



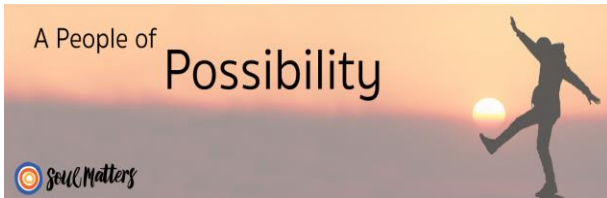
The Flaming Chalice

The newsletter of The Unitarian Universalist Community Church
69 Winthrop Street ~ PO Box 8 ~ Augusta, ME 04332-0008

Winter 2018 / 2019

Sunday Worship Services at 9:15 & 11:00A.M.

WORSHIP AT UUC IN JANUARY



As Unitarian Universalists we draw from many sources, our members embrace a range of beliefs and faith traditions, and we celebrate inclusion. Yet, our sacred space does not offer a flexible space for people who wish to gather in circles, on cushions, prayer rugs or yoga mats or with dance.

Very few people, especially those familiar with us, would ever say Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Augusta is a Protestant church. Yet, every week we gather in a sanctuary with pews facing forward to focus on a speaker or worship leader. Our Sunday service is crafted and offered with elements (readings, hymns, offering, sermon/reflection) from the Protestant tradition. While our sense of who we are has evolved, and our messages and music are theologically diverse, the way we gather on Sunday mornings remains unarguably Protestant in nature.

With this as our back drop, a piece of our story, we have an exciting – some might prefer the words ‘anxiety producing’ – opportunity to explore our January theme: *What does it mean to be a people of POSSIBILITY?* in new and innovative ways.

The worship committee has dedicated five Sundays (Dec. 30th – Jan. 27th) to exploring diverse models of ‘worship’ to foster an expansive and inclusive use of sacred space. A January worship team is crafting a variety of services to expand the ways in which we gather to connect to our deepest self, to connect to each other, to experience the grace of Love, and encounter the ineffable and oneness of all that cannot be named.

You will find a list of Sunday services and other opportunities listed below. But before we go there, a few of the logistics.

The pews: We will remove eight of the 13 pews, following service on December 30th. They will be replaced with the 70 red chairs we have in the building. The three pews in the far back as well as the last row of pews will remain in the sanctuary. The pews will be moved to the hallway and fellowship hall. Folks using fellowship hall for meetings will use the folding chairs in the storage room.

Each service has two or more leaders. In the spirit of shared ministry and collaborative worship, Rev. Carie will work with one or more people to plan and co-lead services. Additionally on January 6th local interfaith religious leaders will participate in a service on prayer. With greater participation in leadership the worship committee will be able to better assess the experience of worship leaders and associates. By engaging our local leaders we will be able to consider how to grow our interfaith ministries in Augusta.

Then what? The discernment team will guide a listening process with members and friends, along with the worship committee and the minister to hear of the experiences, hopes, and wishes for the future set up in our sanctuary. The team held an informational session on December 16th to offer members and friends an

opportunity to learn more about this time of possibility and exploration. Below is a report of the Dec. 16th meeting.

Report for December 16, 2018 Meeting

The Discernment Team hosted a meeting for all interested members and friends between services on December 16, 2018. The purpose of the meeting was to answer questions about the removal of pews from the sanctuary for experimental worship services throughout January and to hear hopes and concerns about the removal of the pews.

Excitement was expressed about doing something different and satisfaction in gathering while facing each other (described as a more matrilineal seating arrangement). There was worry that services would minimize or eliminate quiet reflection and meditation. There was concern for people that use the pews in front of them as a support to aid in standing and sitting down. There were questions about what happens with the pews and what happens in February.

Two of the five services will be more interactive—one encourages dance movement and the other conversation. The other services will offer more quiet contemplation.

Rows of pews will remain in the back of the church and this seating option will be incorporated in each service.

The pews will be in the hallways and in fellowship hall during January.

The Discernment Team will have a 2nd all congregational meeting, January 27 @ 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. During this meeting, members and friends will have an opportunity to share their experiences and offer feedback so that we can learn the wishes of the community with regard to the future setup of pews and chairs in the Sanctuary. **The Discernment Team will then present a recommendation at the Feb. 14th Board of Trustees meeting in keeping with the expressed wishes and concerns of the congregation.**

For more information or to share your thoughts, please contact a member of the Discernment Team.

Rev Carie Johnsen	revcariejohansen@gmail.com
Karen Foust, chair	karmafoust@gmail.com
Erin Ballew	ballew.erin@gmail.com
Gary Chapin	garyparkerchapin@gmail.com
Claire Curole	panacea@gwi.net
Debbie Mattson	debbiemattson@hotmail.com
Annie Voorhees	annabelle.voo@gmail.com
Catherine Emery	chydemccoll@yahoo.com

SUNDAY SERVICES

What does it mean to be a people of possibility?

December 30th Quaker style program meeting with Rev. Carie and Karen Allen. Children will meet in Fellowship hall and go directly to the classroom.

Sanctuary set up: The pews will be set up in the round

Please note: Eight pews will be removed from the sanctuary following the second service.

January 6th Prayer service with Rev. Carie, Gary Chapin and the choir. Children will meet in Fellowship hall and go directly to the classroom. Sanctuary Set: chairs, meditation cushions and prayer rugs.

January 13th Radical Hospitality with Rev. Carie, Claire Curole and the choir. Youth and children are encouraged to participate in this intergenerational conversation. Sanctuary set up: cafe style service (tables and chairs)

January 20th Movement Service with Rev. Carie, Christine Little, Debbie Mattson, and Mindy Novick from Dances for Universal Peace. All ages—from our youngest to our oldest – are encouraged to participate in this intergenerational service. Sanctuary set up: some chairs in the round

January 27th Traditional Service: A sermon and three hymns with Rev. Carie, Dan Gilbert, and Orchestra. Children will begin in the sanctuary and be sung out to classroom. Sanctuary Setup: protestant style worship (chairs in rows facing forward)

PLEASE NOTE: Three pews will remain in the back of the Sanctuary **for ALL services** from Dec. 30 – Jan. 27

Snow dates for any service between Dec. 30th and Jan. 27th will be Feb. 10th & 17th If weather requires cancellation of a service, we will extend the service into February so we can explore all the models of worship we have planned.

NEW YEAR'S EVE and
NEW YEAR'S DAY
Labyrinth in Sanctuary

December 31st

Interfaith New Year's Eve Celebration*

6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.

Hosted by UUCU and the greater Augusta, Hallowell and Winthrop interfaith community

This time of multifaith fellowship and prayer will focus around the ancient practice of walking the labyrinth. People of all ages and all faiths or no faith are invited to engage the ageless New Year's custom of releasing the old and welcoming in the new.

January 1st
New Year's Day Multicultural Brunch*
with raffle drawing
Hosted by UUCU Finance Committee

Gather up your family and friends for this community gathering to welcome in the New Year. Bring your favorite cultural or family dish to share. We will draw the winner of the *Anywhere in the World Raffle* promptly at 12:00 noon.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

to experience multiple uses of our sanctuary space

Peaceful Heart Sangha - Monday nights from 6:30-8:00 p.m. plus intensives on Jan. 5th and Feb. 2nd

UU Yoga Wednesday nights from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Social Action* Engaging the history of genocide in Maine with the Maine Wabanaki REACH Map Exercise. January 20th 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Snow date: January 27th

Family Dance Night January 12th Stay tuned and get your dance shoes ready.

Imbolc* (Pagan Sabbat) Saturday, February 2nd Imbolc is a Sabbat focused on coming out of the dark of winter; it is also the feast day of Brigid, the Goddess of healing.

*See event fliers for more information and for event contact information

From the desk of Rev. Carie

A faith Journey...

In my annual June 2018 report, I noted how (despite the lack of a functioning justice committee) UUCC is recognized as a justice leader in the greater Augusta community. For the past ten years I have observed this reality while exploring models for justice making within Unitarian Universalist congregations. I have come to the conclusion there is no existing program model that best fits UUCC. As such it befits us to create a model that capitalizes on UUCC strengths and empowers the emerging justice ministers in our community.

What I witness at UUCC is a multitude of leaders engaged in advocacy and action around a variety of issues: climate change, revitalizing democracy, expansion of Medicaid, racial justice, food scarcity and poverty, land conservation, immigration, indigenous rights and sovereignty, family planning, animal rescue, etc. These leaders are passionately engaged in building a more just world on the ground in our local, state, national, and global communities. They are agents of change, emboldened by their values, and showing up to speak truth to power.

As their minister, I ask, "What do they need from their church and their minister to sustain their call to action?" And I ask, "How are their faith and the Unitarian Universalist principles grounding and informing their call to respond to the injustice they witness?"

The answer or opportunity, as I see it, is not about building a justice committee within our community but rather about supporting, equipping, and sustaining the justice initiatives and passionate leadership rising up from the people in the pews. In December I approached the Board of Trustees about stepping into a leadership and visioning role focused on the development of an innovative UUCC justice ministries program based on the strengths of UUCC, the emergence of multiple justice advocates/leaders within our community, and our relationship with the Maine UU State Advocacy Network. My emerging vision for UUCC is a small group justice ministry where longstanding, new, and emerging justice leaders are supported and equipped to engage their passions and commitments in the wider world community.

Following (in part) the small group ministry model of intimacy, ultimacy, and service, the program I'm imagining would offer space for both spiritual reflection and leadership development. Holding intentional space for spiritual reflection will bring justice leaders together to connect with others committed to being agents of change in the world (intimacy); and foster in them a better relationship of what/who calls them and sustains them in the long journey of justice making (ultimacy). Gathering for leadership development then equips the leaders in our community, to strengthen their voice and inspire others to follow their leadership of advocacy and witness (service).

I have spoken with the small group ministry committee who supports this new innovative as a way of expanding their program through interconnection with justice ministry. While I have many ideas on the specifics of this program, I am eager to gather a small group to co-create and shape the program. Rather than identify a justice committee chair, I will gather a team of three leaders to help develop this new ministry at UUCC. If you are interested in being part of this innovative work, have ideas to share, or want to better understand the vision, let's talk.

In faith, Rev. Carie Johnsen

Save the Date
MLK Speaker Breakfast
Monday, January 21st
Winthrop Congregational Church
10 Bowdoin St, Winthrop, ME

Message from the President, UUCB Board of Trustees

Happy New Year! What a year 2018 has been. This is a good time to review and reflect where the past year has taken us. As I review and reflect on the board of trustees' activities since our last newsletter, I want to thank the board for the thoughtful discussions and decision about having an all-gender bathroom.

This was a decision that took multiple months to make as we wanted to give congregants voice into the decision and to have time to make the necessary changes to make the all-gender bathroom ADA compliant thus creating a "safe" bathroom for all. This is an important change we made in our church building as we, as a board and I'm sure as a congregation, want to have all individuals feel safe when needing to use the bathroom.

Our new all-gender, private, one stall bathroom, locked from the inside meets the needs of all of our congregants. This bathroom can be used by all, please just make sure to lock the door when you are using the facility. Please thank the members of the building and grounds for making the changes that changed the men's bathroom into the all-gender bathroom. Your hard work is greatly appreciated. If you haven't already seen the new sign, here's what it looks like.



Our board also made fiscally responsible decisions concerning our investments, which were based on recommendations from our very hard working finance committee. A variety of changes were investigated and the decisions that were made helps keep the church on very solid long-term financial ground. We, as a board, are committed to ensuring that our church looks towards the future with an eye on sustainability and not just take it one year at a time. We have had, and will continue to have, multiple discussions of ways for sustainability to happen.

One of the ways to help with financial security and meeting our budgetary needs this year, was the implementation of a travel raffle, which we have hopes of making \$20,000. This is the biggest fundraiser that we have tried and many thanks to Nancy Fritz, Catherine Palmer and Kathy Shaw, along with all those who have sold or bought tickets to help make this fundraiser a success. I also want to thank everyone who has worked hard at all of our fundraisers. Through all of our efforts, we are able to continue reaching out and meeting the needs of our congregation and community.

As a board we also started a discussion about developing a political activity policy, which we will be asking for congregational input in the near future. Thank you, Dylan Voorhees for researching similar policies and writing a draft for the board to have a jumping off point. Please look for opportunities to have your voice heard on this topic.

I, as your president, look forward to 2019, which I'm sure will bring opportunities for growth and challenges that we will face together. Your board of trustees will continue to work hard to govern the church in ways that reflect our values and beliefs. Please continue to contact me with your concerns and opinions about what we as a board can do to meet the needs of our congregation.

I hope you have a wonderful New Year and that 2019 brings many blessings!

Peace to all

Jill Watson, Board President

Music at the UCC

The music program at the UCC is flourishing!

During the Fall, the choir welcomed new members and brought beautiful and inspiring music into our sanctuary. Featuring music by Ysaye Barnwell, Ola Gjeilo, W.A. Mozart, the Beatles, Shaker hymn tunes, the traditional Welsh Folksong "Ar Lan Y Mor", among others.



Our time with Rev. Alun-Wyn Dafis was a wonderful experience. Rev. Alun sang in the choir and taught us how to sing in Welsh...yay us! The choir and orchestra joined forces for the annual Music Sunday on December 2nd, which featured soprano soloist, Torrey Gimpel, and the orchestra's own first chair violinist, Joan Atkinson.

The Guest Artist concert series welcomed International Klezmer musicians Sruli Dresdner and Lisa Mayer; as well as the local trio of moms, *Resinosa Ensemble*: Joëlle Morris, Eliza Meyer, and Bridget Convey. This is our third season for our guest artist programming, we look forward to seeing you at future concerts in our beautiful sanctuary.



Our next guest artist concert, back by popular demand, we once again welcome *James Johnson and Friends*, featuring the Erskine Academy Jazz Combo. This concert was a big hit last year....Join us on Saturday, March 16th 2019 at 4:00 p.m. (inclement weather date: March 23rd).

The choir is looking forward to the next few months of Winter, singing music to lift your spirits and invigorate your hearts and minds. We are always welcoming new members! If interested in joining the choir, please email Bridget Convey at: musicdirector@augustauu.org
All are welcome!

Bridget Convey, Music Director

Update from the Discernment Team

Discernment Divining

Discernment is a process of discovery that is multifaceted. It's not thinking your way to knowledge, it is thinking, intuiting, feeling, and behaving your way to an understanding of where you are and where you want to be. We do it a conversation at a time, and with an aggressive curiosity about everyone's thoughts and feelings.

A few months ago, we asked you all to fill out a survey. The questions were 1) what brought you to UCC? and 2) what anchors you here? Going through the abundant responses, we found that the answers answered a number of variations on these questions. When you came here, what were you looking for? What have you found? What brings you back every week? So, we read your responses through a number of lenses. Here are some of the things we discovered in your responses.

- Your responses fell according to a number of themes. These themes were *community (people, friends), connections, activism, comfort, principles, music, spirituality and worship, ministry, and a place for children*.
- Other things we saw were around *non-creedal, freedom of thought, new ideas in religion, hard time with doctrine, liberal faith tradition*.
- Newer members were more likely to mention *comfort*, older members were more likely to mention a *place for children*, as reasons why they came here. *Comfort* seems like a broad category that could have a number of facets.

- Many folks mentioned a specific person who invited them to come.
- Specific programs tended to be seldom mentioned. Possibly things like *orchestra*, *choir*, or *elder lunch* were included in peoples' thoughts when they said, *community*. Also, specific church work was not mentioned (fund raising, committee work, board members, work crews), but possibly these are also a subset of *community*.
- *Community* was, by far the most frequent answer, especially when we included words like "*inclusivity*," "*acceptance*," "*family*," "*encouragement*," "*needs met*," "*caring*," "*sharing*," and "*meetings*" in that category.

Thank you for engaging with us in this conversation. If you have any questions, please ask one of us. We're plotting the course of our team as we go, but we're eager to share our journey in progress.

Thanks

Gary Chapin, on behalf of the Discernment Team (Karen Foust, Annie Voorhees, Deb Mattson, Erin Ballew, Claire Curole, Catherine Emery, and Rev. Carie, Gary Chapin)

Stewardship Update

Hello Church Family!

It's the darkest time of the year, and I love it. It's less active and more cozy, if not exactly warm. As the wheel of the year turns, though, it leads us to our next holiday cluster (I love being a Unitarian Universalist!), celebrating the tangible return of light: Imbolc, Candelmas, Groundhog Day - all encouraging celebrations to hold our hands through the coldest time of year. When my eldest child was very small, one of her favorite songs was "This Little Light of Mine, I'm Gonna Let it Shine." When we sang "Hide it under a bushel?" She'd pretend to hide her light, then jump up and yell, "NO!" I still take heart when I remember her enthusiasm for shining her light for all. We can take this light and warmth and reach out to each other in our UUCA family and shine our lights for and with each other, the Augusta community, and the whole wide world. To that end, the Stewardship Committee is hosting again the *UUCCA Talent Show on February 2nd, from 3:00 - 4:30*, followed by a potluck supper in the Fellowship Hall. Last year I was delighted by the variety and skills of everyone who performed. It was such a warm, supportive audience that even a few people who had been timid to share got up and performed! So: know we will welcome your sparks as well as your flames of talent.

Stewardship Sunday is the next day, and in the service we will be dazzled by our choir and UUCA Occasional Orchestra who will be performing a piece of music by Eriks Esenvalds inspired by the poem, "Stars" by Sara Teasdale. The poem, which celebrates the beauty of the night sky, ends with the lines:

And I know that I
Am honored to be
Witness
Of so much majesty.

Although the proportions of elements may differ, humans and stars share about 97 percent of the same kind of atoms, according to a recent Sloan Digital Sky Survey. When I attend the Talent Show and listen to the music on Stewardship Sunday, I will be thinking about the stars, and I will also be thinking about us, too, the stewards of our planet, our church, and our community.

Hide it under a bushel? NO! Let us know if you want to share your majestic self in the Talent Show

---Liza Gottlieb and Martha Naber, Co-Chairs of the Stewardship Committee

Update on the Ahmadi-Aryaie Family

The Capital Area New Mainers Project (CANMP) is a cross-cultural organization that welcomes immigrants and works to create a thriving, integrated, multicultural community in central Maine. A primary way CANMP helps new Mainers is through Family Mentor Teams, who volunteer to help new arrivals adjust to life in the capital area. In spring 2017, a UUCC-based Family Mentor Team (FMT) began serving an Afghan refugee family of six who had been settled recently in Augusta.

On paper, our purpose was to provide logistical, social, and educational support. In reality, we received so much more than we gave! From swimming lessons to driving lessons; through homework help and English language learning; by navigating the complexities of health care, job searches, and green-card applications; by sharing meals, laughs, hugs, and occasional tears; our lives were enriched, our minds expanded, and our hearts filled to bursting!

In September 2018 the Ahmadi-Aryaie family moved to Portland and the next chapter of their lives as New Mainers. They are so very grateful to their FMT, to CANMP, and to UUCC for the support they received. They are confident, capable, compassionate, and ready to reach new heights. And we are all so much better to now call them family.

From your family mentor team, Hilary Neckles, Mary Simpson, Faith Madore, Jenny McKendry, Romaine Turyn, Ellen McGuire, Susan Parks, Pam Lombard



FMI about Capital Area New Mainers Project (CANMP) or to get involved, contact any of us or Director Chris Meyers Asch at newmainersproject@gmail.com



Goddess/Earth Circles

Unitarian Universalist Community Church
Augusta, Maine
Circles and Sabbats thru 2019

Earth-based spirituality includes traditions reclaimed from ancient cultures and some new paths that are drawn from many different sources. The common thread that links these various traditions is a deep reverence and connection to the Earth, Moon, Sun and nature itself.

The celebration of the eight earth festivals (Sabbats) expands with two events anticipated for each festival. The example was Winter Solstice or Yule:

December 22 Yule Ritual was hosted by Evergreen Grove and UUCC, and
December 23 Goddess/Earth Circles engaged darkness as we move toward light.

The next Festival is **Imbolc**:

Sunday, January 27 Imbolc Goddess/Earth Circles, noon-2pm, Fellowship Hall

Celebrates the moving toward Spring, the awakening of the earth, renewal and fertility. Meet Brigid, with a focus on the maiden goddess, healing, poetry, prognostication

Saturday, February 2 Sabbat: Imbolc is a Sabbat focused on coming out of the dark of winter; it is also the feast day of Brigid, the Goddess of healing.

Look for more information in the announcements and brochures and join us for:

Spring Equinox (March 20)
Beltane (May 1)
Summer Solstice (June 21)
Lammas, Teltane (Aug. 1)
Fall Equinox (Sept. 21)
Samhain (Oct.31/Nov. 1)
Winter Solstice/Yule (Dec. 20-23)

Goddess/Earth Circles meet one Sunday a month following morning worship services, Sept.-May at noon-2pm, in the Fellowship Hall. Gatherings are open to all ages, gender and sexual identifications. Gatherings include check-in/sharing, rituals, a focus on a topic and light refreshments. Circles also meet on Sundays between earth festivals to consider goddess traditions, and native/indigenous spiritual practices. A complete listing of the Circle schedule through 2019, and other opportunities, is in the brochure in the vestry, and on the UUCC website.

The UUCC Library in the Committee Room across from the sanctuary includes feminist studies and spirituality, information on goddesses, and various pagan traditions.

CONTACTS

Information on Circles: Helen Zidowecki, 207-582-5308, hzmre@hzmre.com,

Information on Sabbats: Contact: Rita Moran, 207-446-9994, kennebecblue@gmail.com

Submitted by Helen Zidowecki

UUCC Library Update

The UUCC Library, located in the Committee Room, presents a broad scope of Unitarian Universalism. *The library is an evolving community collection of over 540 items that depends largely on contributions.*

The Library functions on an *honor system*. Sign Out/In sheets are in a folder with the Return/Donations Basket on a shelf. If you are browsing and remove items from the shelves, please place in the Return basket to be re-shelved.

To donate to the Library, place the item in the basket with a note of your name and contact information. Contributions are reviewed by Thursday morning Small Group Ministry. If accepted, items will be cataloged. If not accepted, the contributor may retrieve the item or it can be placed in a “Free to Take” bookcase to the right of the main shelves.

The various sections include: General UU history, UU Meditation Manuals, writings by and about UUs, Beacon Press and Skinner House publications, Congregational Resources, Olympia Brown Mystery Series, Social Justice issues, UU variances (Transcendentalism, Humanism, Naturalism), Faith Traditions (Earth-based, Buddhist, Jewish), Aging and End of Life. The Library is a Service Project of Thursday morning Small Group Ministry. Some sections are coordinated with other groups, such as Circles/Sabbats, Peaceful Heart Sangha, Leadership Council, Seasoned Souls, History Committee.

UU World, the magazine of the Unitarian Universalist Association, produces a quarterly print magazine. Members receive copies. Don't discard – Donate them to the Library collection.

For complete information, see the *Library Brochure* and the listing of items in the Library, located on the shelf with the Return/Donations Basket. Contact: Mary Shifman (592-9011 call or text)

Submitted by Helen Zidowecki

UUC Website Update

The UUC Website www.augustauu.org has two primary functions:

1. Inviting people who are searching for information about Unitarian Universalism and/or a connection to come and see what we have to offer.
2. Providing a communication network and prominent resource for people who are already involved with UUC.

The essential voice on the website is yours! Leadership and participants are invited and encouraged to share the work and impact of their committee or program area. A dynamic website relies on regular input, as suggested here.

The UUC Calendar is on the website (Calendar and Communications) and you can select the format that you would like to use to read the calendar: weekly or monthly on a calendar display, or ‘agenda format’ of listing items daily and scrolling. The calendar is managed by Lynn, our Office Administrator, but the information comes directly from you and others. It is a key tool on the use of space and for collaboration in the life at UUC. Please connect with Lynn early in your planning, and with changes. Give as much detail as possible, including brief description and who to contact for more information.

Committee and program leaders, the Communications Work Group would like to talk with you, hopefully during January, for your comments and updates, and suggestions of how to make information accessible on a timely basis.

Keeping the website current with activities and communications within the UUC community, information found in other ways may be added to the website.

For example, the following have been added to the website:

Visitors: Newcomer Meet and Greet events information

RE/Adult Programs: “Read, Learn, Share Book Group” and “Making Peace with Money”

Goddess/Earth Circles: The brochure in the vestry has been added to the site.

Governance: Discernment Team description has been added.

A place to note changes and updates has been added to the Website page.

Please contact Lynn Smith, Communications Work Group (622-3232), or Helen Zidowecki (hzmre@hzmre.com, 582-5308) with comments and if you are interested in assisting with keeping the website current.

Announcing a NEW UU Affinity group

LIVING SUCCESSFULLY WITH DEPRESSION AND BIPOLAR DISORDER

A **NEW** UU Affinity Group begins **January 22nd from 1:30 to 3pm**; it will meet **every Tuesday at 1:30 in DREW HOUSE**; open to UU members and their families; no charge.

Many of us suffer the “winter blues”. Many of us know the pain of a long-term mood disorder. We welcome you to a peer-led group where you won't be diagnosed or “treated” but will receive the caring support of fellow sufferers. Come to a safe, confidential place where you can tell your story to people who will listen with compassion. We will speak our truths, become a small community and share ideas for coping with mood disorders.

Caring Wisdom from Peer Support will fight depression, that convincing liar whose distortions can be exposed by our stories. **Peer Facilitators** are fellow sufferers. We believe in the power of **Self Help** with each person contributing in their own way. We believe **each person is the final authority** over his or her own life. We believe that it's **okay to just listen** in a group committed to kindness, acceptance, hope and encouragement.

This Program is Confidential – everything said in the group **stays in the group**. The only exception is for the safety of a member.

This is not a substitute for professional help. No professional services will be offered. There will be **No** diagnosis and **No** referrals to services. It is **not** a 12-step program and attendance is **voluntary**.

Questions? We welcome your calls and emails. Contact group facilitators Jim Boyle 917-371-5691 jmboyle@earthlink.net and Gary Chapin 207-485-1023 garyparkerchapin@gmail.com or Rev. Carie Johnsen 207-623-3663 revcariejohansen@gmail.com

Other affinity group facilitators are Priscilla Ridgway, Michael Conley and Corinne Coleman.

News from the Membership Committee

Have you experienced the welcoming presence at UUCC?

How can we all spread this to others who come to UUCC for their first try, or maybe their tenth time? What will help you to continue to build a sense and experience of beloved community for yourself and others?

We see our mission as welcoming all who come to our community and working with everyone to help you connect to elements of our community that speak to you. In an effort to further our mission, the following initiatives are currently underway:

We recognize the value of having a warm welcome for everyone who arrives for worship. We are working with the Worship Associates to recruit and support greeters at Sunday services. Having provided greeters for the holiday fair, we see the value of having greeters for events in addition to Sunday.

A Welcome Table is now set up on Sunday morning where a member of our committee greets newcomers and helps them learn about the comprehensive offerings of our community.

On the third Sunday of the month we offer a drop in Meet and Greet for newcomers and anyone who wants to get better acquainted with our community. We gather in the minister's study in Judd house after each service for coffee and conversation. The idea is to help newcomers learn more about us and to have a chance to meet other newcomers.

And finally, we are working with the Small Group Ministry Committee to offer Exploring Your Unitarian Universalist Journey. All who are interested, newcomers and long term members, are invited to join us on four Sunday afternoons: Feb 10, March 10, April 14 and May 12. This experience is intended to give you new understandings of UU theology and history as well as deepen your connections with other participants. We encourage all of you to see yourselves as ambassadors for our faith and our community. Reach out to people you don't know whether you have seen them before or not. And if growing our community really calls to you, please consider joining our committee.

Kathy Kellison

Special Invitation to New Members

To those who have signed the membership book at UUCC during 2018, on behalf of the Membership and Small Group Ministry Committees, welcome to the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Augusta! During my 12 years here, I have experienced exhilarating spiritual fulfillment both as a regular congregant and as a member of Small Group Ministry.

When Annie, our kids, and I moved to Augusta from Framingham, MA, we left behind a large UU church where we were deeply involved in a variety of important activities and found many wonderful friends during our 10 years.

The previous minister of UUCC suggested that I try a Small Group to help orient myself to my new city. Over the intervening dozen years, I can honestly say that SGM has been the most vital part of my life here at the UUCC.

All of this is a prelude to invite you to consider this special invitation to become a part of our new Exploring Your UU Journey initiative. This unique program was designed to introduce our UU faith to spiritual explorers both new and for those who have joined within the past three to five years.

These sessions will be held every second Sunday afternoon from 1-3, starting on February 10 and ending on May 12, 2019. These sessions promise to be lively, upbeat, and insightful and we are very excited to share your story with all of us on this new venture.

For more information about this program, please contact either Kathy or myself. We'd love to have you be a part of Exploring Your UU Journey!

Michael Conley, Chair of the Small Group Ministry Committee, 248-7941 or estherpearl67@gmail.com
Kathy Kellison, Chair of the Membership Committee, 445-4415 or kell6787@gmail.com

Submitted by Michael Conley

A Message from Small Group Ministry



In the iconic song, "Turn, Turn, Turn", there is the line, "A time to build up, a time to break down." During this past year in Small Group Ministry, 2018 was certainly a period of change, upheaval, and then promising renewal.

My own group, which can trace its roots to the very beginning of the SGM two decades ago here at UUC, was in danger of a fatal implosion. Lois Whitcomb, an original member, moved to Colorado, Harold Burnett, another long-timer, resigned and, due to a number of reasons, other members were unsure of their future in the group. However, during a make-or-break group meeting, it was evident that SGM is an impactful part of each member's life. A consensus was reached quickly to keep the group going. But instead of bi-monthly meetings on Monday evenings, we agreed to a single monthly session on the first Friday of the month. Other groups were also in transition. One, facilitated by Dan Sorensen until his passing, reformed itself under Helen Wing, adding some new members.

This was indeed a period of turmoil, then, and uncertainty, among SGM in 2018. But there were signs that the power of SGM remained as strong as ever. "Doing church" is something that is rapidly changing, not only among UU congregations, but also in most other denominations. Sunday is no longer sacrosanct, it appears, and the unchurched among the Millennials is growing dramatically. Yet the need for spiritual exploration and fulfillment remains a deep-seated human trait, and SGM has demonstrated that it is well-positioned to satisfy that urgent need for connection and meaning.

Finally, the visit of the Reverend Alun-wyn Dafis during September and October gave us an opportunity to share the grace of Small Group Ministry with him. Carie's visit to Wales then gave her an opportunity to introduce SGM to the congregations there. In other words, a spiritual beachhead was established in Wales. The SGM Committee is committed to fostering that newly formed relationship. Skype and other newly minted communication tools will be used to nurture this incipient relationship.

If 2018 was a period of transition, then 2019 holds out great promise as a year of growth and unforeseen opportunity for Small Group Ministry here at the UUC.

Please contact me, Michael Conley (248-7941), if you are interested in participating in this special ministry. There are a number of groups that meet on different days and at different times, so I'm sure that there will be one for you, too!

Claire Curole - Ministerial Formation Update

As I gratefully shared with the congregation on Music Sunday, I successfully interviewed with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the UUA and was admitted to Preliminary Fellowship on the first of December, 2018. This is a big milestone - not an ending, but the beginning of the next phase of my ministry.

What changes now?

The most important thing is that my relationship with Rev. Carie has become more professional than before. In the interest of clarity and transparency we have created a written covenant between us describing that relationship and the boundaries of our respective ministries. That written covenant is included below.

A few folks have asked me whether all this means I am a "Reverend." The answer is "No, not yet." The title Reverend is reserved for religious leaders who have been ordained.

In the UUA, fellowshiping is the process by which a new minister is determined to be properly prepared and ready to serve. The authority to ordain someone into the ministry, however, resides not in a committee in Boston or in an individual's personal sense of call, but rather in the assembled community: only a congregation, or more than one congregation acting together as one body, has the power to ordain a particular individual to the work of ordained professional ministry.

No plans for my ordination have been made yet, but I expect that to change in the coming year. Look for another update in the Spring newsletter.

As for what happens next? I continue to serve as a part-time chaplain at Maine Med (Portland) while exploring other opportunities for paid ministry. While my preference is for chaplaincy at this time, I am also leaving my heart open to hear where the Spirit calls me next.

Thank you all for being part of this journey so far.

Onward.

-- Claire Curole

Covenant between

The Reverend Carie Johnsen, Minister of UU Community Church of Augusta, ME
and
Claire Curole, UU Minister in Preliminary Fellowship
December 1, 2018

Knowing that the role of a congregant must change as one enters the ministry, and in recognition of Claire's community ministry as a hospital chaplain, we covenant to recognize the shift from a minister/congregant relationship to a collegial one with intention and ongoing communication.

Believing that our professional relationships promote a culture for all congregational relationships, we covenant to bring honesty, integrity, and a collegial spirit to our interactions. We will avoid triangulated relationships by dealing directly with persons or groups, and by redirecting those who might attempt to put us in the middle, whether friends or family. We will abide by the UUMA guidelines in our speech and actions and we will respect one another's work and personal boundaries.

Consistent with the UUMA's Code of Professional Practice and Guidelines for the Conduct of Ministry, Claire shall defer accepting from members and friends of the church any invitation for services associated with Rev. Carie Johnsen's ministry at UUCC, and will communicate with Carie directly if such a request is made. On occasion, Claire may serve as hospital chaplain to persons associated with UUCC and will inform Carie of such service only to the degree appropriate under patient privacy regulations.

Claire shall maintain active membership at UUCC and may participate in a range of activities and volunteer in areas appropriate to the role of a congregational member, as time and energy permits. Claire will not serve in any elected position nor take on a leadership role without prior consultation with Rev. Carie Johnsen.

Rev. Carie Johnsen and Claire L. Curole
December 1, 2018

Unitarian Universalist Community Church
P.O. Box 8
Augusta, Maine 04332-0008

Newsletter Submissions

Submission Deadline for the Spring newsletter is March 18, 2019.

Submissions received after this date may not be able to be published.

Please submit all articles as an attachment in a Word document using Arial font size 11. Don't forget to give your article a title and sign it. Send an email to newsletter@augustauu.org with the article as a word attachment! ***Photos of church activities welcome! *** You will receive a confirmation e-mail of receipt of your submission.

Minister: Reverend Carie Johnsen

Board President: Jill Watson

RE Coordinator: Monique McAuliffe

Choir Director: Bridget Convey

Contact information for Committee chairs and other leaders can be found in the UUCC directory or obtained by contacting the Office Administrator.

Office Administrator: Lynn Smith

Phone: (207)622-3232 or email: admin@augustauu.org

Office hours: 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. (Tues, Wed & Thurs)

No office hours: Monday or Friday

Rev. Carie's Office Hours:

Tuesday 1:00 – 6:00

Wednesday 2:00 – 6:00

Thursday Writing Day

Other times and days available by appointment.

Rev. Carie takes a Sabbath once a week on either Monday or Friday. She does not attend to emails, phone calls or meetings. For pastoral emergencies please call her cell phone (508) 221-5295. She will return your call as soon as possible.