



# The Flaming Chalice

The newsletter of  
The Unitarian Universalist Community Church  
69 Winthrop Street  
Augusta, Maine 04330

February 2009

## Worship Services

Sundays 9:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

### Feb 1 *The Big Picture*

Rev. Keith Kron

Perspective meets attention to detail and self-awareness. These ultimately help people make better decisions. We'll take a different perspective to see how stepping back allows us to see more quickly-- especially when we are in the middle of the search process for a new minister. This sermon will begin to explore how having "the big picture" helps a congregation find it's best match and, along with the workshop to follow, allow you all to explore the ways in which identity can keep our congregations from finding the best match. Rev. Keith Kron, the UUA's Director of the Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Concerns will be guest preacher.

**Please join us for lunch after the second service (12 noon). The Workshop "Beyond Categorical Thinking" - designed for congregations engaged in a ministerial search – will begin at 12:45 and last until 4 pm. See the article in the newsletter for more information.**

### Feb 8 *If The Heart Is Right . . . and . . .*

Rev. Lee Devoe

A minister's view into the makings and meanings of marriage reveals how ceremonies serve us, or not, and what they reveal about us.

### Feb 15 *Love Stories*

Rev. Lee Devoe

Extraordinary tales of ordinary people and congregations that reveal the love all around us. A service of good news!

If you have a "love" story – an experience from your life or another's life, particularly in a congregation - please share it with me as I prepare for this service. (I mean "love" in the expansive sense here, bigger and beyond romantic love.) - lee

**Interim Minister: Rev. Lee Devoe**

President: Debbie Mattson

Director of Religious Exploration: Karen Fisk

Administrator: Julie Pelletier

Choir Director: Douglas Barley

Small Group Ministry Coordinator: Kathy Kellison

Office Hours: Monday & Tuesday, 8 am—4 pm

Office: (207)622-3232, [admin@augustauu.org](mailto:admin@augustauu.org)

Minister's Study: (207)623-3663, [leedevoe@aol.com](mailto:leedevoe@aol.com)

<http://www.augustauu.org>

Next Newsletter deadline is **February 9th**. Please make submissions by email if possible

# A Letter from Lee

By Rev. Lee Devoe



This January, the District Trustees and District Executive Rev. Mary Higgins travelled to Augusta for their winter meeting. Apparently there was grumbling along the way – good natured grumbling to be sure – in anticipation of the hard folding chairs that would offer little comfort through the long hours of their work from Friday night until Sunday morning. How surprised they were to be greeted by sunlight streaming in through windows in the Sanctuary and the bright and clean colors of Fellowship Hall . . . including padded chairs. It was gratifying to be able to offer a comfortable space while they work on behalf of this congregation and our neighbor congregations in the district that now comprises Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

The Trustees talked about how the current economic difficulties would affect our congregations and movement and how the district and national organizations could be of service to the congregations through this time. There are the obvious expectations. People might not be able to follow through on their pledges, or pledge at the same level next year. Congregations who broke ground on building projects right before the downturn might be left in the lurch. Planned expansions in programming might need to wait. Yet also, our congregations might grow. People might value community in new ways. They might feel the need to join together in meaningful ways, as we do in our congregations. In addition, people feel an increased amount of uncertainty and fear. People don't always act in line with their highest ideals, or what they know to be helpful, during anxious times. They act up, they act out, they react. These times offer us a spiritual path to walk: to remain open and welcoming to newcomers, to offer to our community a much-needed pastoral response at the same time that we are struggling or are tempted to close down or draw inward.

For those of you who were not in worship on January 11, Mary Higgins offered greetings. She spoke of how impressed she is with the work we have done in the building and in our congregation. She is watching the progress of the Ministerial Search and feels confident that you will find the right person to walk with you on the next part of your journey. It is wonderful to be reminded of our interdependent web of Unitarian Universalists!

In faith,

*Lee*

## **Please participate in these important conversations and votes!**

**February 8** Town Meeting to talk about proposed by-law changes, after 2<sup>nd</sup> service – 12 noon

**March 1** Congregational Meeting to vote on proposed by-law changes and to vote on applying to the UUA for designation as a Welcoming Congregation, after 2<sup>nd</sup> service 12 noon

**May 10** Congregational vote to call a new minister, after 2<sup>nd</sup> service, 12 noon

Candidating week will be from Friday, May 1 – Sunday, May 10. Please keep your personal and committee calendars clear and plan to participate in this important, and exciting, process. The ministerial candidate will lead worship on May 3 and May 10. The Search Committee will plan many activities for the candidate .

**June 7** Annual Meeting



# From the Director of Religious Exploration



Balance is a wonderful goal. The junior youth recently spent a Sunday morning discussing balance. When they were standing on one foot and purposefully put themselves out of balance, they agreed you have to adjust to put yourself back into balance. It seems like a no-brainer, but there you have it, they discovered a truth that is essential for being able to move forward in an ever-changing world. By the way, they were all able to adjust, and get themselves back in balance. I saw a few steady each other. That works, too.

As the new year unfolds, we are very pleased to continue in our religious explorations in a number of different directions which somehow all lead to that goal of balance. The Preschool and Kindergarten children are venturing into activities that celebrate difference and empower individuality. Grades 1 & 2 are creating "Me Balls," examining what makes each of them unique and unrepeatable while still a part of a cohesive group. Grade 3 continues to explore the good works of important UUs of our past, while putting their faith into action with activities such as selling popcorn to benefit the Augusta Food Bank and making dog treats for the Humane Society. Grade 4 & 5 are undertaking the important study of Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education, learning about respect, responsibility and relationships. And the Jr. Youth continues to stand on one foot and see if they can balance despite all that is flowing around them.

Spirit Play is enjoying incredible energy. In 2009 we will continue our free activities and add a singing and reading circle to our morning.

Evening Youth activities continue with great enthusiasm. As Coming of Age was learning about the spiritual practice of movement—I think it was a section on ecstatic dance—the furnace guys came in to check the thermostat. I am not sure who was more startled or who had the greater laugh, but the energy was so positive I wouldn't be surprised if we don't have a couple new visitors to our church on Sunday morning.

In Peace Jam, the youth have decided instead of a big peace project to do many small projects to promote peace. They are considering calling their project "Small Acts of Kindness Send Big Messages." Their recent project was to write letters to the editor responding to the racist graffiti found on the Hallowell Rail Trail this fall. Stay tuned for more from this very thoughtful and empowered group.

Youth movie nights will continue on the fourth Sunday of the month. Sr. Youth meets in the annex and Jr. Youth meets in 71 Winthrop Street. Both groups meet from 5:30 to 8.

Helen Zidowecki continues to offer super exploration opportunities for adults in our congregation. Please see her information in this newsletter.

May 2009 be filled with balance. May we all find ways to adjust when we are set off kilter (whether on our own or with the steadying hand of a friend) and may we all find that balanced center again and again.

Yours in faith,

Karen



## **Religious Exploration Retreat Please Save the Date**

Please join us for an exploration into our RE Program. Help us explore curriculum possibilities for next year and different approaches to Faith in Action. Learn about facilitating and being a muse (as compared to a mentor or role model) for our young UUs. Play some new games and sing some new songs. Take time to share your thoughts about our program with congregation members eager to provide our children and youth with the best we can offer. Lunch & snacks provided.

**When:** Saturday, March 28, 9-3

**Where:** The Fellowship Hall

Hope to see you there:

Karen and the RE Committee, Hilary Neckles, Pam Lombard, David Rand, Cheryl Clukey, and Helen Zidowecki

# History Committee

## CAPTURING OUR LIVING HISTORY

The living history of the congregation is what happens daily! And a crucial part of history is the "people history". Some of this is captured in newsletters and other ongoing communications of the congregation. However, we would like to re-institute the practice of capturing the media notice of people in the congregation. Please clip newspaper articles and other information about people involved with UCC. These can be left in the church office, or by the History Room door (second floor of the Annex) or given to a History Committee member (Heide Munro, Helen McKendry, Barbara Thurlow, Helen Zidowecki). Looking forward to your contributions.

The next meeting of the History Committee will be Thursday, January 29, 10am-Noon, in the Olsen Room/Annex. The agenda includes: history of the Olsen Room, history room space, updating our projects and timing, website, organ Wayside Pulpit.

## Greetings from the Aesthetic Committee.

We've added a few bulletin boards throughout the building that will help to eliminate posting flyers and announcements on walls, doors and windows. The bulletin boards are in convenient areas and are there to post news and information relevant to our church community. The boards have been labeled for your convenience and include: Church Leadership, Search Committee, Religious Exploration, Community News and Church Related items.

If you have any ideas or suggestions, please feel free to contact us. We are all stewards of our sacred space.

Liza Rose Gottlieb      (549-5198) [lizarosegottlieb@yahoo.com](mailto:lizarosegottlieb@yahoo.com)

Mark Griswold      (441-2380) [mark@gwi.net](mailto:mark@gwi.net)

Janet House      (465-3524) [belgradehouse@roadrunner.com](mailto:belgradehouse@roadrunner.com)

# Search Committee

## Beyond Categorical Thinking at the UCC

Your Ministerial Search Committee invites you to participate in an important part of the search process: *Beyond Categorical Thinking* is a workshop we are offering on Sunday, February 1, 2009 at 12:45 pm following worship services with Rev. Keith Kron. A light lunch will be provided directly following the second service. **Childcare will be provided.**

*Will the new minister hear me?*

*Will my concerns and needs be met?*

*Will the minister understand what I'm living with?*

*How will the community respond to our minister?*

In answering these questions, a picture of the “ideal minister” (categorized by age, gender, gender identity, nationality, physical ability, race, and sexual orientation) comes to mind. With this picture in place, it can be easy to unintentionally exclude ministers who fall into certain categories. At times, as we get caught up in comparing candidates to our “picture,” we can even forget what it is we hoped for in a minister.

*Beyond Categorical Thinking* promotes inclusive thinking and helps prevent discrimination in the ministerial search process. The Search Committee and the congregation as a whole will learn more about our institutional culture, examine ways we can be more inclusive in our consideration of ministerial candidates. *Beyond Categorical Thinking* encourages the healing of oppressive dynamics that divide us and prevent us from sharing our real gifts with each other.

The selection of a minister is important to all of us, and this workshop is another opportunity for everyone in our congregation to be a part of that process. Please join us on Sunday, February 1st!



# Small Group Ministry Beyond Augusta

We talk so much about what it has done here in Augusta, but UUCC has influenced Small Group Ministry far beyond our walls. Versions of Small Group Ministry have been in Maine for over 12 years, and UUCC has been part of its denominational development. For example, Cheryl Ring, Linda Findlay, Kathy Kellison and others, have been part of panels and presentations with specific congregations, on the district level, and at UUA General Assemblies. Kathy Kellison and I have been part of the District Small Group Ministry Committee. Two books created at our church on Small Group Ministry are being sold through the UUA Bookstore. Many congregations have used resources and session plans developed here! Did you realize that session plans developed here had wider range?

Our church is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network, which started in 2004. Check out the website at: [www.smallgroupministry.net](http://www.smallgroupministry.net) Ministerial leaders from small group ministry at UUCC have been very active in the Network. Glenn Turner, our Minister Emeritus, has just sent out nine new session plans, which will be available on the Network's website. I am on the Network Board, and my son Erik and I manage the website. I have also authored several "Small Group Ministry in Changing Times" is the theme of a weekend conference in Caribou, February 7-8. We will explore how Small Group Ministry can enhance congregational life and be part of responding to congregational issues, as well as to deepening community and promoting individual spiritual development.

"The Small Group Ministry Summer Institute 2009", is being held August 16-21 at The Mountain, NC. This includes current and emerging trends in small group ministry denominationally, as well basics of implementation. I am coordinating both – so ask me for information on these events. Small Group Ministry at UUCC makes a difference – in our congregation and way beyond!

Helen Zidowecki

Chair SGM Topics Subcommittee  
and Group Leader

## Upcoming Sunday Open Group Topics:

### 9:30 at 71 Winthrop Street

January 25 Imbolc Awakening and Growing  
~Helen Zidowecki

February 1 To Be Announced  
~Beth Whitman

February 8 Change  
~Marilyn Karasopoulos

February 15 What Do You Love  
~Kathy Kellison

## Milestones

~Woody Greenier celebrated his 80th birthday in  
September

~Happy Birthday to Lorna Tarbox on February 28th

## Thank you

~Thank you from Nan Greenier for phone  
calls, cards and most importantly, your thoughtfulness

~"I thank all those members who have expressed their sympathy to me on Rudy's death. I have been touched by all of the caring messages, and of the help I have received. Saying "Thank you" seems rather inadequate, but it comes from my heart.

Sincerely,  
Scotti(Faith Soria)



# Welcoming Congregation at UUCC

The Town Meeting on January 4, 2009, focused on the Welcoming Congregation program. We are at a transition point: The Welcoming Congregation Task Force led the congregation through the preparations for becoming a certified Welcoming Congregation and the Welcoming Congregation Alliance will work with committees and other parts of UUCC to enhance an environment that welcomes people of all gender and sexual orientations.

We asked why, if we see UUCC as welcoming, do we need the Welcoming Congregation program or certification? We agree on wanting to welcome people of diverse sexual and gender orientations. Certification is a public proclamation that we have been intentional about what 'welcoming' means and that there is commitment to continue educational opportunities with seminars and adult religious exploration, as well as having small group ministry sessions available. This public recognition may be important to people looking for a church to attend and in the ministerial search process. (Of the Maine congregations, 15 of 27, and all Maine congregations over 100 members except UUCC, are certified Welcoming Congregations.)

We want UUCC to be welcoming in general. The focus of the Welcoming Congregation program was on gender and sexual concerns because:

- We need to pay attention to the evolving facets of these concerns.
- We need to intentionally confront the uncomfortable issue, and gender and sexuality continue to be strong emotional issues.
- We want to maintain and enhance the current level of being "welcoming" and also move forward by broadening the focus of welcoming. The UUCC Welcoming Congregation program can serve as a model or example for addressing other areas of discrimination or with other issues.

The general actions that were noted at the Town Meeting are:

Make the criteria for the certification and the draft application available to the congregation. Helen Zidowecki will have copies available and posted or e-mail her ([hzmre@hzmre.com](mailto:hzmre@hzmre.com)) for an electronic copy.

- Encourage attendance at the "Beyond Categorical Thinking" workshop with Rev. Keith Kron on February 1.
- Encourage attendance at the February 8 Town Meeting where bylaws changes, including those proposed around Welcoming Congregation, will be discussed.
- Hold the congregational vote to apply for UUA certification as a Welcoming Congregation. The process for doing this will be determined by the Board.

Thanks to those who attended the Town Meeting for a thoughtful discussion.

~Helen Zidowecki

# Board Highlights

## REVISIONS TO CHURCH BYLAWS

The Board of Trustees have been working on a number of changes to our church bylaws; changes that we want to discuss with the Congregation so that we can approve the changes at a special Congregational meeting on **March 1st**. Two critical issues got this revision process going. First, changes to reflect our Congregational vote to become a welcoming congregation. Second, church bylaws need language about calling a new minister; language that does not currently exist in our church bylaws. The Board has also taken this opportunity for a complete review of the bylaws to ensure that they are up to date and that the bylaws are relevant to the governance of our church community.

Our church needs your attention to the bylaws for a number of reasons. First, as they address our church's governance, all Congregation members need to know what's in the bylaws and how our church is supposed to carry out its mission. Second, the bylaws are approved by a congregational vote so we need your participation in the special Congregational Meeting that is being scheduled. We also need your attention to the proposed changes so that you understand the changes being proposed.

The Board will provide a number of ways in which Church members can see and understand the proposed bylaws changes; important steps so we all understand how we intend to govern ourselves as a religious community.

The next UUCC Community meeting, to be held on Sunday, 8 February, at **12 noon** will be the first time to hear about the proposed changes. This important session will start with an overview of the proposed changes and will then move to a discussion about the proposed changes. This will give church members the chance to consider the changes as well as hear what other church members have as ideas for the bylaws.

The Board will also be providing a copy of the proposed bylaws changes to church members; electronically as well as being mailed to folks without email. Copies will also be available at the church for review prior to the 8 February meeting.

Please take the time to consider the changes being proposed and to attend the community meeting and congregational meeting. The input and approval of our Congregation is essential to having bylaws that continue the spiritual growth in our great religious community.

Respectfully,

George Lapointe



## **Milestones**

## **Thank You**

If you would like to honor a milestone or say thank you to someone who has contributed in a generous or visionary manner, please send the information—in a sentence or two—to Administrator Julie Pelletier(622-3232, [admin@augustauu.org](mailto:admin@augustauu.org))

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

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## **Administrative News!**

Our Administrative Office is open:  
Mondays and Tuesdays 8 am-4 pm and Saturdays 8 am-12 pm

**Please note our new mailing address effective immediately:**

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

Administrative offices are now located at 71 Winthrop Street

### **In the case of inclement weather:**

Our hope is that a Sunday Service would be cancelled only in the case of an emergency in the building. In such a circumstance, the cancellation will be announced on the office telephone message, 622-3232. If you are scheduled to be of service on a Sunday morning, please use your own discernment to consider where you live and if you should try to come in to church.

*Please be safe!*

**In case of emergency,** please call:

President, Debbie Mattson @ 622-1429 or vice-President, Sheila Comerford @ 395-2259

# Adult Religious Exploration

## Misquoting Jesus

Based on the book by Bart D. Ehrman

**Mondays, January 26, and February 2,  
6:30-8:00pm in the Fellowship Hall**

Explore factors in the creation of the New Testament (also called Christian Scriptures), and reflect on ways of viewing the person and message of Jesus in light of the material included in – or excluded from – the New Testament. What does this mean for Unitarian Universalists? Join us for either or both sessions. You do not have to have read the book in order to participate. The sessions are co-facilitated by *Helen Zidowecki* and *Tom Waddell*.

To register, please sign up on the bulletin board or contact Tom at 512-5382 or [us1863@roadrunner.com](mailto:us1863@roadrunner.com).

## SPIRIT OF LIFE

*Spirit of Life* seeks to bring meaning, beauty, inclusivity, and growth to Unitarian Universalist adults as they deepen their spiritual awareness and connections. It is based on the hymn by the same name. This new course is part of the UUA Tapestry of Faith curriculum.

[\\*Workshop 1: Spirit of Life: Exploring Spirituality for Unitarian Universalists](#)

[\\*Workshop 2: Sing In My Heart: Celebrations And Rituals](#)

[\\*Workshop 3: The Stirrings Of Compassion: Caring For One Another](#)

[\\*Workshop 4: Blow In The Wind, Rise In The Sea: Nature And Spirit](#)

[\\*Workshop 5: Move in the Hand: Living Our Spirituality in Our Day-to-day Lives](#)

[\\*Workshop 6: Giving Life The Shape Of Justice: Loving Your Neighbor And Yourself](#)

[\\*Workshop 7: Roots Hold Me Close: Tradition, Teachers, and Spiritual Formation](#)

[\\*Workshop 8: Wings Set Me Free: Hopes, Dreams, and Expanding Vision](#)

[\\*Workshop 9: Come to Us: Closing and Continuing On](#)

The workshops are an hour each. I suggest that the course be offered in 4 meetings, 2 hours each and that each session covers 2 workshops. My suggested time frame for this is end of March to early May, 6:30-8:30 pm Sundays, Mondays or Wednesdays, or Sunday afternoons.

Are you interested in leading the course or one or more of the sessions?

Please respond to Helen Zidowecki ([hzmre@hzmre.com](mailto:hzmre@hzmre.com) or 582-5308) by January 28 so that firm plans can be made.

## Rise Up and Call Her Name

Rise Up and Call Her Name, A Woman-honoring Journey into Global Earth-based Spiritualities that provides an opportunity to learn about goddesses from a variety of traditions around the world, hear and share personal stories, create sacred art and rituals. The course is open to women and men and older youth. The feminine goddess is available to everyone, not just women, and this will enrich and expand the dialogue around the perception and role of the goddess in our congregation. There will also be time within each session for gender-specific dialogue.

The entire curriculum is 13 sessions, 2 hours each.  
The Session topics are:

Session 1 Beginning the Journey

Session 2 Tools for Traveling

Sessions 3-4 Africa

Session 5 African America

Sessions 6-8 Asia

Sessions 9 Pacific Islands

Sessions 10-12 Americas

Session 13 The Return

Please let Helen Zidowecki know if you are interested and your thoughts on the following:

TIME: This will be offered between late February and May. I suggest that we have a longer session that actually covers Sessions 1 and 2 on a Saturday or Sunday, followed by the evening sessions at 6:30-8:30pm on Sunday, Monday or Wednesday. Another alternative is Sunday afternoon 1-3 pm. What is your preference on time?

LEADERS: This will be a shared facilitation of people who sign up for the course. Materials are available, and there will be support for the facilitators. I suggest that the same facilitators lead the sessions of similar topic, such as Africa (3-4) and Asia (6-8) and Americas (10-12). We would have an overall planning meeting or about 1.5 hours for all facilitators in February, as convenient for the facilitators. Please let me know of your interest.

Please respond to Helen Zidowecki by January 28 so that firm plans can be made. ([hzmre@hzmre.com](mailto:hzmre@hzmre.com) or 582-5308)