



The Communicator

the monthly newsletter of the

UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF HAVERHILL

What's Happening this Month, October 2013

The Impromptu Choir

This “new” choir will rehearse at 9 am every first Sunday of the month, and will sing at that worship service. All singers are welcome; ability to read music is desirable, but not required. For more information contact Claudia Keyian, Claudia@claudiamusic.com.

UUCH Book Series

This year's book series will begin with the reading 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. The Book Group meets second Sundays at 9 am, beginning October 13. We will take three months to read and discuss this important book (covering approximately 60 pages per month). The book is available used on Amazon.com, or see Nancy Rusk, who has several copies to loan out.

UU 102 Film Series

Many of you have enjoyed our monthly Friday night film series. This year, we are calling the series “UU 102,” and it will explore a diversity of spiritual and religious traditions. These films will be shown on the second Fridays of the month at 7 pm. On October 11 we will screen the documentary “Making a Case for Unitarian Universalism.” As always, discussion will follow.

Ladies Circle Programs

The Ladies Circle will meet on October 12 at 1 pm. Rev. Frank Clarkson will be the guest speaker. All women of the church are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be served. On October 19, the Ladies Circle will serve its annual Blind Guild Luncheon, with preparation starting at 10 am.

New Moon Coffeehouse, October 19, 8 pm

This month features The Jammin Divas, who present traditional and contemporary folk music from Ireland, Australia and the USA. The opening act is by David Dodson, who hails from mid-coast Maine, and composes songs in many American traditions— folk, blues, jazz and country. Tickets are \$20 per adult, and \$10 for 18 and under. UUCH members receive a 10% discount! Tickets are available on line at www.newmooncoffeehouse.org, or at the door.

The MoonPool Coven

Saturday, October 26 at 7 pm brings the Coven's annual Witches Ball. All are welcome!

Pumpkin Potluck

Our annual Pumpkin Potluck event will be held following Sunday worship on October 27. Come enjoy food, fellowship and fall traditions!

The Life of Prayer, October 8, 15 & 22, 7 pm

This 3-session gathering, led by Rev. Frank, will offer an introduction to practices of prayer and meditation. We'll reflect on what prayer is, and we'll experience different kinds of prayer and meditation. If you have wondered about starting your own spiritual practice, this might help. Please join us if you're interested!

UU 101, November 3, 10 & 17, 9 to 10:15 am

If you're new here, or want to learn more about this church and our UU tradition, this class is for you! Led by Rev. Frank, UU 101 is also a great way to meet interesting people, get answers to your religious and spiritual questions, and feel more at home here at UUCH. Please contact Frank if you have questions or plan to come: frank@uuhaverhill.org

Things Seen and Unseen

by Rev. Frank Clarkson

I want to lift up the spirit of hopefulness and happiness that I have sensed in our community lately. Have you noticed it too? If you were here the past few Sundays, I think you must have. The church building was buzzing the Sunday of our Water Communion and Homecoming, and the following week, the Parish Council Fair was awesome! (Check out the panoramic photo by Robert Mohns below.) I loved standing back and taking it all in. There are so many good things happening here, and I'm grateful for all of you who are helping make them possible!

Have you noticed how many visitors we've had in recent weeks, including several families with babies? Have you been aware of how seamlessly our ministerial intern, Julie Lombard, has entered our congregational life and Sunday worship? What else have you sensed?

This church year is a good time to practice this kind of paying attention. We're participating in New England Leap of Faith, a congregation to congregation mentoring program designed to help us grow and prosper. (For more about Leap of Faith, see the article in this *Communicator*). We will be taking time to reflect on who we are as a congregation. What are our gifts and our challenges? What aspects of our community do we want to conserve, and in what ways do we need to adapt and change?

Your perspective--what you notice and value about this church--will help inform the work we do in Leap of Faith. The more people involved in this, the better. We need the perspectives of as many people as possible, including you.

I encourage you to make a practice of noticing, and reflecting on what you notice, because it is a way to be present and attentive in a world that so often drives us to distraction. The poet Mary Oliver put it this way: "I don't know what a prayer is. I do know how to pay attention." She implies that paying attention is a kind of prayer, and she's right. Attentiveness brings us more fully into this present moment, which is the only time we really have. This year, let's pay attention to what is seen, and unseen, in our midst.

Reflections

by Sally Liebermann, Director of Religious Education

During these first few weeks of church we talk a lot about why people choose to go to church. In our classes we talk about ways that church school is different from Monday-Friday school. Friends of all ages talk of covenants and ways to be together, to work together and play together, in our faith community. In R.E. we share ideas about how to live good and meaningful lives. I love the quote from James Luther Adams that states "church is a place where you get to practice what it means to be human." I think that is what we are learning in our U.U. classrooms when we study a set of guidelines that remind us that all people are important and instruct us to be kind in all of our actions.

Our principles identify us as people who are curious learners, free to question and grow in thought and spirit. And they inspire us to be global citizens, acting on behalf of people in need and acknowledging our power and responsibility to advocate for all creatures and for our great and gracious home planet.

Experience has taught us that people of all ages are most comfortable in settings when they know and understand how they are invited to participate. Our church covenant identifies us (UUCH) as an intentional faith community—one that acknowledges all individuals as unique and special in a larger community bound by kindness, respect and love. A church friend recently commented that "it's so wonderful to have the covenant here at church. At work and out in the world, people behave the way they want to, or the ways that they know to. Here we remind ourselves all the time to be our best selves."

We weren't born knowing how to talk or walk. We've been learning since our first moments in this life. Church offers us a place to practice being human in the best ways. Church invites us to know our best selves. We begin our classes on Sunday morning with a chalice lighting and our affirmation, reminding us of who we are and who we can be

"We are Unitarian Universalists. We are the church of the open mind, the loving heart and helping hands." And then we practice!



Intern Insights

By Julie Lombard

Since 1958 Ms. Joan Walsh Anglund has written and illustrated more than 120 children's books, which have sold more than 40 million copies worldwide. Maybe you are familiar with her and her stories. She lives nearby in Connecticut. The story below was inspired by her children, Todd and Joy. I like to think that Ms. Anglund always has joy in her life because she chose to name her daughter Joy. Can it be that easy to put joy in your life? In your busy lives, may you find time to take inventory of your friends.

A Friend Is Someone Who Likes You

A friend is someone who likes you. It can be a boy... It can be a girl... or a cat... or a dog... or even a white mouse. A tree can be a different kind of friend. It doesn't talk to you, but you know it likes you because it gives you apples... or pears... or cherries... or, sometimes, a place to swing. A brook can be a friend in a special way. It talks to you with splashy gurgles. It cools your toes and lets you sit quietly beside it when you don't feel like speaking. The wind can be a friend too. It sings soft songs to you at night when you are sleepy and feeling lonely. Sometimes it calls to you to play. It pushes you from behind as you walk and makes the leaves dance for you. It is always with you wherever you go, and that's how you know it likes you. Sometimes you don't know who are your friends. Sometimes they are there all the time, but you walk right past them and don't notice that they like you in a special way. And then you think that you don't have any friends. Then you must stop hurrying and rushing so fast... and move very slowly, and look around carefully, to see

someone who smiles at you in a special way...or a dog that wags its tail extra hard whenever you are near... or a tree that lets you climb it easily... or a brook that lets you be quiet when you want to be quiet. Sometimes you have to find your friend. Some people have lots and lots of friends... and some people have quite a few friends... but everyone... everyone in the whole world has at least one friend. Where did you find yours?



Got Stuffing?

Each year our neighbors at Calvary Baptist Church assemble 150 Turkey Dinner baskets for city families which they distribute during the weeks before Thanksgiving. They have invited us to contribute stuffing to their baskets this year—are you able to help? If so, kindly drop off any donations of boxed or bagged stuffing mixes to our Giving Chalice (located in the sanctuary). Our challenge is to collect 150 boxes or bags before Sunday November 17, Can we do it? Oh YES we can!!! Contact Sally Liebermann with any questions and let's take the stuffing challenge!

A Leap of Faith

by Rev. Frank Clarkson

Last year, our congregation was one of twelve in New England invited to participate in a program called “Leap of Faith.” Churches that were identified as healthy and vital, with the potential to stretch and grow, were the ones asked to be part of this program. In Leap of Faith, aspiring congregations are paired up with mentoring congregations. Teams from each church meet and learn from one another. We were invited as an aspiring congregation and our Board of Trustees enthusiastically and unanimously said “yes!”

Our mentoring congregation is All Souls UU Church in New London, CT. You may remember reading about All Souls in the Fall 2012 issue of *UU World* magazine. You can find that story online at <http://www.uuworld.org/life/articles/220121.shtml>. Our travel team first met the team from All Souls at the Leap of Faith Launch Conference in Bedford in mid August. The travel team will be spending the weekend of October 4-6 in New London, visiting and learning from the folks at All Souls.

From the start, we felt kinship and connection with the All Souls team. They are wonderful people, and we feel blessed to be on this learning journey with them. They will visit us in Haverhill the weekend of November 9-10. Our Leap of Faith travel team members are Carolyn Hart, Sally Liebermann, Jim Ryan, Sarina Ryan, Abbe Wertz and myself. We created a video about UUCH to introduce our church at the launch conference. You can view it online at <http://vimeo.com/72309423>. There’s also lots of good information about Leap of Faith at this website: www.uunewenglandleapoffaith.org

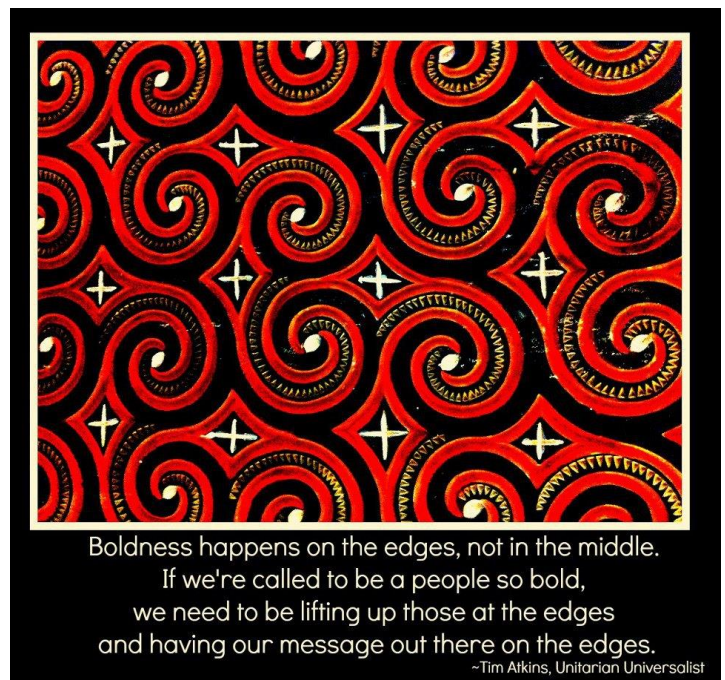
We’ve identified three challenges to work on, and are recruiting members for our home team, which will help us do this work. If you’re interested in joining the home team, speak to any of us on the travel team. Whether you join the home team or not, we want and need your perspective on these challenges, and we invite your participation. I spoke about Leap of Faith in the sermon on September 22. See: <http://www.uuhaverhill.org/sites/default/files/sermons/Fly.pdf>. This promises to be a great and gratifying adventure, and we on the LoF travel team look forward to sharing it with you!

Some Thank You’s!

Thank you to Anne Doughty for her donation of art/craft treasures and the shelving to house them to Religious Education! Your gems and sparkles already adorn many a treasure box!

Thank you to our generous and talented volunteers who are working with our children and youth on Sunday mornings! Children are settling in, our classrooms are clean and comfortable and our experiences are rich and meaningful. Thanks for getting us off to a great start!

There are many others to thank who quietly undertake unseen volunteer tasks—Pat Feller for initiating the new back door project, and seeing it through... Trudy Blyth for weekly office and kitchen elf work... Bonnie Floyd for revitalizing the greeter program... Our Community Meals chefs and helpers... Coffee hour cooks... Our hard-working board members (did you know they have reading assignments?) and committee chairs... Those who fill the Giving Chalice each month... and so many others! Thank you!!



What Happens Every Month

This is a list of recurring gatherings in our community. To make changes, or add a meeting or event, contact Lisa Compton in the office.

Drumming Circle gathers the first Sunday of the month at 12:45 pm in the Meditation Chapel.

Tuesday Bag Lunch happens every Tuesday from noon to 1 pm in the Ladies Parlor. Join Rev. Frank and others for conversation and connection.

Ladies Circle meets the second Saturday of the month at 1 pm. All women of the church are invited to be part of this group that serves the church and knows how to have fun!

UUCH Book Group meets on the second Sunday of the month at 9 am in the Meditation Chapel.

Lectio Divina is offered on the fourth Sunday of the month at 9:15 am in the Meditation Chapel. This ancient spiritual practice offers a contemplative way to engage with scripture.

Community Meals happen on the first and third Saturdays, beginning at 2 pm. This is a primary way we serve the needy in our community. Sign up in the Murray Room or contact leaders Abbe Wertz abbewertz@yahoo.com or 978-914-01015 or Kristie Colton kenozagals@me.com

MoonPool Coven gathers on the first and third Sundays of the month at 6 pm. Led by Rick Baillargeon rick@lifetyme.com and Marylou Johnson mldiz109@verizon.net, the Coven offers teaching about and experience of pagan spirituality.

Meditation Group meets Sundays at 5 pm, led by John Lalumiere, jlalu100@msn.com.

Mindful Meditation Practice is held Mondays at 7 pm, led by Betsy Robertson, at bets.robertson04@gmail.com

Board of Trustees meets the second Wednesday of the month at 7 pm. Meetings are always open to visitors; however 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 meet (it's obvious, isn't it?) at 6:30 pm every week, and sing in worship about one Sunday a month. This choir depends on a steady attendance commitment. Ability to read music is desirable, but not required.

New Moon Coffeehouse offers traditional and new folk music and amazing baked goods on the third Saturday of the month at 8 pm. For more information, <http://www.newmooncoffeehouse.org>

Alcoholics Anonymous meets in our downstairs hall at 7 pm on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday nights.

Interfaith Special Needs Worship, led by UU minister Rev. Wendy Von Zirpolo, is held in the Murray Room the second Monday of the month at 6 pm.

Welcoming Congregation Committee works to make sure our church is open to all people, especially gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender folks. Watch the e-News and Sunday announcements for meeting times.

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 Scheutze at Joy.Strings@verizon.net.

Social Justice Committee meets the third Sunday of the month, following coffee hour. All are welcome.

Various other committees meet periodically throughout the year. Watch the e-News and Sunday announcements for meeting times for the following committees: Building & Grounds, Committee on Ministry, Green Sanctuary, Music, Membership, Parish Nurses, Permanent Funds, Stewardship, and Worship.

Office Wish List

Does anyone have an unused Dustbuster (the rechargeable kind) they would be willing to donate, or the funds to purchase one? The office floor and windowsill would appreciate it! So would the office manager...

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

Intern Minister 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

