



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, November, 2015

Tuesday, November 3 is Election Day, and UUCH is a polling place. The building will be open from 6:30 am until 8 pm for voters.

The Ladies Circle's November 14 meeting is a field trip to the New England Quilt Museum in Lowell, MA. We will meet at the church and depart at 10 am.

The Choir will warm up on Sundays, November 8, 15, and 22 at 9:45 am, and then sing at the 10:30 Worship Service. Regular rehearsals begin following Coffee Hour. There are no rehearsals on November 1 or 29, when Nate De Young will be away (Fred MacArthur will play those days). Come sing with us—all are welcome!

Overnight Youth Conference will be at UUCH from 9 am on Saturday, November 14 until 9 am Sunday, November 15. If you need access to the building during these hours, please contact Sally Liebermann.

December Communicator Deadline is November 15 by 9 am. Articles (limit 325 words, less if you include graphics or photos) are welcome from groups, committees and individuals. Articles should be of some spiritual or intellectual depth.

New Moon Coffeehouse, Saturday, November 21, 8 pm. Featured artist is blues/folk/rock singer songwriter Les Sampou, Accordion/guitar rock duo Ruby Mancini opens the show. Tickets for this show are available at the door starting around 6:30 pm; concert doors open at 7:30 pm. Tickets may also be reserved prior to the show at www.newmooncoffeehouse.org, or by calling 978-459-5134.

Haverhill's Annual Santa Parade and Betsy Conte Food Drive will be held on Sunday, November 22. Be mindful of this when you park for worship that day! Church families off-load the food offerings collected along the parade route, sort them, and prepare them for delivery to the seven food pantries in the city.

The office will be closed for Thanksgiving Day on Thursday, November 26. Happy Thanksgiving to all! Please see the article about our "Stuffing Drive" on page 3.



Things Seen and Unseen

by Rev. Frank Clarkson

Don't you come to church seeking to engage with life's big questions; to be more present to its joys and sorrows and make meaning from them? Our Spiritual Exploration program offers a variety of ways to do this: classes and discussions, book groups and workshops on diverse subjects like death and dying, race in America, the Bible, and various aspects of religion, spirituality and Unitarian Universalism. We've used programs like the PBS series *The Power of Myth* and *God in America*, and Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way*. My goal this year is to expand these ways you can explore and enrich your spirituality here.

I imagine a vigorous program of offerings here that will feed your soul, expand your mind, and help you to engage more deeply with people here and in the wider world. Building this program will take time and effort, and we need your help. First, we need to know what you are interested in. Are you drawn to engaging with current social issues like racism and Black Lives Matter, immigration and income inequality? Do you want to explore spiritual practices like prayer and meditation, and would you be interested in day-long or weekend spiritual retreats? Is your interest in religious traditions and history, or studying scripture, or engaging with the mystics? There are so many things we could offer, and we will shape the program based on your needs and desires, so please let me know what they are!

Finally, if this talk of Spiritual Exploration excites you, how would you like to be involved? Will you consider being part of our leadership team or leading an offering? If so, I'd love to talk to you. This is a growing edge for our congregation; a way to live more deeply into our mission of transforming lives and the world. I hope you'll want to be part of it!

Black Lives Matter

by Bill Taylor

[Editor's note: This Statement of Conscience was unanimously approved at the Board of Trustees meeting on October 14.]

In the past year, the Black Lives Matter movement has arisen as a powerful political and ideological force, working to liberate Black people from oppression they continue to face in the U.S., including the disproportionate rates at which they are arrested, incarcerated, and killed by police. Recognizing that the ideals guiding the Black Lives Matter movement align closely with our UU values, the UUA General Assembly has called for UU congregations to support the movement, and to work toward an end to racial injustice. We, the UU Church of Haverhill, resolve to answer that call.

Believing in the inherent worth and dignity of every person, we affirm that black lives matter, despite the forces in our society that deny their worth.

Believing in our interdependence with all human beings, we recognize that we have a responsibility to challenge racial injustice in all of its forms, and to work for a place of dignity, safety, and true equality for people of color in our society.

Therefore, we resolve to take action and offer public witness in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.



Second Sunday Collection for November

The Second Sunday donation for November will go to the Haverhill Citizen's Center Community Meal on December 7, 2015, which will be organized by UUCH. On a yearly basis UUCH sponsors one Citizen's Center meal which serves approximately 150 community members at the Citizen's Center at 10 Welcome Street in Haverhill. For more information about helping with the Meal contact Diane Itasaka at diane.itasaka@gmail.com. In coordination with UUCH's Community Meals program the Citizen's Center meal is another great way for UUCH to have a concrete, positive impact on issues of hunger and poverty in the Haverhill community. Thank you for your support of this valuable community service.

This will be the last Second Sunday Collection of the 2015 year. So far this year we have supported many valuable Haverhill and Merrimack Valley assistance programs including: Anchor of Hope Diaper Bank, Merrimack Valley Elder Services, Waltham House (support for transgender teens), Link House (support for addiction services), Ruth's House and WIC (Women, Infant and Children- food and nutrition services). The thank you letters we get from these organizations are very indicative of appreciation not only of the financial assistance but appreciation for the attention and care from UUCH to the greater community. Second Sunday continues to be a great way for UUCH to make real our mission of "transforming lives and the world." Thank you for your continued support of this church and of our wider community.

UU Mass Action Story Slam Includes Rev. Frank

Rev. Frank is part of a fundraiser for UU Mass Action, a storytelling slam called, "Out of the pulpit and into the frying pan; stories at the intersection of hindsight, hope and humor." The idea is to share a story you couldn't tell from the pulpit, hopefully in an engaging and funny way. Frank is worried about his ability to do this, and secretly hopes you won't come and witness the many opportunities for embarrassment. But if you must know, it's happening on Saturday, Nov. 7 from 7 to 9 pm at the First Parish in Bedford. More details and tickets available at www.eventbrite.com/e/2nd-annual-story-slam-tickets-18906752606



Back by Popular Demand: Our Turkey Stuffing Drive!

For the past several years, we have joined with our friends across the street at Calvary Baptist Church, assisting them in providing 150 Thanksgiving dinner baskets. The baskets include a turkey and all the trimmings. Last year we collected 150 jars of gravy. This year, we are seeking 150 boxes or bags of stuffing mix. As we have in the past, our offerings will be on display in the chancel for all to see. Please contribute to this hunger ministry as you are able. Stuffing may be left at the church at any time up until Sunday, November 15.



Caring Committee Update

by Barbara Robbins

A busy fall for the Caring Committee has followed on the heels of a busy summer. Fortunately, the Caring Committee has a "wider circle of care" which always steps up to the plate when someone is in need. It is not so fortunate that there has been a great need for our care recently. I think I speak for all of the members of our wider circle of care when I say that those who provide the care feel honored and pleased to be part of this circle.



Our main goal is to provide help and comfort to members of our church family whenever possible. Our activities include sending cards, providing rides to appointments, running errands and visiting those who cannot easily get out of their homes.

We have just created a procedure to inform the members of the Ladies' Circle when a need is brought to our attention. I am very grateful that they have offered to connect with the Caring Committee in this way. If you would like to be part of our wider circle of care or have any questions about our committee please speak to Barbara Robbins or Barbara Cleary (Caring Committee co-chairs). Our meetings are held after church on the 4th Sunday of each month. If you need any assistance or hear of others who need assistance (through Facebook or the old-fashioned grape vine) please let a committee member know. For assistance through the month of December please contact Barbara Cleary at (978) 373-2495.

Fair Trade Holiday 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 8th, 15th, and 22nd. Contact Richard Smyth for more information at rsmyth64@yahoo.com.

[Editor's Note: Fair Trade is a social movement whose stated goal is to help producers in developing countries achieve better trading conditions and to promote sustainability. Members of the movement advocate the payment of higher prices to exporters, as well as higher social and environmental standards for workers.]



Help Our Friends at The Open Hand Pantry

by Bill Taylor

As I hear and see so much going on around church these days, I'm often reminded how we are able to give of ourselves in service to others in so many ways. But one of the most vital ways we all can give--especially to those less fortunate--is by way of our food ministry.

And the need locally for this ministry is great. Every Tuesday, scores of less fortunate families enter the Open Hand Pantry next door, desperate to be helped. I reached out to the folks at the Pantry and asked how we at the church can help keep it well-stocked and better serve the needs of these less fortunate folks. The reply I received from them was enthusiastic and detailed.

They find that they need these non-perishable food items every week: hot chocolate, tea bags, coffee, salad dressing, instant flavored oatmeal, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, boxed cereal and milk, and 8-10 oz. cans of meats (like spam), baked beans, spinach, spaghetti O's, ravioli, beans, peas, and corn. They also find that they regularly need these toiletry items: shampoo, body wash, toothpaste and deodorant.

In the coming weeks and months, you'll see various reminders (like this one!) about how we can help. I hope that we do, even if it's just one item here and there. Donating a box of cereal, for example, might not seem like much, but it means everything to a family struggling to provide their hungry children breakfast. Filling our giving chalice with our combined generosity will fill the spirits of so many of our friends and neighbors, especially during the holidays.

Transgender Day of Remembrance

From the Welcoming Congregation Committee

Since 1998, November 20 has been set aside as a day to memorialize those who have been killed as a result of the hatred or fear that some others have of transgender or gender non-conforming people. The Transgender Day of Remembrance was founded by Gwendolyn Ann Smith, a transgender graphic designer, columnist and activist to memorialize the murder of Rita Hester in Allston, Massachusetts. The event has been held annually and is now an international day of action which calls to attention the continued violence endured by the transgender community.

This day has been marked in many ways including the reading of the names and the lighting of candles for those members of the transgender community who have lost their lives from violence all over the world. For your information, 18 of the 19 homicides of transgender individuals in the US this calendar year were of women of color. No one should be subjected to violence nor denied their basic rights because of their gender identity or expression.

Our church has participated in other ways to support the transgender community. Spearheaded by the Social Justice Committee, we have worked for the passage of the Transgender Anti-Discrimination bill before the Massachusetts legislature.

For those who wish to participate directly, there will be a service at St. Paul's Cathedral in Boston on Sunday Nov. 22 from 4-7. First Parish UU of Chelmsford will hold its remembrance on Friday Nov. 20. Please consider holding in your hearts our transgender brothers and sisters during this time of remembrance.

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 Warm-Up is most Sundays at 9:45 am, with rehearsal at 12:15 pm. 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!

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.

Hunger/Elder Services Roundtable meets second Tuesdays at 10 am.

The 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 Maggie Reeve.

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

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

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.

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

New Moon Coffeehouse is on third Saturdays at 8 pm, September through May.

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, Membership, Ministry, Music, Parish Council, Permanent Funds, Religious Education, Stewardship, Welcoming Congregation and Worship Committees.

Church Leaders and Staff Contact Information

Board of Trustees Chair: Maggie Reeve: maggie.reeve@hotmail.com

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

Rev. Frank Clarkson: frank@uuhaverhill.org

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

Music Director: Nate De Young: nathaniel.deyoung@yahoo.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

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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