



The Communicator

the monthly newsletter of the

UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF HAVERHILL

What's Happening This Month, January, 2014

The Office Reopens Jan. 2, 2014

Following the holiday break, the office will reopen and resume the regular hours of Tue., Wed., and Thur. from 9-3, and other times by appointment.

Wednesday Night Singers Begins New Schedule

The Wednesday Night Singers will begin an every-other-week rehearsal schedule, starting Jan. 15 from 6:30-8 pm. All are welcome; music reading ability is preferred but not required, and a sincere attendance commitment is necessary. Contact: Claudia Keyian, 978-462-3405

UUCH Book Series

This year's book series continues with sections Three 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.

UU 102 Film Series

This adult education series explores a variety of world faiths. The next film will be shown on Friday, Jan. 10 at 7 pm. We will see a film about Christianity, followed by discussion.

Ladies Circle Program Jan. 11 at 1 pm

At its regular monthly meeting, the Ladies Circle will meet to hear book reviews. Refreshments will be served. All are welcome!

"Remember the Hungry" Coffee Hour Jan. 5

On the first Sunday of each month we "Remember the Hungry" at coffee hour by serving beverages and just a small amount of food. There will be baskets for money donations for Community Meals, and the Giving Chalice will accept non-perishables (and pet food!) for the food pantry.

MoonPool Coven Resumes Full Moon Rituals

On the Wednesday closest to the full moon, the Coven will convene for its full moon ritual in the Meditation Room at 7 pm. The first meeting will be held Jan. 15.

Soup on Sundays Fundraiser

See article elsewhere in this issue about this fundraiser, which will benefit the operating budget of the church. It promises to be a warm and delicious undertaking during the months of Jan. and Feb.!

New Moon Coffeehouse Jan. 18 at 8 pm

This month Guy Davis is featured. Guy is an American blues guitarist and banjo player, actor, and musician. Opening act by Shun Ng. Tickets available at the door. Refreshments are served at intermission.

Martin Luther King Breakfast, Jan. 19 at 8 am

Our joint commemoration of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's life and legacy with our neighbors across the street at Calvary Baptist Church will take place in our downstairs dining room. All are invited!

Parish Council Meets Wed., Jan. 15 at 6:30 pm

All committee/task force chairs, or their representatives should plan to attend this important quarterly meeting.

Film "A Ripple of Hope" Jan. 26 at 12:30 pm

Following worship and coffee hour, the adult education program will offer a screening of this film, which follows Robert Kennedy's trip to Indianapolis on the evening of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination. All are welcome.

Haverhill Harmony Drumming Circle

See the article elsewhere in this issue about this multigenerational activity offered at UUCH on first Sundays at 12:15 pm.

Things Seen and Unseen

by Rev. Frank Clarkson

At times the parish minister is the most visible representative of the church. One of the reasons clergy wear robes is so people can find us in the crowd on Sunday morning! But sometimes people make the mistake of thinking the minister is the church, and that's simply not true. We are the church, all of us, together.

I hope you will discover this truth in new ways during the four months I'm away on sabbatical. We've identified a great team of leaders who will be responsible for the different aspects of our congregational life, and I'm confident that you all are going to thrive in my absence. Do you know this saying from Lao Tzu? "Leader are best when people barely know they exist. They talk little, and when the work is done, the aim fulfilled, the people will say, 'We did this ourselves.'" This is my hope for these four months--that you will be proud of and amazed by what you accomplish together.

I'm looking forward to the opportunities this sabbatical offers me--to lay down the daily responsibilities of parish ministry for a time, to spend more time in reflection and study. I'm grateful for this gift of time to rest and be restored, to travel and explore new ideas, to spend more time with my family. I hope the fact that I'm on sabbatical will encourage you to find your own ways to observe sabbath time--to find practices that nourish your own soul and help you be in touch with what is sacred and life-affirming.

At the same time, I'm going to miss you, and I'm going to miss being part of our congregational life. I won't be communicating with you, but please know that I will be keeping you all in my heart and in my prayers. Though I'm away for four months, the connections between us will remain, just in a different form for a time.

This church community is such a blessing to those within and outside its walls. So please, remember that you are the church, and keep being the church while I'm away. Please show up regularly and care for one another, support your leaders and be good to yourselves. And don't forget to have fun!

Intern Insights

by Julie Lombard

Happy New Year!

Amanda Poppei wrote a meditation to welcome this annual transition. She shared, "My friends, we have arrived. We are here, in this new year. We have crossed the boundary of time, into the next year, with all its resolutions and plans and schedules ahead of us. Let us pause, for just this moment, before we move boldly onward. Let us pause to hear the breathing of those around us, to feel their presence, to know their presence in our lives. Let us pause to consider the trees, their branches stripped bare, their elegant architecture on display. Let us pause to feel the spirit of life and love that ties us to each other, that winds its way through our very bones and settles in our hearts. Before we march forward, armed with resolutions that will shortly be forgotten in the day-to-day of living, let us notice what it is that remains every year, every day. What exists beyond schedules and months, beyond time. It welcomes us to life, not just at the start of the year, but every day."

This is often a time of making resolutions, and Amanda reminds us that there is something that may exist in our daily lives, an overlooked hope within, that draws from the deepest wells of our core values. What are the themes of your core values that you have carried forward through time? She reminds us that New Year's might be more than a time for resolutions and new promises that we make to ourselves; perhaps what we desire most is a seedling already planted within, waiting to be nourished and fostered by self-awareness.

This New Year offers me more precious time with this congregation to continue to learn. Even as Rev. Frank goes on sabbatical, I will not be without a teacher. You are my teachers and I have much to learn from you. I am looking forward to our journey together in the months ahead. My hope is to learn what your core values are and see which ones we have in common. Let us move onward boldly together.



Gratitude from R. E.

By Sally Liebermann

Our first term in R.E. has been fun, inspiring and full of rich opportunities for children and youth to learn, work, play and worship together. Our Sunday morning volunteers are an inspiring, fun and generous group which consistently provides our children and youth with safe space to explore new ideas. We owe them our greatest thanks and admiration for sharing their time and wisdom!

In addition to our Sunday morning lineup, we owe thanks to those who coordinate our many events, supporting both long-loved traditions and exploring new ideas to learn and serve. We have many folks to thank for coordinating our Pumpkin Potluck, Stone Soup Workshop, Santa Parade Concession Stand, Betsy Conte Food Drive Off-Load, Fleece Hats Workshop and our Living Nativity celebration! Great thanks also go to friends who donated supplies and snacks and all manner of useful items to R.E. classrooms and events.

Please join me in celebrating these fantastic friends who are too many to name! You know who they are: they escort children to classes and they are there when you pick up your children. They visit other churches and houses of worship, sharing seats and car space. They set up for potlucks and they clean up afterward. They donate their time and their money and snacks, saving coupons and shopping at sales to get the most savings on supplies. They work with countless yards of fleece, cutting and sewing and guiding young hands in the process of creating hats and goodwill. They invest their time and spirit into special trainings and they facilitate our unique O.W.L. programming. They spend countless hours learning, planning and implementing strategies that create safe and sacred space. They read emails and curriculum, they arrive early and stay late. They are our wonderful volunteers, always ready to listen and learn and share. To you, who are too many to name here, we honor and thank you! We wish you and your loved ones a warm and peaceful holiday season and time to rest, reflect and rejoice!



Caring Ministries

By Stacey Sherman

UU Haverhill has always been a congregation that reaches out to help one another. The number of acts of kindness extended is beyond calculation and that suits many of the folks who offer assistance as a natural manifestation of their spirit. We need your help to assure that all congregants' needs are met.

Several years ago, encouraged by Rev. Frank, two members of UUCH attended a UUA sponsored training program on providing Pastoral Care. The objective of that training was assure we are doing all we can to assure those in need.

The Caring Ministries team has surveyed the UUCH community for two years. The survey's purpose is to:

- Develop a web of support encompassing all.
- Identify those able to provide assistance.
- Design and implement the means to integrate that information efficiently.

Members of the UU churches in Portsmouth and Concord, NH, have graciously shared what they do to service their communities. Based on their experience we plan to come up with a system that will work for our Haverhill community.

Many visitors to our community note that we are a warm and caring group. We can all take comfort from knowing that hands will be there when we are in need. We always welcome thoughts and suggestions from you to improve this work. How to help:

- Fill out and return to the office a Caring Ministries Survey.
- Use and encourage others to use our new pink Help Request Forms, found in the pew racks.
- Sign the birthday list in the Murray Room.
- Contact committee members with questions, needs you may have, or offers to help.
- Join the Caring Ministries Committee.

Caring Ministries Members: Anne Doughty, Colleen McKenna, Terry Koukias, Barbara Cleary, Barbara Gove, Lynn LaFerla, Julie Lombard, Trudy Blyth, Carolyn Hart, Cil Dullea, Frank Clarkson, Sandra DeVilles, Stacey Sherman

"Soup on Sundays" Fundraiser

by Stacey Sherman

This fundraiser will benefit the operating funds of the church. It will put good, homemade, warm food in our tummies this winter! Homemade soup (by our own chefs!) will be sold in quart increments at our Sunday coffee hours during January and February. Each order will include oyster crackers, which were donated by the manufacturer. We will try to offer a vegetarian and/or gluten free soup as an option each week. Contact: Stacey Sherman, thesherm@comcast.net, or 978-373-1227.



Haverhill Harmony Drummers

By Andrea Sweeney

Come experience the peace, harmony and fun found in drumming as a group. No experience required. If you have a heartbeat, you can find the beat in a drum! All ages are welcome to attend. Andrea Sweeney, a professional Haverhill artist and long-time member of Northshore UU Church (Danvers), and Richard Smyth facilitate the circle. Andrea feels that drumming offers more than meets the ears...

Drumming is a meditation and a melding of our rhythms into one big social consciousness without words. It transcends verbal conversation in a spiritual way that's fun, intriguing and relaxing. We come away feeling connected to ourselves, each other, and music as well. It's a way for all generations to have a time of connection as a multi-generational circle where all are considered creatively equal.

The Drumming Circle meets first Sundays in the Meditation Room at 12:15, following coffee hour. Contact: Andrea Sweeney artenviron@mac.com

Introducing the "Second Sunday" Collection Donation

by Abbe Wertz

A season of giving leads to a culture of giving.

The Board of Trustees would like you to know that starting in January 2014, UUCH will be donating one Sunday's (non-pledge) plate collection per month to a local humanitarian cause. In doing so, we are following in the footsteps of many other UU congregations, and we are proud to join their ranks of generosity and good care of our neighbors.

On the second Sunday of each month, the "loose plate" collection will be given to a pre-chosen organization, chosen by the congregation and its committees and approved by the Board of Trustees. We will include organizations that address anything from heat assistance to food pantries, animal rescue to diaper banks. The Haverhill community has many needs that UUCH already addresses in so many ways, but we can do more. We believe that, by increasing our generosity towards the greater community, we are truly embodying our seven UU Principles and taking concrete actions in their light.

A few details: if you are writing a check that you want to be credited towards your yearly pledge, please remember to write "pledge" in the memo line. If you would like, you can donate to the Second Sunday donation in your check that week by denoting "donation" in the memo line and the specific amount you'd like to donate. If you have a particular group that you would like to add to our consideration of donation recipients please email abbewertz@yahoo.com or cori.thurlow@gmail.com



What Happens Every Month

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

Drumming Circle gathers first Sundays at 12:15 pm in the Meditation Chapel.

Choir Rehearsal

The choir meets Sundays at 9 am to rehearse, and sings periodically at Sunday Worship. All are welcome; ability to read music is a plus, but not required.

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!

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

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

Community Meals happen on 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 first and third Sundays 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.

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

Board of Trustees meets second Wednesdays 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 meets (isn't it obvious?) at 6:30 pm every other week, beginning January 15, and sings in worship about one Sunday a month. This choir depends on a steady attendance commitment. Ability to read music is preferred, but not required.

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

Interfaith Special Needs Worship, led by Rev. Wendy Von Zirpolo, is held in the Murray Room on second Mondays 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 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 third Sundays following coffee hour. All are welcome.

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.

Community Meals

Every first and third Saturday, volunteers shop for, cook, serve and clean up after this free meal for the entire community. This is a very rewarding outreach program, serving 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)

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

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

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>