



FUSN News

First Unitarian Society in Newton

Unitarian Universalist

June 26 - July 9, 2016

SUMMER SERVICES - 9:30 A.M

June 19 - Mindfulness is Heartfulness - Betsy Simmons and Journey Songs
Compassion Practices including gentle breath awareness, chair yoga, simple singing, loving kindness meditations, poetry, reflection and partner sharing. Come with an open heart and spirit of exploration
JourneySongs, our hospice choir, will accompany us.

June 26 - Foreign Intrigue - Kate Carney
They say "travel broadens one." Whether it's the pleasure of sharing insights with a new friend from another culture, the exasperation of trying to communicate with no language in common, or the sheer adventure of travel, it deepens us. Come hear - and share - your own stories of travels which affected you

July 3 - No Service

July 10 - Art in Prison - Betsy Leavitt, Lynn Holbein, Denise Bousquet
If you had been a fly on the wall at the Northeastern Correctional Center any Thursday night over the last 15 years, you would have seen FUSN volunteers and incarcerated men busy with pieces of paper, colored pencils, stencils and glitter glue. Come to share some of the men's art and find out what it's like to enter a different world where people aren't so different.

July 17 - Hope and Art - Curt Lamb, Juliette Carignan, Lois Shapiro
What can we learn from artists about how to create a fulfilling life, and how to find hope in our darkest moments? Three FUSN artists - a painter, a musician and a sculptor - will describe the nature of art and what it brings to their lives. Come and consider the artistic facets of your life, and indeed, explore the possibility that our own lives ARE our our ART!

MESSAGE FROM ERIN

Greetings from Columbus, OH and the 54th annual General Assembly (GA) of UU Congregations — well truth be told the gathering is still a day or so away but already Columbus is awash in UUs and thousands more are on their way. I like to picture this time borrowing the image of the Marauder's Map from Harry Potter. All across the world UUs of every stripe are gathering up their issues, concerns and hopes and traveling by train, plane and automobile to one location — to be together in spirit and body. General Assembly is the time each year when member congregations gather to participate in the governance of our Association, decide on the issues on which we will focus, take workshops, gather in worship and generally revel in being in and among thousands of UUs from around the globe.

Again this year FUSN has a great group of delegates to the convention including Bobbie Sproat, Ann Woodbury, Beau Stubblefield-Tave and Barbara Deck. In addition Tom Bean is here in his capacity as Legal Counsel for the UUA as is David Pettee who is the UUA's Ministerial Credentialing Director. As always members of your staff including Rowan Van Ness and Dani Negus are here to network, gather information and ideas to bring back home.

GA is a remarkable, stimulating, inspiring if not exhausting event. Within days there will be upwards of 4,000 UUs here in Columbus. We will sing, worship, study, talk, discuss, and vote together. Unfortunately, GA is not without it's limitations and faults. At the top of that list is the cost associated with getting to and staying in whatever city is home to GA in any given year. Currently, as part of our annual budget, FUSN pays the registration fee of every delegate who represents our congregation. How we as a community can make it easier for members of our

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 , Judy Curby, Laurel Farnsworth, *Vice Chair*, Andrea Kelley

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congregation to get to GA is a on-going conversation for FUSN leadership. It is an experience not to be missed and we can and will do more to help make the experience more accessible.

In the meantime, I sit here in Columbus grateful to be part of a religious movement that is committed to an open and engaged governance model — that encourages the consideration of difficult and layered issues — that works to find ways to connect member congregations and congregants in moments of shared worship and shared service.

I will be back home the last week of June until late July. Although my time in the office will be somewhat scattered I am available for conversation, a dog walk, lunch or any such thing. From late-July until late-August I will be on vacation and away from Newton. Yet, I will be back for the beginning of our year together before I take my sabbatical leave beginning September. 20. If our paths don't cross until we are together again in September, I hope you all have a restful, relaxing and renewing summer.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

LOOKING at CONFLICT

One of the tasks I helped with during this first year on the board of trustees was to review the work done several year years ago by a group studying conflict within the congregation. Delving into the material made me realize, once again, how many of the efforts here at FUSN are subterranean, nearly invisible to others.

In 2011, academic fellows from Harvard's Negotiation and Mediation Clinical Project interviewed some fifty congregants on the subject of how they reacted to and felt about discord within FUSN. Their findings and suggestions were summarized in a 25-page document, known familiarly as "the Harvard Report."

During the next church year, a working group made up of some very talented FUSNites developed a formal plan to implement the ideas presented in the Report. Their project was most often labeled as conflict "transformation" rather than "resolution." This term was a recognition that disagreement and conflict will always occur from time to time, and can even be healthy in a vital organization-- if it is properly acknowledged. A few concrete steps were taken as a result of their work—for instance, our 2013 Policy on Threats and Disruptive Behavior—but much of it has remained

FROM THE BOARD (continued)

untouched for several years.

This past spring, Erin asked a few Board members to revisit the material, to see if there was interest in moving on with any parts of it. Simply collecting it all took quite some time. Folders of paper had moved to the bottoms of stacks on back shelves; digital documents and e-mails lost in arcane file systems, covered with a thick layer of electrons. Pieces kept turning up that referred to "the Harvard Report," as if everybody of course had one and knew what was in it, but the original study itself took the longest to find.

I read through it with that now-familiar sense of amazement at my own obliviousness: the interviews and working group meetings had been going on while I was regularly attending service, and reading the Newsletter and the online Business list, yet I managed to be completely unaware of it.

Perhaps the Harvard Report (which, I'm happy to say, now exists in a handy PDF format available to all; just ask) made such an impression on me because of its seeming prescience—several years ahead—in describing and explicating the events which took place during our previous church year. For me, one of its most profound passages points out the contradictory impulses embodied in UU's seven principles. We recognize "the inherent worth...of every person," "the right of conscience," and "acceptance of one another." We also affirm "the use of the democratic process," "justice [and] equity," and "respect for the interdependent web of all existence." In other words, the Principles can be used to justify almost any action or point of view—just like the Bible and the U.S. Constitution. This tension between individual and community rights is an unresolvable paradox.

At the core, it doesn't matter who's "right." What's important is how we treat one another.

I gratefully acknowledge the help Barbara Bates gave me in composing this column. *-Eric Haas*

THANK UUS

Thank you **Dwight Golann** for building an efficient space for our various committees to store their posters, bins and assortment of materials.

AND THE SURVEY SAYS ...

More Social Justice Activities for Families With Children, Please!

This spring, we conducted an online 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. Parents and caretakers of children who are involved in FUSN, whether they are FUSN members or not, were invited to participate.

Highlights from the survey include:

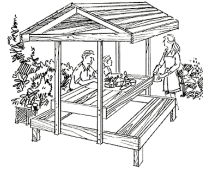
1. Of the 36 respondents, 26 would like to see more social justice activities and events for children and families at FUSN. 9 feel that there is just the right amount, and 1 feels that there should be fewer.
2. The preferred time for family-oriented social justice activities is on Sundays immediately after services (78% of respondents). More than 40% of respondents also expressed interest in Saturday mornings, Saturday afternoons, and Sunday afternoons, with the next most popular time being Saturday evenings (32%).
3. 35% of respondents are interested in having breakfast with other families before Sunday services, and 24% are interested in having lunch with other families afterwards.
4. 30% of respondents are interested in longer RE hours so that parents can attend coffee hour without children. 35% are interested in a dedicated space for children during coffee hour.
5. Of the different types of social justice activities, respondents expressed the most interest in:
 - direct service to at-risk populations (e.g., working at a soup kitchen, spending time with seniors) (69%)
 - doing hands-on activities that benefit at-risk populations (e.g., sorting at a food pantry) (62%)
 - doing hands-on activities that benefit the local community (e.g., park clean-up) (59%)
 - participating in marches, rallies, walks, bike rides, and demonstrations for social justice issues (51%)
 - educational events to raise awareness of racial and/or cultural issues (51%)

AND THE SURVEY SAYS ... (continued)

We will continue working with Rowan, Social Action, and other FUSN parents to brainstorm about next steps and see if we can put some of these ideas into action. Thank you to those of you who participated in the survey!

-Julia Huston & Brooke Foucault Welles

FUSN SUMMER PICNIC



Please join us on Wednesday, July 13 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Auburndale Cove Park (on West Pine Street, Auburndale). Bring your choice of meat/fish/veggie burgers/etc. to grill, plus a dish to share (salad, chips, watermelon, dessert). Bring your own beverages (non-alcoholic only). We'll provide the charcoal, paper goods, cutlery and condiments. Auburndale Cove has lots of free parking, grills, picnic tables, bathrooms, a playground and fields for all sorts of games. If you'd like to help, please contact Pat Rohan, jprohan@verizon.net.

LAY MINISTERS

The FUSN lay ministers are available to help members and friends who are experiencing difficulties and could use a listening ear, help with meals in case of illness, rides to the doctor, and the like. If you would like to reach a lay minister, here is the list below. If you would like to be one of those who make up our Care Crew—the cadre of people the lay ministers call on to help—just e-mail for more information or to sign up to be in the Care Crew database.

Margaret Costello, 617-332-3248
MCostello@partners.org
Cris Goldsmith, 617-969-1638
crisgoldsmith@gmail.com
Kathy Hearn, 617-965-0938
kathyhearn@rcn.com
Shawn Konary, 617-332-2783
konary@comcast.net
Jud Leonard, 617-969-2623
jud.leonard@gmail.com
Erin O'Donnell, 303-520-3917
ejnodonnell@gmail.com
Cindy Orrell, 617-901-6848
cindy_orrell@hotmail.com
Ann Woodbury, 617-964-7699
ann@sulliwood.org

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

Our next newsletter deadline will be August 16. We return to our regular two week schedule in September. Deadline for the first newsletter is September, 6.

STAFF SUMMER SCHEDULE

Erin Splaine - see Erin's column above for her summer schedule

Rowan Van Ness

June 17-19 (weekend)

June 21-26 (GA) July 1-6 (Baltimore/DC)

July 9-15 (Ferry Beach RE Week)

July 27-Aug 10 (CA/WA)

Aug 14-21 (RE Week in NJ)

Fran Clancy

Out of the office:

July 10 - 24

Aug. 1-15

Anne Watson Born is at FUSN:

July 12-14 and 26-28

August 23-31 Tuesday-Thursday

Beth

Out of the office July and August

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