delicious gathering of food of friendship. All are invited to bring a sweet or savory dish to share. This wonderful offering has become Christmas Eve dinner for many and is timed so that families can attend church and arrive home at an early time on this holiday evening.

We look forward to a warm and bright holiday season. We count you among our many blessings and look forward to learning and growing together for many years to come!

Warmest regards,
Sally Liebermann
Director of Religious Education



Notes from the Music Director

Join the UUCH Christmas Eve Choir! Rehearsals are on the four Wednesday evenings prior to Christmas Eve: November 28 and December 5, 12 and 19 from 7:00-8:30 PM in the Murray Room. I would love to do some beautiful 4-part music, so need to know now that I will have at least 3 singers on each voice part (soprano, alto, tenor, bass). Singers will be asked to make a commitment to attend all four rehearsals, and to come early on Christmas Eve as well. Let me know if you'd like to join us!

Claudia Keyian
UUCH Music Director

Office Outreach (office@uuhaverhill.org)

I thought I might report to you some of the items we discuss in staff meeting, as you may be wondering what goes on here during the week. We meet about twice a month, in our circle with our chalice lit, and begin with a brief reading. Our lives are so busy here attending to the various needs of the church and its members, that this provides a wonderful time for us to gather and reflect on our jobs. We bring any pastoral concerns we may have to the table. We discuss what is going well and what is not working so well in our various departments. We share observations and suggestions about the various systems— human and physical, in the church. We've even been known to share some laughs: about the best one was when we all decided what fun it would be to trade professional places with each other some Sunday— Claudia would preach, Lisa would teach Religious Education, and Sally would play the organ! Of course there was a serious side to this amusing suggestion, too. The point was that we need to share the various pressures, challenges and rewards of our various positions, so we can be as supportive as possible of each other. I have now been with you for an entire year, and please know how grateful I am to be serving UUCH!

Lisa Compton
Office Administrator



Some Thank Yous!

Pumpkin Potluck: Warm thanks to Kristie Colton, Barb Scott and Erika Lowrey for coordinating our annual Pumpkin Potluck on Sunday, October 28. A fun and delicious time was had by all as we ate yummy food and carved our pumpkins. Thank you to each of you and your families for making this a safe and fun special day!

"Remember the Hungry" Coffee Hour: This new program was a wonderful success. The donations to the Community Meals program included paper goods and products, cash donations and pantry supplies. We have volunteers for Community meals signed up through December. A great big thank you goes out to all those who were able to donate supplies as well as their time for this wonderful program. The last Community Meal served 58 people, and continues to be an important part of our service. As we head through the Fall season and harvest time, may we continue to "Remember the Hungry" as we make our way toward Winter.

From the Caring Ministries Team

The Caring Ministries Team is a group of people who work to extend the care of our congregation to those in need. One way we are doing this is by developing a wider network of care, that is, people in the congregation who are willing to help in this work. Thanks to everyone who filled out a survey last spring. Since then we've been matching you up with people who need a ride, or a meal, or who would like a visit from a caring person. Starting over the summer you did a lot! You in the wider network:

- made 15 visits to hospitals, the ill and shut-ins.
- gave 13 rides to and from church, doctors appointments and other events.
- ran 9 errands to pick up groceries, prescriptions, etc.
- fixed 1 flat tire!
- offered countless other acts of kindness and helpfulness, such as fixing meals, loaning medical equipment, writing sympathy cards and reaching out to those in need.

At least 20 people in our community, in addition to the members of the Caring Ministries team, have pitched in as part of the wider network of care. We thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, for all that you do to make our church a warm and caring congregation!

We're developing a new card you'll soon find in the pew racks. One side will provide a space where you can let us know about someone in need. On the other side you can update us about ways you are willing to help. You can leave these cards in the offering plate or in the Caring Ministries mailbox outside the church office. Again, thank you for being part of our caring ministry!

Trudy Blyth, Cil Dullea, Carolyn Hart, Terry Koukias, Delight Reese & Rev. Frank



From the Welcoming Congregation Committee

The Welcoming Congregation Committee is pleased to inform our church of its involvement with Welcoming Faiths. We are among nine churches in the Merrimack Valley, joined together in this young organization, created by South Church in Andover.

The mission of Welcoming Faiths is to "promote equality and inclusion" for LGBTQ individuals and families, and to reach out, assisting those seeking a spiritual home. Our member congregations encourage active support for the LGBTQ community, assuring that they are welcomed, comfortable and safe in every aspect of congregational life. We also strive to increase awareness of issues surrounding equality and justice for LGBTQ persons, and to serve as beacons of fairness and loving affirmation in the Merrimack Valley and beyond.

If you are interested in learning more about Welcoming Faiths, ask a member of our Welcoming Congregation Committee! We'll be happy to give you more details, or check it out at welcoming-faiths.blogspot.com.

New Moon Coffee House: Les Sampou Concert November 17

Les Sampou performs at the New Moon Coffeehouse on Saturday November 17 at 8:00 pm. Naturalist and folk singer Oen Kennedy opens the show. Admission to the show for Church members is just \$18; \$8 for those 18 and under. The general public pays \$20; \$10 kids. Tickets for this show are available at the door starting around 6:30; doors open at 7:30. Tickets may be reserved prior to the show by visiting www.newmooncoffeehouse.org, or by calling 978-459-5134.

Les Sampou can't be categorized. Rock, blues, country, folk; her music is a sum of them all and a genre all her own. But her themes are universal: love, heartbreak, hellos and goodbyes. And her vocal work adds emotional depth and layers of understanding to her songs. She seamlessly takes listeners on a life journey.

Share the Warmth Clothing Drive: The New Moon coffeehouse is participating in the UMass Boston's Golden Key Society's "Share the Warmth" clothing drive. During each winter concert (Nov. – Feb.) the New Moon will collect winter outerwear (coats, hats, mittens, sweaters, boots...). Collected clothing is then donated to various non-profit organization in the Greater Boston area that serve the homeless and those in need. Last year, the New Moon participated in the program along with 12 other area coffeehouses. Together all the venues collected over 2,400 pounds of clothing. These donations were shared with five non-profit organizations. Help keep those in need warm this winter. Grab your unwanted coats and jackets, bring them to the concert and we'll make sure they keep someone warm this winter.



Fair Trade Gift Bags

Give the gift of fair trade this holiday season: help raise awareness, contribute to the church fair trade coffee program AND buy a Christmas present all at the same time! Each gift bag will include a 12 oz. bag of ground coffee (Organic Mind, Body & Soul or Organic Decaf), a package of Organic Irish Breakfast tea (25 bags), a 12 oz. can of organic hot cocoa mix, and a 3.5 oz. organic chocolate bar (dark or milk chocolate). To pre-order, send a check made out to the church for \$30, indicating what kind of coffee and chocolate bar you want, or plan to order your gift bag after church on November 4, 11, or 18. Contact Richard Smyth for more information at 978-469-7085 or rsmyth64@yahoo.com.

Knitting from the Heart

Knitting from the Heart will be meeting in the Ladies Parlor on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month from 6:30-8:00pm. This month's meetings will be held on November 13th and November 27th. All levels of knitters and crotcheters 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. 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. 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.

Next Communicator Deadline is November 25!!

A Note from Your Friendly Staff

We spend a fair amount of time in our staff meetings discussing effective communication methods within our church family. We use electronic formats as much as possible (cost saving, labor saving and quick!), but there are some folks who do not, or choose not to, use electronic media. This means that not everyone "gets the message" at times. We are seeking solutions to this issue, and welcome any suggestions. In particular, we have noted that not everyone who does have access to our electronic publications is reading them. Are they too long? Too frequent? Too complex? Again, ideas are welcome!

Another issue the staff is dealing with is the incredible amount of email that comes our way. It can be as high as 50-60 per day (not counting spam), with more than half requiring answers. Something that would help us out immensely would be if people would refrain from using the "Reply All" command unless it is really necessary. Limiting the number of "Forwards" and "Cc's" would help as well. For example, internal committee business, unless it directly affects staff members or the schedule, does not need to be copied to the office; a monthly report will suffice.

November 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 MSVO 5:45-8:45pm Articulating Your UU Faith 7 pm AA 7 pm	2	3 Ladies Circle 1-3pm Community Meals 2:30-5pm
4 Choir 9am + 12:30pm Worship 10:30am Sr. Youth 4:30-6pm Meditation 5pm OWL 6-9pm Moonpool 6pm AA 7pm	5 Mindful Meditation Practice 7pm	6 Election Day Polls (All day) Bag lunch & discussion 12-1pm AA 7pm	7 Tending the Sacred AM 9:30-11:30am Staff Mtg 1pm WCC 7pm Men's Spirituality Grp 7 pm	8 MSVO 5:45-8:45pm Articulating Your UU Faith 7 pm AA 7pm	9 District Youth Conference 4pm-midnight	10 District Youth Conference (All day)
11 Youth District Conference Midnight-9am Book Group 9am Worship 10:30am Meditation 5pm AA 7pm	12 Mindful Meditation Practice 7pm	13 Bag lunch & discussion 12-1pm Knitting from the Heart 6:30pm Tending the Sacred PM 7-9pm AA 7pm	14 Board of Trustees 7pm	15 MSVO 5:45-8:45pm Articulating Your UU Faith 7 pm AA 7pm	16 Movie Night 7pm	17 Blind Guild Luncheon 10 am-3pm Community Meals 2:30-5pm New Moon Coffee-house 8pm
18 Choir 9am Worship 10:30am SJC 12pm Food Drive 12:30-4pm Recital 1-5pm Meditation 5pm AA 7pm	19 Mindful Meditation Practice 7pm	20 Bag lunch & discussion 12-1pm Girl Scouts 5:30-7pm AA 7pm	21 Staff Mtg 10:30-noon	22 Thanksgiving AA 7pm	23	24
25 <u>Communicator Deadline</u> Lectio Divina 9:15am Worship 10:30am Meditation 5pm AA 7 pm	26 Mindful Meditation Practice 7pm	27 Bag lunch & discussion 12-1 Girl Scouts 5-6:15pm Knitting from the Heart 6:30pm Tending the Sacred PM 7-9pm AA 7pm	28 Tending the Sacred AM 9:30-11:30am Vespers 6pm B&G Mtg 7pm Choir 7pm	29 MSVO 5:45-8:45pm AA 7pm	30	

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New Moon Coffeehouse Presents

Les Sampou

Saturday, November 17 at 8 PM



Songwriter **Les Sampou** blends rock, blues, country and folk styles as she wends her way through a musical life journey. Folksinger **Oen Kennedy** open the evening.

\$20 admission at the door, 18 and under half price.

UUCH members receive a \$2 discount. More info: newmooncoffeehouse.org