

# UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF HAVERHILL

Volume 8, Issue 6

February 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).*

On Sunday mornings, when you walk into our lovely old building, what are you looking for? What are you hoping for? Do you ever think about this? I trust that you do come to church looking for something. Looking for a way to connect with others. Hoping that you might have an experience of the sacred here. Expecting, I hope, that here you will find strength and consolation, encouragement and challenge for the living of these days.

When I went off to seminary at age 41, I realized that I wasn't going there for specific vocational training (though I got that too!) as much as I was seeking a deep and transformational experience. I was looking to be made different, to be shaped in ways that would help me to become more fully who I was meant to be.

What I'm talking about is called formation. In a spiritual or religious context, formation is what happens when a person is shaped and changed by participation in a faith community. This can happen anywhere—in worship or around a table at coffee hour, in a class or small group or working with others to serve the hungry through Community Meals. It's not a one-time event, but a process of growing and becoming.

I expect that some of you, maybe many of you, come to church looking for formation, whether you would call it that or not. I suspect that you are looking for ways to make meaning in your life, and to feel more fully alive: to connect more deeply with the mystery of being human, to inhabit your days with awe and wonder, purpose and joy.

We're starting to work on creating an overall program here that will help you in your formation as a person of faith. I want to know what would interest you and what you would be excited to participate in. Is it studying the Bible or other sacred texts? Do you want to learn about and experience prayer, meditation and other spiritual practices? Do you want to delve into theology or church history? Would you like to work with a spiritual director or guide? All of these are part of a well-rounded process of formation.

**Will you let me know what interests and excites you?** I want to know, and what you tell me will inform how we shape this program. If you'd like to help imagine and build this program, I'd love to work with you. Please let me know, and thanks!

Yours in faith,  
Frank

## Greetings from Religious Education

It is surprising to note that February has arrived, and to note that we have enjoyed only frost and flurries in this winter of 2012! I hope that this newsletter finds you well and warm and enjoying the surprises of the season.

February will be a month of stretching and visioning for Religious Education at UUCH.

On February 9, Reverend Frank and I will attend a workshop "Fashion Me a Post Modern People" to explore the future of spiritual development in U.U. Congregations. Preparation for this workshop asks us to reflect upon the observation that "our families are *living in the most intensely stimulating period in the history of the earth. They're being besieged with information and calls for their attention from every platform - computers... iphones...hundreds of television channels.*"

It is a great and exciting challenge for churches to meet people of all ages where they are and to provide opportunities for experiences that provide spiritual sustenance and inspiration to seek, stretch and grow religiously.

Our R.E. Committee will "go on retreat" to begin a visioning process for our present and future programming. Our committee members are Erika Lowrey (Chair), Colleen McKenna, Chris Shramko, Kristie Colton, Mary Lou Johnson, Valerie Walton and Carolyn Hart. Board Member Kate Drouin has offered to be a liaison to the R.E. Committee and will be included in this process. Together we will look forward for ways to enrich our programming that meet the spiritual needs of our children and families in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Please watch for communications regarding this process and be in touch if you would like to be part of this exciting work.

Our children and youth will meet for classes and/or worship during February. Please watch weekly email communication for updated information and for opportunities to support our classes and volunteers. Currently, we are looking for adults who would like to cover our Nursery and Preschool rooms on one Sunday each month. We staff these rooms with two adults (each) every Sunday. If you would enjoy spending time with our youngest friends please be in touch. I look forward to seeing you soon!

In peace and friendship,  
Sally Liebermann  
Director of Religious Education

## Thank You!

Thank you Aiden Wertz, Emily Hitchcock and Connor Wertz for representing UUCH at our annual Martin Luther King, Jr. breakfast celebration with echoes from Dr. King's Drum Major Instinct sermon. Each of you shared your voices and your commitment to an awareness of our collective responsibility to work for the greater good. Thank you!



## Office Outreach

I am pleased to report that we have successfully “certified” this congregation for another year with the Unitarian Universalist Association. During this process, we report to the UUA the number of voting members we have, the number of pledging units we have, our operating expenses for the previously completed fiscal year, and this year a new statistic was requested: how many non members/friends we believe we reach in the greater community. The latter is a substantial number! Once we are certified, the UUA determines how many delegates to General Assembly we are allotted, as well as what our Fair Share is for UUA and district dues. As you can imagine, this process requires a fair amount of record keeping, and must be kept current throughout the year. The good news is that because I had to go through the membership list several times, I now know everyone’s names! I still look forward to putting a few more faces to those names, though.

UU101 came highly recommended to me by several people, and it has proven to be a fascinating class. I have met some very interesting people, all of whom have amazing stories to tell of how they came to be in this place at this time. Rev. Frank also shares the history and theology of Universalism and Unitarianism with a depth of knowledge (and humor!) that make it not only easy to understand, but thought-provoking as well. Although billed as a class for newcomers and seekers, I would recommend it to any and all!

Coming!!! A new, SMALLER photocopier (which will do everything the old behemoth did) and a recycled (from upstairs) SMALLER desk for the office. Has anyone noticed how crowded we have become? There is literally no space for someone to come into the office and sit down! I could still use help moving the old desk upstairs and the “new” desk downstairs. I would need a little warning so I can pack up the contents and transfer them efficiently.

Several items of jewelry are currently in the lost and found box in the office...

And in the “Wish List” for this month, instead of items, we wish that:

- If you “borrow” something, you put it back exactly where you found it, whether it is a table or a pair of scissors or a book.
- If you “borrow” something to remove it from the building, that you check it out with the office, including planned date of return (leaving a note is fine).
- Sometimes spaces are set up in advance for a particular activity to save time; if you “borrow” a space for a meeting, please leave it exactly the way you found it, including furniture, snack items, and papers.
- Any and all meetings or events scheduled (or rescheduled) need to be placed on the church calendar, as we are becoming a very busy place! Please email or leave a note in the office if your group schedules something.

Thank you all for your patience as I continue to learn the systems here. It is a pleasure to serve UUCH!

Lisa Compton  
Office Administrator



## Lenten Vespers

During the seven weeks of Lent, the season that precedes Easter, we will offer Vespers on Wednesdays at 6 pm. This contemplative half-hour service offers a quiet space in the middle of the week, and is followed by a simple supper in the Murray Room. We'll have Vespers on February 22 and 29, March 7, 14, 21 and 28 and April 4. Please join us as you are interested and able. If you'd like to help with Vespers, either by participating or by helping prepare the meal afterwards, please speak with Rev. Frank.

## Two Social Justice Events in February

**Friday, February 3, 7 – 9:30pm**

### **Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet**

Please join the Social Justice Committee to view the PBS documentary "Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet," which will provide a good foundation and point of reference prior to the lecture on the Islamic faith on February 18. There will be a discussion period following the film.

**Saturday, February 18, 1 – 4pm**

### **Islamic Faith from the Perspective of a Believer: A lecture by Salma Kazmi**

The Social Justice Committee is pleased to welcome Salma Kazmi to our Church on Saturday, February 18 to speak about the Islamic Faith from the perspective of a believer. She will highlight major historical events in the history of Islam as well as the beliefs and practices of Muslims. UUCH members have expressed a strong interest in learning more about Islam and to stand up against discrimination and negative rhetoric against Muslims. We believe that understanding of Islam will help us to become better advocates for tolerance and respect among the major religions.

Salma Kazmi has been an active member of Boston's Muslim community for over a decade. She served as the Associate Director of the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center for over five years, and as a youth educator at the Islamic Center of Boston in Wayland, as well as a board member of Alhamra Academy, a Muslim day school in Shrewsbury. Salma was a co-founder of the Center for Jewish-Muslim Relations, and has been a frequent speaker on the topic of Islam and Muslims throughout Greater Boston. Salma earned her BA at Wellesley College and her Masters of Theological Studies at Harvard Divinity School. She developed and currently teaches a new course, "Theology and History of Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations," which is required for the new Minor in Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations at Merrimack College.

Please sign-up at the Murray Room or send an e-mail to [dhaksev@comcast.net](mailto:dhaksev@comcast.net) if you plan to attend either event, so we can contact you in the event of a weather postponement.



## MoonPool Coven Change in Date

Please note that due to the Super Bowl, the MoonPool Coven class and circle scheduled for Sunday, February 5 has been changed to the following week, Sunday, February 12 at 6 pm.



### **Thank You!**

Thank you to Patrick Bowe, Tom Ellis and Megan Shea for their leadership and hard work on this year's Martin Luther King Breakfast. Thanks also to everyone who helped by setting up, being greeters, serving the food and cleaning up. Thanks to Claudia and the choir for a moving and inspiring musical contribution, and to Sally and our youth for a powerful and beautiful tribute to Rev. Dr. King. It was a great day, and a great celebration with our friends from Calvary Baptist Church.

Big thanks to Cil Dullea for the many ways she helps out around the church. Quietly and behind the scenes, Cil takes on projects like polishing the church silverware and removing and repairing graffiti outside our back door. These tangible acts, and many others like them, make a real difference in our community. Thank you Cil!

Have you seen our new Meditation Chapel space at the top of the front stairs? It is a lovely space for individuals or small groups to gather. Thanks to Betsy Robertson who had the vision for this space, and to everyone who did the work to make it possible. Betsy is leading meditation on Tuesday evenings at 7 pm and Wednesday mornings at 11 am. You are welcome to join her.

Many thanks to Kevin Backman for helping willingly and faithfully each week, folding the order of service, inserting inserts, and undertaking other office tasks. Also for his thoughtful and yummy gifts of food!

### **Parish Nurses Open Discussion February 5**

The Parish Nurses invite anyone who is interested to an after-church discussion about "end of life" decision making and responsibilities. The meeting will take place at noon in the Ladies Parlor.



### **Book Group Meets February 12**

The Book Group's next meeting is February 12 at 9 am. The book selection is *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, by Michelle Alexander. This book explores how the criminal justice system and the current penal system keep an "astounding" percentage of the African American community trapped in its subordinate status. All are welcome to join the discussion.

## **Celebrating Spring! Annual Service Auction**

### **Saturday, March 10 at 6:00 pm**

Plan to join us for hors d'oeuvres, wine, punch and lots of fun...bring your checkbook and have a ball! This will surely be one of the most exciting evenings everyone will have for a long time. Mark your calendars and don't miss it! The goal of the Service Auction is to give the community an opportunity to help raise money for our church in a fun and welcoming way.

Please indicate below items you plan to donate. There are also forms in the Murray Room.

Name of donor\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number and email address\_\_\_\_\_

Item or service being donated\_\_\_\_\_

Detailed description\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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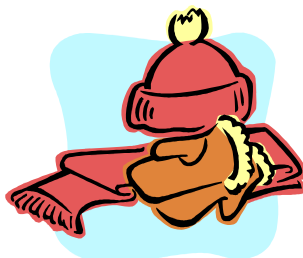
Dates or limitations\_\_\_\_\_

Suggested value\_\_\_\_\_

Some examples of previous auction items are: a vacation in Vinalhaven; rich chocolate cake; scrumptious English trifle and homemade pies; yard and housework; works of art; Red Sox tickets; museum tickets; gift certificates; baby/house/pet sitting; gardening and garden parties; dinners and brunches; painting for a day; guided tour of Ipswich; and Rent-a-Truck. Items for the Silent Auction should be in new or like new condition (unless they are antique!). Please drop off the form to the folder in the Murray Room or email it to Maureen (maureenschofield@comcast.net) no later than February 20th.

## **Share the Warmth Clothing Drive**

Help the New Moon Coffeehouse keep people warm this winter. Bring your extra coats, hats, mittens, snowsuits and gloves to the concert on Saturday, February 18. The New Moon coffeehouse is participating in the UMass Boston's Golden Key society's "Share the Warmth" clothing drive. Collected clothing is 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 venues collected over 2,400 pounds of clothing. These donations were shared with 5 non-profit organizations.



# February 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1</b> 11-Mindful Meditation Practice 7-Green Sanctuary Committee	<b>2</b> 5:45-MVSO 7-Memberhip Committee	<b>3</b> 7-Social Justice Committee Event	<b>4</b> 2:30-Community Meals 5-Dennis Private Event
<b>5</b> 9-UU101 9-Choir Rehearsal 10:30-Worship 12-Parish Nurses Open Discussion 5-Meditation Grp.	<b>6</b> 10-Small Ministry Group	<b>7</b> 12-Lunch with the Minister 7-Miindful Meditation Practice	<b>8</b> 11-Mindful Meditation Practice	<b>9</b> 5:45-MVSO	<b>10</b> 7-Social Justice Committee Snow Date	<b>11</b> 9:30-Spirit Band Rehearsal 1-Ladies Circle Meeting
<b>12</b> 9-Choir Rehearsal 10:30-Worship 12-Choir Rehearsal 12-After Service Discussion Group 5-Meditation Grp. 6-MoonPool	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 12-Lunch with the Minister 7-Miindful Meditation Practice 7-Committee on Ministry	<b>15</b> 11-Mindful Meditation Practice	<b>16</b> 12-INC 5:45-MVSO 7-Worship Committee	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 1-Social Justice Committee Event 2:30-Community Meals 8-New Moon Coffeehouse
<b>19</b> 10:30-Worship 5-Meditation Grp. 6-MoonPool	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 12-Lunch with the Minister 7-Miindful Meditation Practice	<b>22</b> 11-Mindful Meditation Practice	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 9-Communicator Deadline 9:30-Spirit Band Rehearsal
<b>26</b> 9-Impromptu Choir 10:30-Worship 12-After Service Discussion 5-Meditation Grp.	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 12-Lunch with the Minister 7-Miindful Meditation Practice	<b>29</b> 11-Mindful Meditation Practice			

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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](mailto:office@uuhaverhill.org). Thank you!*

## **New Moon Coffeehouse Presents**

### **James Keelaghan**

**Saturday, February 18th at 8 PM**



Award winning Canadian singer-songwriter James Keelaghan is featured, while Berklee graduate Lindsay Straw opens on guitar and Irish bouzouki.

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

UUCH members receive a \$2 discount. More info: [newmooncoffeehouse.org](http://newmooncoffeehouse.org)