



# The Flaming Chalice

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

June 2014

## JUNE THEME: COMMUNITY FINAL FAREWELLS

June 8<sup>th</sup>

### ***Flower Communion***

This will be Rev. Carol Strecker's last Sunday at UUCC. Join us for the flower communion, as well as the opportunity to thank Carol and to say good-bye.

June 15<sup>th</sup>

### ***Sharon's Farewell Sermon***

This will be Rev. Sharon Piantedosi's last Sunday at UUCC. Come and wish her well in her unfolding future.

#### AGENDA

#### **Annual Meeting**

**JUNE 1, 2014      10:00 A.M.**

#### **Unitarian Universalist Community Church**

Call to order

Establishing a Quorum

Introducing a Moderator

Report of Minister and Staff

Report of Committees

Report of Leap of Faith & Vote on Congregational Goals

Report on Heating & Vote on loan

Report of the Treasurer and Vote on the Proposed Budget

Leadership Development Report and Vote

Recognitions

Any other Business

Adjournment of the Meeting

Copies of the budget and annual reports are available in the church vestibule or by contacting Steve Moore at [admin@augustauu.org](mailto:admin@augustauu.org) or 622-3232.

# A Faith Journey by Rev. Carie Johnsen...

## *Spiritual Innovators: Congregations and Beyond*

In the Summer 2014 *UU World*, Rev. Peter Morales, President, UUA and Rev. Dr. Teresa Cooley, Program and Strategy Officer of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, sound the bells loudly for adaptive change in our congregations. Their message for change sounds a bit frightening, something they own right out. It is also an inspiring invitation *to be relevant [and] find ways to embrace cultural and technological change*.

Rev. Cooley reflects on her strident resolve a decade ago to stop joys and sorrows. Humbly she notes a cultural shift is underway as the new generations post and tweet as a way of experiencing and sharing what they doing with the people they know. She is onto what all of you have taught me over the past five years. This act of sharing the stories and moments of our lives is something UUCC cherishes deeply. On a regular basis I seek out and receive feedback from the members and friends of this community. What I hear is the yearning for connection and knowing that comes when people share what is most important and valued in their days. For many decades now our traditions have explicitly and implicitly encouraged seminarians to become preachers who are adept at weaving the intellect with matters of the heart to offer erudite messages in 20 minutes on Sunday morning. It did not take me long to learn that the people who arrive here on Sunday morning are actually more interested in knowing and experiencing what is real and tender and relevant and transformative. Worship that bridges the gap between expectations and the everyday ordinary life inspires and comforts, strengthens and sustains, celebrates and grieves.

Rev. Cooley is calling upon congregations to create a more interactive community ready to move beyond the bricks and mortar, ready to send the people into the community to serve, to find meaning and purpose. Following Rev. Morales, who encourages us to look around for new possibilities, great opportunities and inspiring partnership, Rev. Cooley calls us out of the pews and into the world with curiosity and openness.

We actually began this conversation of *Congregations and Beyond* at our Leap of Faith day of listening in April. We invited those gathered to think beyond the expected and imagine what church might look like outside of the box. A variety of ideas emerged: take SGM to the people, partner with secular organizations that reflect our values, use social media and improved technology, plan and share outdoor events.

One group lifted up the idea of having more social justice involvements. I can see it now: a sea of yellow Standing on the Side of Love t-shirts moving across the greater Augusta community, leaving heart prints along the way. A sea of yellow t-shirts showing up for the Aids walk, park cleaning, vigils, rallies at the State House, or maybe even flash mobs.

Another group lifted up the idea of creating more opportunities for spiritual connections and conversations outside our community. There are so many more like-minded people seeking opportunities to explore meaning and purpose with others who are spiritual but not religious. How might we bring small group ministry or book discussion groups to those seekers in Augusta?

Rev. Cooley ends her article with a provocative reason to stretch through our aversion to and discomfort with change:

*The reason to change is so our values – that love is stronger than hate, that each of us has worth, and that we will find truth and meaning if we search – can be a real force in a world that desperately needs those values right now.*

If you haven't read your *UU World* yet, I encourage you to pick it up and read the full article, and then let your mind imagine a myriad of possibilities. Take up Rev. Cooley's invitation to not let fear be the reason we change or don't change, but rather let love be our guide by becoming the visible church where love lives and spreads out onto the highways and byways.

In faith, Rev. Carie

## Religious Exploration Report....

By Rev. Carol Strecker, Director of  
Religious Exploration

In the Buddhist tradition there is a form of meditation that I've found very helpful when trying to maintain a sense of loving connection with myself and others, especially during challenging times.

### Loving-Kindness Meditation

***May you be filled with loving-kindness.***

***May you be well.***

***May you be happy, healthy and safe.***

***May you live with ease.***

As I take my leave, these are the intentions to which I aspire for myself and for all of you. Loving-Kindness Meditation allows us to begin with ourselves, moving out into ever-widening circles of connection. Connection is the nature of reality. We can choose to nurture those connections or not. I will cherish the connections I've made at UUC. I am also saddened and sorry for opportunities for connection I have missed. I will endeavor to regroup, to learn and to grow in love. One thing I know for sure, in this moment, is that connection is not possible without taking the risk to speak the truth in love. I hope you will find the strength of purpose that comes from speaking your truth in love as you move forward together.

Peace,

Carol

## Goddess Continuing/ Earth Circles...

Join us on **June 1** after the service for the last gathering of the year, a joint session between Cakes for the Queen of Heaven (session 5) and Goddess Continuing/Earth Circles. The focus will be on women and goddesses of peace. There will be light meal (contributions are welcome).

In addition, we will consider options for next year. These include;

- Cakes for the Queen of Heaven, Volume 2 Thresholds. This considers ongoing religious influence in issues for women (4-6 sessions)
  - Have a session on Women of Wisdom and a Croning Ceremony Previous Croning Ceremony was in Fall 2012.)
  - Continue Earth based celebrations
  - Continuing focus on goddesses and gods
- Goddess Continuing/Earth Circles is leading the Summer Solstice Service on June 22. We will start planning at our meeting on June 1 around the theme of Summer Spirituality. The service will include sharing readings, songs and practices that are part of our summers.

Contact: Helen Zidowecki (582-5308,  
[hzmre@hzmre.com](mailto:hzmre@hzmre.com))

## UUC Concert-June 8

The UUC presents "**A Concert Extravaganza!**" featuring the UU Choir and Occasional Orchestra on Sunday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 4pm. Conducted by Joëlle Morris, the music director at UUC, the choir will be joined by the UU Occasional Orchestra and will feature a wide array of music from Mozart's Ave Verum to world music selections and John Lennon's "Imagine".

There is no admission charge, although a free-will offering will be received as a benefit to the church. A reception follows the concert.

# Another Time of Transition...

By Doug Rooks, President

This is my last newsletter message as your congregational leader. After two years of monthly communication – save for one deadline I managed to miss – I am gathering my thoughts as we move into a new church year. After the June 1 annual meeting, Gary Chapin will be taking up this post and this space in the newsletter, and I can assure everyone they will be in very capable hands.

I decided to look back at my first column, in part to see if I remembered writing it – I did – and was struck by one piece of advice that I'd gotten as part of the Harvest the Power leadership training that served me so well. I hope it will be offered again to lay leadership in this congregation and throughout our Northern New England District.

It's from the Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen – better known for his stark depictions of the heroic individual against the conformist community – but, in this instance, striking a different note. He writes, "A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm."

That still strikes me as exactly right. Not everyone, in any organization or community, is called to leadership, but we ought to be ready if we are called. When I first began serving on the Board of Trustees, not quite one year into my membership at UUC, I couldn't think of any good reason to say no, and so said yes.

That, at least, was what I thought at the time. In the light of all I've learned since then, I realize there was a reason I was asked, perhaps several reasons, and that the experience has changed me in important ways. Ever since I moved to Maine, 30 years ago this fall, I have in some way been looking for a community in which I would feel worthy, comfortable and accepted. I didn't find it in my professional life, for all the rewards that it did offer, nor did I find a long-lasting community involvement in the various boards, leagues and children's school activities in which I participated.

It was here, at UUC, that I found the community I was looking for. I can share an intellectually challenging conversation at coffee hour if that's what I want to do, and many people ask me how my book is going – a welcome check-in on what is fundamentally a rather solitary and even lonely enterprise. I can share reflections, stories and jokes with my SGM brothers, who have also helped me grow and change over the past three years. And I can meet, and talk with, an incredible variety of different people just within the four walls of our three buildings – as well as UUs throughout New England and, after General Assembly in Providence, R.I. in late June, around America as well.

It has been quite the journey so far, and the best part is that it's just beginning. As the framers of our bylaws wisely decided, past presidents continue to serve on the board for another year, and I am looking forward to playing new roles, perhaps even in leadership, somewhere down the road.

Our congregation is blessed with a great minister, a strong staff, and members who can move mountains when the occasion demands. I am proud to be part of it all.

**Unitarian Universalist Community Church**  
**Choir and Orchestra presents:**

# **a Concert Extravaganza !**



**Sunday June 8th**  
**at 4 pm**

**Unitarian Universalist Community Church**  
**69 Winthrop St.**  
**Augusta**

*Featuring the UUCC Choir and the  
UUCC Occasional Orchestra*

**Free will offering accepted**

**Join us for refreshments and goodies afterwards!**

**Concert proceeds will go to the UUCC fundraising efforts**



## Growing Together, Growing Apart...

A note from Seminarian Claire Curole

How can it be the end of the church year already? Yes, Easter was late on the calendar and the long cold winter dawdled on the way out, but it still seems too soon to be winding things up for the summer. Where did the time go? For our congregation, a lot of that time and energy has been spent on the Leap of Faith program, working to clarify some of the "big questions" that we face as a faith community. It's been a privilege to work with the Leap of Faith team and see this process in action at the congregational level. Discovering who we are, discerning how we want to be in the world, and choosing to engage that transformation, is powerful - and ongoing - work.

A year ago I shared in this newsletter that I was stepping back from church leadership in order to begin seminary. Many of you have asked when or whether that was happening, since I have been present and active in our church this year. It has. Five intensive-format classes, two extended trips to Chicago, and many community service hours later, I am at the end of my first year of full time study and ready for the next steps of this journey.

It's a bittersweet transition. For me, it means that I will be even less present in our community than I have been this year as the demands of my studies call me elsewhere. This summer I will be commuting to Lewiston for a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). This is a structured internship - I'll be serving as an intern chaplain at Central Maine Medical Center. This is a requirement of both my degree program and the UUA credentialing process. CPE is a full time commitment, so while I hope to attend services this summer I will not be leading any.

In September, when you come back for Ingathering Sunday, I will not be here. This fall I will begin a two year congregational placement - a half-time internship - at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick. This placement is part of my degree program and expected to fulfill the UUA's congregational internship requirement. I will be doing the kind of work with them that Sharon has done with us this year: learning the ins and outs of another congregation, and exploring what my work as a minister might be.

In early November, I am scheduled to interview with the Regional Sub-Committee on Candidacy (RSCC.) This is the first of two levels of review in the UUA's credentialing process: when the RSCC grants candidacy, they are formally recognizing that a person is in the process of becoming a UU minister. The second level interview, with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC), occurs toward the end of the process (a year or more later) and evaluates whether the candidate is properly prepared and ready to serve as a UU minister. Ours is a rigorous process that demands a high commitment of time, effort, resources and personal dedication, and I am so grateful to have the support, encouragement and love of this congregation as I continue on this journey.

Rev. Carie closes many of our worship services with the charge to "Go in peace, go in love, and take what you find here out into the world." It is my prayer that I can do just exactly that. And I hope, from time to time, to come back and share the things I find along the way.

- Claire

# Musings...from Your Intern Minister...

By Sharon Piantedosi

My ordination on May 4<sup>th</sup> was a splendid, magical, joyful event, and I am thankful to you as my teaching congregation. You have had a significant role in so many ways, from my ministerial preparation, the various ways of supporting my ordination celebration, and the act of co-ordinating me with First Parish Portland. Though the title "Reverend" is still new and shiny to me, the responsibility, obligations and authority are solid for me.

Now it's hard to believe that my internship is coming to an end. These past nine months have flown by! I had an interesting thought about these nine months: It takes nine months to create a life---my internship has been nine months of the making of me as a minister....And just as a child grows and leaves the nest, so does the intern leave the teaching congregation. This is the bittersweet time of farewell.

Once an internship ends, there is a policy set by the UUA that provides for ethical boundaries that are good for the intern and the congregation. Former interns are not allowed to have contact with their teaching congregations and any congregants for a period of one year. These are the reasons for this policy: If there is an incoming intern it creates a space for that intern to develop their own relationship with the congregation; it appropriately prevents the former intern having any input in the church life from a distance; any pastoral care the intern was providing is responsibly passed to the minister to continue the pastoral relationship; and it gives the leaving intern practice in both the loving and the leaving of congregations. This last reason is a necessary skill for a minister to have a successful ministry whether it is a community or congregational ministry.

It has been a privilege to share in the ministry of you, my teaching congregation, and I have come to love you. You have allowed me to be present with you through the fun times, joys, sorrows, growth and changes of these months. You have freely given me feedback on my preaching, presence, teaching, leadership and other ministerial skills. You have shared ideas and thoughts. You have taken the time to write me notes and cards. As the intern in your midst, I felt you honored the commitment to me, and took seriously the responsibility of that commitment.

I hope you will be able to join me at my last service on Sunday, June 15. The theme will be "Disappearing Act" and Carie will be with me in the pulpit. It will be a time for us to say farewell to each other face to face. If you are unable to attend, know that I feel so fortunate to have grown into the minister I am under your guidance, and you will always be carried in my heart.

Many of you have asked the "What next" question. I will be moving back to New Hampshire with Barb, my life partner. I plan to become affiliated with a UU congregation in NH over the next three years with the goal of being granted final fellowship. I will also be working towards board certification as a chaplain.

With deepest gratitude and may all the blessings of life be upon you always,

Rev. Sharon Piantedosi

## UUCC Member Helen O. Pare Honored...

UUCC member Helen O. Pare was recently honored by receiving the annual Women's Leadership Award from the Women's Addiction Services Council. She was celebrated at a Silver Tea held at the Blaine House on May 20th.

This state-wide award goes each year to a woman who has provided an exceptional amount of time volunteering to assist individuals and agencies increase the opportunities for recovery from substance abuse. Our own Hannah Faulkner and Dan Sorensen provided the music for the ceremony.

Helen was born in Miramichi, New Brunswick, and moved to Augusta in 1998. She currently works at the Women's Project where she assists women who have young children work on recovery from substance abuse.

Helen has been a member of UUCC for nearly 6 years. She joined just in time to vote for Carie Johnsen to be our called minister.

## Display Case...

Thanks to Abby Lourie for creating a number of displays this year. Thanks also to Rebecca Record for the display of "Americans Who Tell the Truth" by artist Robert Shetterly.

The display for now through the August is Adult Enrichment Opportunities. Please see the materials in the display case.

There is also a survey to indicate your interest in the suggested offerings, and ways to participate. This includes specific curriculum or classes, as well affinity groups (such as UU Christian, Atheism and Humanism, Goddess Continuing, Peaceful Heart Sangha). You may also add courses/workshops you would like to see that are not listed. Completed surveys may be left in the basket at the display case for Rev. Carie Johnsen.

## Where We Live...

I am sorry for the inconvenience to some when the May 18 session on **Where We Live: A Year Later** was postponed. It has been re-scheduled for Sunday, June 15, after the service, 11:30 am to 1:00 pm in Fellowship Hall

This is a follow-up to the Small Group Ministry series in Spring 2013 about where we will live as we grow older. Share what has happened -- or not -- in the last year, and share resources discovered along the way.

You are welcome to come, even if you did not participate in the original series. If there is interest, the series can be offered again. The series is on the UUCC website under Ministries, Small Group Ministry Sessions.

Contact Helen Zidowecki for more information (582-5308, [hzmre@hzmre.com](mailto:hzmre@hzmre.com)).

## Summer's Coming and Ferry Beach is Open for Business..

Ferry Beach in Saco, Maine has been a Universalist and UU church camp since the early 1900's.

Every summer they offer a wide variety of conferences that always include a heavy dose of social time on the beach. There are people who have returned to Ferry Beach each year for decades, and some grandparents that are now bringing their grandchildren to the camp they went to as children!

You'll find skilled conference leaders, comfortable accommodations, excellent food (in the new DeWolfe dining hall) and spirited people from all around. Do yourself a favor and take a great vacation without having to travel too far!

For more information about this summer's schedule, see [www.ferrybeach.org](http://www.ferrybeach.org).



## Peaceful Heart Sangha Mindfulness Meditation

- Join us any time -

We gather for meditation and sharing every Monday from 6:30 - 8 at UUC

**...Except on June 9, Movie Night, see below...**

Children's meditation & activities every first Monday 5:30 – 6:15  
with child care during meditation on that Monday.



~ Monastics playing at Coastal Maine Botanical Garden ~

Members of the Peaceful Heart Sangha and other friends from around the state had a wonderful visit, sort of a non-residential retreat with the monastics from Blue Cliff Monastery this past weekend! About ninety people joined us over the 2 days, including 8 children (also 2 dogs). The monastics shared openly about their own challenges and growth, helping us to better understand how to gently make transitions in our own lives to move ourselves and the world around us towards greater happiness and peace. Thank you again to all the sangha members who helped this wonderful event to come together!

An announcement:

On Monday, **June 9**, we will be attending the 7 PM movie "Death Makes Life Possible" at Railroad Square Cinema in Waterville. This special screening is open to all & complements the Nevola Symposium "Spirituality and Transformation", June 10 at Colby in Waterville. Suggested donation \$5. Movie lasts about 1 hour & will be followed by conversation with Dr. Schlitz, who created the film, & other Nevola Symposium presenters.

**We will not have sangha at the church this evening.**

Those who would like to carpool can meet at UUC at 6 PM. Please contact Marty Soule ([martysoule@gmail.com](mailto:martysoule@gmail.com)) or 685-9270, if you would like to car pool.

More info about the film at: <http://www.railroadsquarecinema.com/death-makes-life-possible/>

# Adult Enrichment Classes

This past year there have been a number of requests for more opportunities for adult classes at UUC. As we begin to think forward to the 2014/15 church year, I have gathered together a list below of some potential classes. All options below are dependent upon interest level and available facilitators. Please indicate which ones you think you would be interested in participating in and/or facilitating. You will find some potential books to use with these options in the display case at the church.

\_\_\_\_\_ **I'm a Unitarian Universalist** – UU Identity and Formation. Discussions and exploration of what it means to be a UU.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Theological discussion group** using the book "A People So Bold: Theology and Ministry for Unitarian Universalists" edited by John Millsbaugh.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Conversations with Emerson and Thoreau** – A time of reflection and discussion on the writings of two Unitarian Transcendentalists.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Matters of Faith: Yours, Mine, and Theirs** - Exploring a diversity of faith traditions through spiritual memoirs.

\_\_\_\_\_ **UUs Praying** – Join other UUs interested in exploring and cultivating a pray life.

\_\_\_\_\_ **"Healing the Heart of Democracy"** - Examining ways to restore and revitalize American Politics through the wisdom of Parker Palmer, celebrated Quaker and prolific author.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Writing the Sacred Journey: The art and practice of spiritual memoir.** – A group to support and encourage the writing of personal stories, experiences and memoirs.

\_\_\_\_\_ **The Way of the Naturalist** – Do you find peace and serenity in the Maine wood and shores? Would you like to spend time deepening your experience of the woods, the flower and fauna, the birds and critters with other naturalists?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Spirituality and Poetry** – Using poetry as a tool to explore spiritual life.

\_\_\_\_\_ **The Shared Pulpit: A Sermon Seminar for Lay People.** – This opportunity is for anyone who has a sermon resting on his or her heart or mind. Please note this seminar meets for three hours every month for eight sessions.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Spiritual renewal in times of grief, stress and loss.** This could be offered as a drop in circle once a month or as a closed group.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Time limited Small Group Ministry Series** – This group might meet once or twice a month around a specific topic such as UU Principles or UU Sources.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Monthly drop in Small Group Ministry** – This group would meet once a month and focus on the monthly theme.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Cakes for the Queen of Heaven, Volume 2 Thresholds.** Exploring current issues for women related to religions around the world.

Other ideas \_\_\_\_\_

**Affinity Groups:** Are you interested in joining one of our open affinity groups or starting a new one?  
Options might include: UU Christians \_\_\_\_\_ Atheism and Humanism \_\_\_\_\_ Goddess Continuing  
Peaceful Heart Sangha \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Young Adults:** are you a young adult looking to build faith community with others your age? What would get you interested and excited about joining such a group?

**In the past two years we have linked Sunday service with an afternoon workshops or discussions.** For example: “Americans Who Tell the Truth” and Peace Love Studies: Living with Mental Illness. Are there any topics (justice, literary, spiritual, health & well-being, etc) that you think would fit this format and would be of interest to the congregation?

Is your group or committee interested in leading a particular adult faith formation program?

Are you interested in facilitating one of the options above?

Is there a class you would be willing to facilitate?

Do you have any other thoughts or suggestions regarding adult faith formation?

Would you be interested in leading a class that is offered to the wider Augusta community?

For instance a *Matters of Faith: Yours, Mine, Theirs?*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information contact Rev. Carie [revcariejohnsen@gmail.com](mailto:revcariejohnsen@gmail.com)

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

### **Newsletter Submissions**

**Please submit all articles in a Word document using Arial, font size 11. Don't forget to give it a title and sign it, and send it as an email to [newsletter@augustauu.org](mailto:newsletter@augustauu.org) with the article as an attachment. Photos of church activities welcome!**

**Next edition submissions due August 18.**

**Minister:** Rev. Carie Johnsen

**President:** Doug Rooks

**Director of Religious Exploration:** Rev. Carol Strecker  
Office hours-Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10am-4:00p.m. or by appointment

**Administrator:** Steve Moore  
[admin@augustauu.org](mailto:admin@augustauu.org)

**UU Office hours: Monday and Tuesday 8a.m.-4p.m.  
Thursday-noon-8pm**

**Choir Director:** Joelle Morris

**Intern Minister:** Sharon Piantedosi  
Office Hours Tuesday and Thursday-10:30a.m.-3:30p.m.  
or by appointment

**Small Group Ministry Coordinator:** Kathy Kellison  
**Office:** (207) 622-3232

#### **Minister's Office Hours:**

Monday 12:00 - 5:00

Tuesday 12:00 - 6:00

Thursday 4:00 - 6:00

Friday is my Sabbath. I do not attend to emails, phone calls or meetings. For pastoral emergencies please call my cell phone (508-221-5295) and I will return your call at soon as possible.

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