



# FUSN News

First Unitarian Society in Newton

Unitarian Universalist

April 1 - April 14, 2012

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

**April 1** - "Question and Answer Sunday"

Rev. Erin Splaine and the entire staff

This is no April Fools joke! Many UU congregations have their version of Question and Answer Sunday where everyone in attendance has a chance to pose a question (almost any question) to the minister. Once again your intrepid staff takes the ordinary and makes it extraordinary. Our Sunday morning worship service on April 1 will be our first (hopefully not our last) Question and Answer Sunday starring your entire staff. Yes, your entire staff! Anne, Barb, Beth, Carson, Erin, Fran, Kristin, and Rebecca will be there and ready to answer your questions. At the service each person will be given a card on which to pose one question for any one or all of the staff to answer. The cards will be collected some time in the middle of the service and then in place of a sermon your staff will gather in front and attempt to give voice to your questions. Of course the staff knows that the questions you pose will be appropriate to the setting of the sacred space of our Sanctuary (uh hum...). We are looking forward to addressing as best we can with humor and passion.

**April 8** - "Easter and Passover Celebration"

Rev. Erin Splaine

**April 15** - Rev. Erin Splaine

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**The Coming of Age Graduation** will span two services this year. Please plan to join this year's class and families as we recognize this important event in the lives of our Candidates. Services will be held on May 13 at 10:15 am and 1:15 pm.

## WHAT IS MEMBER SUPPORT?

One of the three goals of this year's annual budget drive is to increase our Coordinator of Member Support & Development position from 23 hours per week to full-time. Some have asked what that would mean for FUSN. A good question, and the short answer is many wonderful things. Of course there is always a longer answer.

Currently, Kristin Cleveland spends, on average, about 14 hours each week (Sunday mornings and most of her Tuesday hours) working to help FUSN welcome visitors and provide them with the resources they need to make a decision about whether or not they will make FUSN their spiritual home. That crucial focus leaves only about 9 hours per week to work on the other important component of her job, supporting and facilitating the development of the deep connections between members, helping to create a richly supportive spiritual community.

FUSN is a vibrant congregation with a strong RE program, diverse opportunities to join with others in social justice work, an extremely talented array of musicians, et cetera. With all the good that entails, the downside of all that activity and energy is that FUSN can be a bit overwhelming at times, and it may be hard to find places to connect. We hope to increase the number of hours each week that Kristin can spend working to develop and enhance the deep connections that we all have here at FUSN.

Since Kristin came to FUSN a year ago, some of the projects she has worked on that contribute to the development of a deeply connected congregational life include:

- fostering a sense of place by interviewing FUSN's long-term members about some of their experiences in the FUSN community *continued on next page*

**Staff:** Erin Splaine, *Minister*, Cheryl Rubin Lloyd, *Community Minister*, Kristin Cleveland, *Coordinator of Member Services and Development*, Fran Clancy, *Administrator*, Mr. Barb Greve, *Consulting Director of Lifespan Religious Education*, Beth Walton, *Assistant Director of Religious Education*, Rebecca Hinds, *Youth Programs Coordinator*, Anne Watson Born, *Director of Music*, Carson Cooman, *Organist*, Roberta Humez, *Minister of Music Emerita*, Corey Hess Mahan, and Dylan O'Brien *CoBeadles*.

**Board of Trustees:** Susan Bartlett, *Chair*, Margaret Costello, Barney Freiberg-Dale, Bruce Henderson, Pamela McA'Nulty, Carl Metzger, Gordon Moriarty, *Vice Chair*, Strom Thacker, Ann Woodbury, Alan Cody, *Treasurer*, Conrad Buys, *Youth Rep*.

**Operations Council:** Pat Rohan, *Chair*, Jeannie Chaisson, Alan Cody, Anne Hess-Mahan, Laurel Farnsworth, Kim Shanks

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- coordinating FUSN's participation in the 2011 and 2012 Boston Pride Parades
- assisting congregants Rachel Yee and Leah Duset in creating FUSN Fun Nights, casual evenings where people from FUSN can gather for games, music, and socialization
- working with FUSN's Membership Committee and Communications Committee in the creation of both a printed and an online photo directory (note: the online directory project is ongoing. See [www.fusn.org](http://www.fusn.org) or email Kristin at [member\\_services@fusn.org](mailto:member_services@fusn.org) if you have questions about getting your information onto the online directory)
- coordinating a lay-led worship service at Ferry Beach this past fall
- assisting in publicizing FUSN events through FUSN's listserve, Facebook page, and FUSNNews
- working with FUSN's Membership Committee to coordinate the fall 2011 Halloween party
- serving as a staff liaison to FUSN's Communications Committee
- working with FUSN's Board of Trustees & Operations Council to host the Jan. 19 dinner that featured the Urban family's experiences of being UU in Germany
- participating in the UU Association of Membership Professionals workshops and listserve exchanges to learn more about enhancing the quality of people's experiences in their congregations

If FUSN were able to make the Member Support & Development position full time, Kristin would be asked to focus her additional hours on further developing congregational life. Some projects that could be added include the following:

- assisting in coordinating more events where socializing and fellowship are a primary focus, sometimes combined with educational and/or cultural exchange components (events such as the German UU dinner, Dinners for Seven, a Passover Seder, and celebrations of other holidays)
- collaborating with FUSN staff and committee chairs to facilitate smoother transitions for FUSN members when life events change their relationship to FUSN (such as when children graduate from RE or from high school, or when a job is lost, et cetera)
- increasing the flows of communication within FUSN to make FUSN more accessible and supportive to all of its members
- providing a bit of staff support to help FUSN committees fulfill some of the great ideas they've been wanting to do for years,
- and more (there's always more)

Our Coordinator of Member Support & Development position has only been in place for a year -- but what a year it has been. The goal of increasing the position to full-time is one that both acknowledges a current need and plans for the future - a future that is firmly grounded on sustaining the care and connection that is so important to our community.

## **BARB'S BANTERING**

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At the core of Unitarian Universalist religious education is the belief that we are all lifelong learners on a journey. Accompanying this belief is the belief that each one of us is also a teacher, that we each hold a piece (or pieces) of knowledge that when shared with the gathered community makes the community stronger.

In the Children's Religious Education program, this means that our volunteer teacher corps is a collection of members of the congregation. Time and time again we hear from teachers that they learned at least as much as they taught. If you're interested in teaching our youngsters, please let Beth Walton know ([reasist@fusn.org](mailto:reasist@fusn.org)).

Our Adult Religious Education (ARE) program is also graced by the wisdom and passion of members of the community. The course offerings in ARE are as varied as the membership of this congregation, though they all fit into one of four categories: Liberal Religious Traditions, Faith & Doubt: Theology and World Religions, Faith & Practice: Social Justice & Social Concerns, and Spiritual Practice: the Inner Life. Some offerings meet monthly, some for several weeks in a row, and some are what we call one-shot workshops. Volunteer members of this community teach most of the courses.

Perhaps there is a course you'd be interested in seeing taught through the ARE program? Perhaps there is a course you'd be interested in offering this community? Now is the time to make suggestions to the ARE Committee. If you haven't already filled out the ARE Assessment, take a moment to do so (you can find a link to the assessment on [www.fusn.org](http://www.fusn.org)). Another way to make suggestions for courses (that you'd like to take or teach) is to contact one of the co-chairs of the ARE Committee: Jacqui James and Alice Wood.

In faith, -*Barb*

ps - Jacqui James and Mark Morrison-Reed will be releasing their new book, *Voices from the Margins* here at FUSN on Sunday, April 15 at 7:00 p.m. Jacqui and Mark will be available to sign copies of the book during a light reception following the reading. All are welcome.

## MUSINGS

The worship theme in April is doubt; it is also the month in which we celebrate Passover and Easter, on April 8. The choir will sing two Passover-related anthems, including the Yiddish song “Zog Maran,” a story about the *marranos* of Spain who were forced to worship in secret. And we will continue our annual Instant Choir rendition of the “Hallelujah Chorus,” accompanied by our intergenerational orchestra.

Handel’s oratorio *Messiah* premiered in Dublin in 1742 as a benefit concert for three charities (prisoners debt relief, a charitable hospital, and an infirmary). “So that the largest possible audience could be admitted to the concert, gentlemen were requested to remove their swords, and ladies were asked not to wear hoops in their dresses.” [Donald Burrows, quoted in Wikipedia] The premiere was very successful; subsequent performances in London were not, but by the mid 18th century the work was regularly performed, by increasingly larger ensembles. “In the 1860s and 1870s ever larger forces were assembled. Bernard Shaw, in his role as a music critic, commented, “The stale wonderment which the great chorus never fails to elicit has already been exhausted”; he later wrote, ‘Why, instead of wasting huge sums on the multitudinous dullness of a Handel Festival does not somebody set up a thoroughly rehearsed and exhaustively studied performance of the *Messiah* in St James Hall with a chorus of twenty capable artists? Most of us would be glad to hear the work seriously performed once before we die.’” [Dan Laurence, ed. Shaw’s Music, quoted in Wikipedia]

I take Shaw’s point, and I have several times performed *Messiah* with the proper number of singers and players, but our FUSN tradition of singing this explosively joyful work together is for me one of the high points of our worship year. We will suspend our theological doubts and raise the roof with our singing - come one, come all. Hallelujah! -*Anne Watson Born*

**VESPERS SERVICE.** The monthly Vespers service with the Vermilion Quartet, Amelia LeClair, director, will be Sunday April 8 at 7:30 p.m. in our sanctuary. The service is designed for diversity of spirit and thoughtful meditation. This is a unique monthly service of music led by the Vermilion Quartet and poetry—written or chosen—read by FUSN’s poets. Vespers will last just half an hour—a way to set aside the noise and stress of daily life and to spend some time in stillness and mystery. Upcoming service: May 13.

## FELLOWSHIP DINNER THANK YOU’S

It took over 100 volunteers and 230 attendees to make the Fellowship Dinner such a success. We want to gratefully and exuberantly thank the following people for their contributions:

**Dinner Party Configurations:** Sondra Shick, Alice Wood

**Decorations and Set up: Decorating brainstorming and materials gathering:** Clare Kastner, Elli Crocker Morse, Deb Pierce, who then also helped to **Arrange,**

**set up and decorate the rooms:** Lucy Boyle, Allison Costello, Judy Friedman, Laurie Hackett, Nick Hollander, Betsy Leavitt, Wendy Schwartz, Kim Shanks, Nancy DuVergne Smith, Dede Vittori  
**Furniture Moving and Club Seating Arrangements:** Anne Hess-Mahan, Brad Hollister

**Lighting Design and Installation:** Nick Hollander  
**Serving:** FUSN COA, teens and friends: Lilly Brownell, JP Bruehwiler, Brad Davis, Henry Groves, Emma Henderson, Nick Hollander, Rebecca Lozinsky, Gracie Marsh, Ruby Mayer, Audrey Reuman, Julia Severino, Sam Shereda, Ian Teare-Thomas, Chris Axon, Alison and Michael Costello, Brad Davis, Jackie Comstock, Mei Sirdevan, Lili Margolin, Julie Fletcher, Rachel Reichert, Alex Robertson, Revathi Shastri, Pascale Froehlich, Maura Hess-Mahan, Kieran Teare-Thomas, Claire Perreault

**Party Hosts:** Helena and Juergen Froehlich, Barbara Krause, Glenn Palmer, Neil MacGaffey, Nancy Mattei, Kate and Norm Thibeault

**Babysitting:** Hannah Pittel

**Serving Supervisors:** David Hollander, Olivia Margolin, Carol Reichert

**Name Tags -** Rachel Viscomi

**Print Menu Design -** Annie Kelley

**Coffee Beadle -** Mike Arnott

**Clean up -** Marion Bullitt, Jeannie Chaisson, Isatu, Nanah, and Madison Crosby, Deborah Lawson, Jim Mattiessen, Naomi and Eric Olson,

**Wonderful Music -** Arthur Anderson and White Collar Crime, and BJ Griffin and his band

**Menu and Food -** Ron Margolin and his band of chefs and sous chefs: Marion Bullitt, Alison and Michael Costello, Isatu, Madison, and Nanah Crosby, Judy Curby, Cris Goldsmith, Dot Jacobson, Amy LeClair, Lili, Olivia and Peter Margolin, Megan and Pam McA’Nulty, Krishna Rao, Brenda Roberts, Mindy Scharlin, Harriet Severino, Sue Skoler, Bobbi Sproat, Alice Wood, Nancy Wrenn, Judy Zacek, Holly Zeeb Dana Hanson for putting the COA candidates into serving teams, Fran Clancy- everything FUSN and building related

*With thanks, and in fellowship,*

*Ruth Comstock and Andrea Kelley,  
Fellowship Dinner 2012 Co-Chairs*

## COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Join us on April 8 for our FUSN Community Breakfast at 9:00 a.m., in the Parish Hall. Toddlers welcome, we have high chairs available for them. The menu (eggs, eggbeater omelets, fried potatoes, pancakes, biscuits, bacon, sausage, juice and coffee) is great and the price (\$4) is unbeatable. Clean-up help appreciated. Mark your calendars for the Next Breakfast Date: May 20.

## COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

The Committee on Ministry nurtures and provides feedback to Erin. We meet with Erin on a regular basis to discuss her concerns and questions and provide her with advice and support. We invite input from the congregation on matters relating to the ministry. Feel free to contact any of us with thoughts, questions, or concerns. [See FUSN.org's [Leadership List](#) or the Online Directory for contact information.]

- Brian Gill
- Bill Horne
- Liz Marshall
- Kate Mason
- Margaret Ruttenberg

## PUT YOUR OLD BIKES BACK IN ACTION

Looking for a family-friendly social action activity that is also fun, easy, and quick? Do you have an unused bike in your garage? You can turn it into a tax deduction, clean out your garage, and support a great organization. We will be holding a Bike Drive for Bikes Not Bombs on April 15, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at FUSN. Any size bike in any condition is welcome. An optional \$10 donation for each bike donated will help with shipping overseas to communities in need. Bring your family and learn more about Bikes Not Bombs as you put your 'Faith in Action.' For more information see <http://bikesnotbombs.org/bike-drive/167> or email [joyce.pollock@gmail.com](mailto:joyce.pollock@gmail.com).

**THANK UUS.** The Operations Council would like to thank: Alice Nichols and the Ordination Committee for organizing Anne Bancroft's wonderful ordination. Ruth Comstock and Andrea Kelley for the great job they did on the Fellowship Dinner and Ron Margolin for his usual wonderful food service. Janet White, Wendy Atamian, and Claire Perreault for a lively and well attended Youth Coffeehouse. Our treasured Music Director Anne Watson Born and all of our wonderful singers and musicians for the terrific Music Sunday service. Truly memorable.

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