



# FUSN News

First Unitarian Society in Newton

Unitarian Universalist

April 17 - April 30, 2016

## SUNDAY SERVICES - 10:15 A.M.

### The theme for April is Justice

4/17 - Dani Negus, Youth Programs Coordinator

4/24 - Rev. Erin Splaine



Join the **Walk for Hunger** on Sunday, May 1 with the FUSN team after coffee hour! A great family activity. Get your walking papers or pledge at the Social Action table at coffee hour, or join the FUSN team at [www.projectbread.org](http://www.projectbread.org).

### The theme for May is Kindness

5/1 - Rev. Erin Splaine

5/8 - Rev. Erin Splaine

5/15 - Coming of Age Graduation

5/22 - Sunday and Every Day Sunday

As our church year winds to a close, we celebrate the spiritual growth and learning that has happened in our congregation in our annual Religious Education Sunday. For the first time, the worship service itself will be completely led by participants in our Lifespan Religious Education programs, from hymns to homilies, lifting up the meaning of the Unitarian Universalist principles in our everyday lives.

5/29 - Guest Minister

**Please join us as we celebrate** Passover with a seder, Saturday, April 23, 5:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. All are welcome as we commemorate this tale of liberation and consider its contemporary meaning for Unitarian Universalists. We will re-tell the story of exodus through symbolic foods (consumption of gefilte fish is NOT required!) and a reading from the Unitarian Universalist Haggadah (a book of blessings, rituals, story and song). Then we eat a hearty meal augmented by your potluck contributions! Fun and learning for all ages. Suggested donation of \$7/adults and \$5/children (\$25/family maximum). For more information, contact Deborah Bennett at [dbennett@berklee.edu](mailto:dbennett@berklee.edu). See you Saturday, April 23 in the Parish Hall at 5:00 p.m.!

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

This past Saturday, the Member Services Committee hosted its most recent event to foster connection at FUSN - a potluck for newcomers and new(ish) members. While we often find ourselves busy and preoccupied with the hustle and bustle of everyday life, the potluck offered us all the unique opportunity to focus on one another, spend time together, and get to know each other on a deeper level. During February's month of Silence, Erin emphasized the value of 'being' and not just 'doing'. Being fully present with everyone on Saturday night illustrated to me the spiritual value in just being with one another and appreciating each other's company. I would also like to express our gratitude to Julia and Chris Gaebler for opening their doors to us, being such wonderful hosts, and making this wonderful event possible!

Speaking of opportunities to simply be with one another, the Member Services Committee will also be hosting a Multigenerational **FUSN Fun Night** on April 29! It will start at 5:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. or so in the Parish Hall and Children's Chapel. There will be pizza, movie, games and more! Let Pat Rohan, [jprohan@verizon.net](mailto:jprohan@verizon.net), know if you plan on coming, so we know how much pizza to order. We hope to see you all there!

**FUSN Directory** - Be sure to stop by the Welcome Table during next Sunday's Coffee Hour to obtain a copy of the new FUSN directory! There are three ways to obtain it - check out a CD with the directory downloaded on it, bring a USB flash drive and download the directory from one of our laptops, or pick up a paper copy. For confidentiality and privacy reasons, please do not distribute or share the directory. Thank you to the Member Services Committee members, Fran Clancy, and all others who helped make this update possible!

*Continued on next page*

**Staff:** Erin Splaine, *Minister*, Fran Clancy, *Administrator*, Ashley Engel, *Membership and Communications Coordinator*, Rowan Van Ness, *Director of Religious Education*, Beth Walton, *Assistant Director of Religious Education*, Dani Negus, *Youth Programs Coordinator*, Anne Watson Born, *Director of Music*, Carson Cooman, *Organist*, Roberta Humez, *Minister of Music Emerita*, Ruslan Crosby, *Beadle*.

**Board of Trustees:** Brian Burba, Gregg DiBiaso, Eric Haas, Cathy Morocco, Bobbie Sproat, *Co-Chair*, Lesley Sneddon, *Co-Chair* Julianna Lakomski, Becca Lozinsky, *Youth Representatives*

**Operations Council:** Susan Bartlett, *Chair*, John Brennan, Jeannie Chaisson, Judy Curby, Laurel Farnsworth, *Vice Chair*, Andrea Kelley

**First Unitarian Society in Newton** • 1326 Washington Street • West Newton, MA 02465 • <http://www.fusn.org>  
office tel: 617-527-3203 • fax:617-964-5409 • Religious Education: 617-332-3438 • e-mail address: [office@fusn.org](mailto:office@fusn.org)

**New Member Sunday** - Are you ready to feel a deeper sense of connection to the FUSN community? Do you want to vote in official congregational meetings and hold an elected position at FUSN? Then talk to Ash Engel, ash@fusn.org, about becoming an official member and taking the next step to express your full commitment to the sustainability and well-being of the FUSN community! New members will be honored at this Spring's New Member Sunday, taking place on May 22 during service. All are invited to join - whether you have just begun attending FUSN or have attended for some time but are now interested in making an official commitment to the congregation. If you're not sure whether you are already a member or not, feel free to also contact Ash. If you don't recall filling out a membership application in the past, then you are most likely not yet a member and would be most welcome to begin enjoying the benefits of membership at FUSN. Ask Ash or stop by the Welcome Table during coffee hour to pick up your short application form! *-Ash Engel*

### **A NOTE FROM ERIN ABOUT CORI CHECKS**

For years it has been FUSN's practice to do a CORI check of any and all staff members. Doing so is one of the ways we as a community employ best practices when employing the best staff. For years our policy has been to only CORI check paid staff and not any volunteers who work with our children or other vulnerable groups. Based on recommendations from the Religious Education Council, Rowan and me the Ops Council recently voted to implement a system to run CORI checks on all adult volunteer teachers.

Our Child and Youth Protection Policy reads in part: *"Adults working with children and youth have a crucial and privileged role, one that may carry a great deal of power and influence. Whether acting as a teacher, mentor, chaperone, child care worker, minister, youth advisor, or in other roles, an adult has a special opportunity to interact with young people in ways that are affirming and inspiring to young people and the adult. Adults can be mentors, role models and trusted friends of children and youth. They can be teachers, counselors, and ministers. To help our children grow up to be caring and responsible adults can be a meaningful and joyful experience for the adult and a lifetime benefit to the young person."* As we begin to expand the use of CORI checks, we join with a majority of UU congregations in taking reasonable steps to help ensure that FUSN is a place where both our children and adults can create and maintain healthy and meaningful connections.

Starting this month, as recruitment begins for next fall, each volunteer teacher will be asked to fill out a form giving FUSN permission to run a CORI check. Fran will input all the relevant information from each volunteer into the Commonwealth's system. Once each check is completed a report will be sent to a FUSN email account, which has been set-up specifically and only for CORI checks. Further, only Rowan and I will have access to the reports — she and I are mindful of the responsibility we hold to each volunteer, and our children, and to our program. If you have any thoughts or questions please reach out to us.

### **YOUTH MINISTRY BROADCAST**

Thank you for tuning into another week of the Youth Ministry Broadcast. This past Sunday we had the youth service "Kids These Days." The service was filled with fantastic music, informative and funny readings, and four homilies written by youth at FUSN. The service explained what it meant to be a "Kid These Days." Thank you to everyone who attended the service and supported the youth at FUSN!

The youth teacher application for 2016-2017 has been sent out. If you know of youth who are interested in being a youth teacher, please encourage them to apply! This is a great opportunity to be involved with both the congregation and with youth ministry. The applications are due by May 1. Please contact Dani if anyone needs the application or has any questions.

There will be no youth group April 17. Enjoy spring break!

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**FUSN Forum** April 20, Wednesday, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. in the Alliance Room. This Forum will review and discuss the very important national issue: Voting Rights: Past, Present, and Future Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy and the fundamental right upon which all our civil liberties rest. Questions and discussion will be encouraged. Coffee, tea, and refreshments will be provided. The future: It's time to enshrine an affirmative right to vote in the U.S. Constitution.

**A Conversation with Shay Stewart-Bouley;** Tuesday, May 3, 7:00-8:30 pm in FUSN Parish Hall. Executive Director of Community Change Inc. A Chicago native born on the crossroads of working-class, Black and female, Shay Stewart-Bouley's career since 1997 has focused on weaving these intersections into her Daily life and professional work. Last year, Shay became the first African-American Executive Director of Community Change, Inc. (CCI) in Boston. Since 1968, CCI has served as a community for white people and their multiracial allies to come together to learn about systemic racism and to fight against it. In recent years, as talk of white privilege and institutionalized racism has become increasingly mainstream, CCI has shifted its role to engage with anti racist activists, especially in the era of the Black Lives Matter movement. Please join us for this exciting program. Conversation and Q&A will follow Shay's talk. Sponsored by the FUSN Multicultural Ministry Initiative (MMI)

**Coming of Age Service** Sunday, May 15. The culmination of our Coming of Age program for 8th graders is a Sunday worship service, when the graduates share statements of their beliefs and music that represents them. In the milestone, the congregation recognizes the transition a young person makes from being a "child" to being a "youth," and graduates are invited to become members of our congregation. Please join us for this meaningful service.

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS UPDATE

In one of the twice a year meet-ups, chairs of many FUSN committees got together with the Operations Council over lunch on March 12 to talk about the work of their groups. The goal is to share information and keep communications open about the various efforts that go on in our congregation. Some highlights that reflect the breadth of interest and work at FUSN:

**Annual Budget Drive:** A challenging goal has been set for this year, a big increase over last year, in order to make up the difference for our previous use of reserve funds. Pledge parties have begun.

**Membership:** The committee is reaching out to “lost” members to see if they may want to return or have moved. The membership database is being updated. There are many families with young children. No matter the number of members in a family, it is considered one pledge unit.

A current member directory is being prepared (has since been completed and is available to upload to your own usb drive). FUSN Friday Fun Nights may be revived for selected Fridays, everyone invited, not only families with children. Potluck Dinners for Newcomers continue. New Member Sunday will be in May.

**Youth Ministry:** There has been good participation in youth ministry; for instance there were 16 youth involved in the recent Youth service. Youth advisors are exploring different models of involvement, including organizing the coffee house and youth justice activities.

**Finance Committee:** This committee meets monthly to review the operating budget. Annually, it prepares a 5-yr projection, and a proposed Operations budget for the next fiscal year. Erin will be taking a sabbatical, per her contract, which will be an additional expense if we hire a half-time person while she is away, at a cost of approximately \$25,000. Options are being explored.

**Buildings and Grounds:** Due to the extreme snow conditions last year, costs were very high, but this year’s utility bills are significantly lower. A handicapped access ramp to the Sanctuary entrance on Highland Street through the Memorial Garden has been approved by the Board of Trustees but still awaits approval by the Mass. Historical Commission.

**Green Sanctuary:** The committee’s efforts have been successful this year. About 35 people attended a program with Andy Savage, the City’s Sustainability Director, and Eric Olson, about the City’s goals, and how homeowners can get energy assessments.

**Worship:** This committee mainly plans the summer services, and is currently working on a joint service for June 5 with Myrtle Baptist Church, that would include a community breakfast for members of our two congregations. There may a lunch after the service, and possibly talent performances.

The FUSN Annual Meeting and cookout will be on June 12.

**Accessing UUA (formerly “Denominational Affairs”):** a name change is in the works.

**UUA Delegate, District Meeting, General Assembly:** the Mass. Bay District meeting is coming up. The UUA General Assembly will be in Columbus Ohio, June 22-26.

**Leadership Team** is exploring ways to create more pathways to leadership and volunteering for congregation members, and is open to hearing input from all sources.

**Nominating Committee** likewise is open to suggestions from everyone. Job descriptions will be provided for positions to be filled.

**Adult Religious Education:** There have been fall and winter-spring semester program offerings. The committee is looking for suggestions from the congregation, hopes to recruit younger members, and encourages everyone to read *Just Mercy*, a book about criminal justice.

**Multi-cultural Ministry:** This group, formed last spring, is focused on educating the congregation on history, multiculturalism and race. They have had, and plan to continue to hold, discussion groups, workshops and a dialogue series.

**Preservation Committee** is considering two current projects: recording FUSN memories, and the June 4th 100th Anniversary of the dedication of the bells. Carson Coonan created an original piece of music, with three movements for three different musicians. In addition to the chime concert, other activities are being planned. The event will be open to the public.

**Social Action:** 5 task forces with 27 projects comprise the group currently. A survey to help shape family-oriented social action activities is in the works. Find out more at the Social Action table at coffee hour every Sunday.

And this isn’t all! Just a taste of the wide scope of interests at FUSN... Contact any of the members who attended representing a committee, or ask a Member of the Operations Council for more information.

Present were Susan Bartlett (Ops Council Chair), Peter Smith (Social Action), Rachel Viscomi (Membership), Judy Curby (Ops and Treasurer), Gayle Smalley (Preservation Committee), Jacqui James (Adult RE and Multicultural Ministry), Josie Greene (Developing Leadership, Multicultural Ministry), Kate Mason (Accessing UUA, Denominational Affairs, Developing Leadership Team) Laurel Farnsworth (Buildings & Grounds, Green Sanctuary), Jeannie Chaisson (Ops Council, Youth Group advisor, Ushers), Saul Lookner (COA coordinating team, Budget Drive), Ellen Metzger (Budget Drive), Brian Gill (Finance Committee, Ministerial Relations Committee), Ash Engel (Membership Coordinator).

## COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

**Join us** for our last Community Breakfast, the best way to start your Sunday, on May 22 at 9:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall. The extensive menu includes scrambled eggs, scrambled eggs with vegetables, pancakes, French toast, bacon, sausage, gluten-free corn bread, home fried potatoes, white and whole wheat biscuits, vegetarian sausage gravy, fruit, yogurt, jams and jellies, juices, coffee and tea, and the occasional special treat. It's only \$4 for adults and \$3 for kids. Newcomers eat free. We have high chairs, too.

## EVENING SONG

**Evening Song Sunday**, May 1, at 7:00 p.m.! FUSN's Vespers service sung by Vermilion, a quartet directed by Amelia LeClair, has a new Name, a new Time, a new Date! Our monthly service of contemplation with music and poetry chosen by FUSN poets continues every FIRST Sunday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary.

**Deadline for the next newsletter is April 26, 9:00 am.**

## SURVEY

We are conducting a survey to explore the ways in which families with children (ages 0-18) would like to engage in social justice activities through FUSN, particularly in a manner that builds community among the participants and reflects our shared values as a UU congregation. The survey is intended for parents and caretakers of children who are involved in FUSN, whether they are FUSN members or not.

You may access the survey at <http://tinyurl.com/j5guocj>. The survey will remain open until April 27. We look forward to your responses! Please feel free to contact us with any questions. *Julia Huston, [juliahuston@yahoo.com](mailto:juliahuston@yahoo.com)*  
*Brooke Foucault Welles, [brooke.foucault@gmail.com](mailto:brooke.foucault@gmail.com)*  
*Matt Cuddy, [cuddy.m@gmail.com](mailto:cuddy.m@gmail.com)*

Non-profit  
Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Boston  
Massachusetts  
Permit No. 8900

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

First Unitarian Society in Newton  
1326 Washington Street  
Newton, MA 02465

