



# FUSN News

## First Unitarian Society in Newton

Unitarian Universalist

February 7 - February 20, 2016

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

#### The theme for February is Silence

2/7 - Rev. Erin Splaine - Baby Dedication

**Special Collection** - The Community Day Center in Waltham provides a place for homeless individuals to find warmth, companionship, and help with referrals. Those without homes can find access to mail delivery, telephones and internet, a warm meal, and a friendly place to be when the shelters close for the day. They receive help with job applications and apartment hunting. It has been a lifesaver for people in transition. Your offers of hats, scarves, gloves and socks can be picked up by Mary-Ann Greene or Nancy Stanton – we will get them to the Center for you. Look for us in coffee hour.

Please make out your generous checks to Community Day Center. Sleeping bags are critical for the guests who cannot access a nighttime shelter.

2/14 - Rev. Erin Splaine

2/21 - Rev. Erin Splaine

2/28 - Rev. Erin Splaine

### RACIAL JUSTICE EVENT

**Wondering how to talk with young people** about race and racism? Sponsored by the Newton Human Rights Commission and hosted by FUSN, join us on Thursday, Feb. 11, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m., for a presentation by racial justice consultant Madeline McNeely, “Having Difficult Conversations With Our Children About Race and Racism.” Event is geared towards parents and caregivers of children ages 4-10. Free and open to the public. Bring your friends! Light refreshments and childcare provided. Please RSVP at link below: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HRCevent> by Feb. 10. Questions? Contact Linda Walsh: [lwalsh@newton.ma.gov](mailto:lwalsh@newton.ma.gov).

### A NOTE FROM ERIN

*“From birth, our culture teaches us that all people fit into neatly prescribed and fiercely policed binaries: boy or girl, straight or gay, white or person of color, able or disabled, and on and on. How would we be transformed if we fully unlearned this myth and truly embraced the full spectrum of genders, sexualities, and other identities and ways of being in this world?”* These are the questions we will raise and begin to answer together here at FUSN on Sunday the 21st of this month first in our worship service and then in a workshop together in the Parish Hall.

As Rowan said in her announcement last week, we are so pleased that Alex Kapitan will guide us in our learning and sharing. Zr. Alex Kapitan is a transgender and queer lifelong Unitarian Universalist who grounds radical social justice work in a place of faith and love and also does interfaith work to help queer and trans folk connect to religion and spirituality.

Alex, and I will be co-leading our morning worship focusing on the topic of “transgender faith” as we consider the twenty-first century challenge of living into our charge as a Welcoming Congregation. After the service, from 12-3 all are invited to stay for Alex’s workshop **“Beyond the Binary: Transgender and Queer Sexualities and Genders.”** See the description in R. E. Connections.

I hope you will join me on this full and important day here at FUSN. The service and the workshop are the beginning steps in our work together as we more fully and intentionally live into who and how we are as a diverse community of faith. Of course, childcare and a light lunch will be provided, so please RSVP to Fran so that we can know how to best prepare for the day.

**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

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## FROM THE BOARD

### Grace in Poetry

On Sunday, Jan. 31, Rowan described grace as a moment—surprising, even undeserved—that lifts us from the ordinary into “the creative force that (upholds and) sustains all life” (a Reverend Mark Morrison-Reed quote). I experienced grace in Copley Square on the way to a concert with David the day before she spoke. As we emerged from the subway, four students rushed to us, bumping each other with excitement. “Are you married?” When we said yes, they asked, could they take a picture of us kissing? They snapped a stunning photo. They were over the moon, not just because the photo was an item on their BU freshman scavenger hunt, but also because of the rapture in our sudden connection.

Rowan said in her sermon that we may be most open to grace when we are in need. That explained a surprising aspect of the Copley Square moment. It plucked me, for a few hours, from grief I was experiencing at the death of my poet friend, Holly Zeeb, who is a much loved and respected member of FUSN. Holly and I have critiqued each other’s poems as trusted friends for years. We would egg each other on to find the elusive and disturbing truths in our experience. We both lived from poetry. Holly’s poems will endure in *Eye of the Beholder*, the volume she completed before her death.

Poetry, Rowan said, can create a transcendent moment, “a clear image that gives shape to our lives.” In her sermon of Jan. 24, Erin invited members of the congregation to read and talk about the personal importance of a favorite poem. Twelve people shared poems that endure for them as images of clarity and guidance. Poetry is interwoven with music in our Evening Song services. The presence of poetry in our FUSN services and our lives speaks of courage and openness to grace.

-Cathy Morocco

## ABOUT US

**The FUSN community** extends their sympathy to Noel and Peter Zeeb on the death of their mother, long time FUSN member Holly Zeeb; the memorial service will be here on Feb. 20 at 2:00 p.m. Also, to Karen Lein on the death of her mother, long time FUSN member Helen Lein; her service will be on March 19, 2:00 p.m. at FUSN.

## RE-CONNECTIONS

Unitarian Universalists believe learning and spiritual growth are lifelong processes that are worth supporting each other in. The fact that FUSN has had an Adult Religious Education program for so many years reflects this value. During the next congregational year (2016-2017), an adult faith formation task force will be taking a deeper look at our programs and learning opportunities for adults, what our needs are, and how we can strengthen and support them. Part of learning and growing involves periodically taking a good look at a particular area and reviewing it, and I am excited to see how this work might provide opportunities for transformation and self-reflection.

In the meanwhile, it is my pleasure to announce an upcoming workshop for teens and adults, “Beyond the Binary: Transgender and Queer Sexualities and Genders.” Erin and I have been talking about this over the past year and are finally able to make this happen! Last spring, I attended an excellent workshop sponsored by the New England branch of LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association, the professional organization for UU Religious Educators), and I thought FUSN would really benefit from and enjoy such a program.

As we continue to do the work our renewing our Welcoming Congregation status, developing common language around the diversity of identities in our community is an important step.

We sincerely hope you’ll join us.

In faith, *Rowan Van Ness*

### **Beyond the Binary: Transgender and Queer Sexualities and Genders**, Feb. 21, 12:00-3:00 p.m.

Do terms like genderqueer, two spirit, transfeminine, gender fluid, bi-flexible, pansexual, and asexual make your head spin? This interactive and informative workshop will offer a crash course in identities “beyond the binary” of gay and straight, female and male, and provide concrete ways to be more mindful and supportive of people of all identities. Bring your questions, your curiosity, and your dedication to deepening FUSN’s Welcoming Congregation ministry, and prepare to leave behind everything you thought you knew about gender and sexuality!

**About the Speaker** - Zr. Alex Kapitan is a transgender and queer lifelong Unitarian Universalist who grounds radical social justice work in a place of faith and love and also does interfaith work to help queer and trans folk connect to religion and spirituality. You can find Alex’s writing in anthologies including *Falling Into the Sky and Becoming*, as well as the blog [www.rootsgrowthetree.com](http://www.rootsgrowthetree.com). Alex works for the Unitarian Universalist Association’s national office doing social justice ministry, lives in western MA, and sings with the Boston Gay Men’s Chorus.

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## MUSIC SUNDAY!

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“O light most blessed, fill our inmost hearts”

Music Sunday on March 20 will revolve around the themes of light and calling as found in the medieval prayer “Veni, sancte Spiritus”:

*Lava quod est sordidum, Wash all that is filthy  
Riga quod est aridum, Water all that is parched,  
Sana quod est sucium, Heal what is hurt within*

We would love to have you join us! There are many ways to participate in Music Sunday:

- Chant, tune and shout with the choir: we will sing music by Morten Lauridsen as well as arrangements of “Bright Morning Stars” and “Is a Light Shinin’ in the Heavens”
- Croon - sing a TTBB arrangement of “Turn Your Radio On”
- Harmonize - sing a lively SSAA work by UU composer Elizabeth Alexander
- Jam with FUSN’s Intergenerational Chamber Orchestra
- Tootle and skirl (okay, not really) with the Flute Choir
- Twirl with CreationDance
- Declaim - be a reader in the service

For more information, email Anne Watson Born at [music@fusn.org](mailto:music@fusn.org)

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## ADULT R.E. COURSE

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**Serving With Grace:** Volunteering to serve can be a spiritual practice. Two sessions: Thursday Feb. 4 and Wednesday Feb. 10, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m., special time! Facilitator: Karen Edwards. In this course we will examine and shape our volunteer contributions so they enhance our spiritual lives. Some people work so hard at FUSN that they burn out or are depleted by the experience; others observe or fear that experience and stay clear of volunteering. We will learn ways to feel spiritually enhanced by those experiences instead. We want to live out our principles in community and this community can help us do that mindfully. Let us come together for a few early evenings and learn how to lead or participate with greater grace and more fulfillment. This includes how to lead a meaningful and effective meeting.

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## FROM THE CO-CHAIRS OF YOUR ANNUAL BUDGET DRIVE

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It is budget drive season, the time of the year when we—the members and friends of FUSN—pledge to donate funds totaling approximately 70% of next year’s budget.

Our Board has set an ambitious goal of \$575,000 for the budget drive this year. This represents an almost 8% increase over the amount raised last year. To achieve this goal, every one of us needs to step up and give at least our fair share. We will talk more about what this means in coming weeks.

The theme for this year is, “FUSN Values Are for Life.” Testimonials will be given primarily, if not exclusively, by adults over 25 who have graduated from our religious education program. They will share with us how the values they learned as children at FUSN continue to influence their lives as adults.

Starting this Sunday, you will have the opportunity during coffee hour to sign up to attend a Pledge Party with your fellow congregants. These parties are a time when most of us gather in small groups and pledge to support our beloved community. If you would prefer not to attend a pledge party but would like to be visited by a Steward to make your pledge, please let us know at the Budget Drive table during coffee hour.

The parties have different themes. So, please read the descriptions and sign up for one that interests you. If you have a child or children in religious education from first through seventh grades, you can meet the parents of one or your child’s classmates by signing up for a party for parents of the students in your child’s class.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Your Annual 2016 Budget Drive Co-Chairs,

*-Tom Bean, Ellen Metzger, & Saul Lookner*



**Save the Date for the Youth Coffeehouse**  
Coffee House is Brewing. The 2016 Youth Coffee House will be held in the Parish Hall on Saturday, March 5 at 7:00 p.m.

## COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

**Our next Community Breakfast** is next Sunday, Feb. 7, starting at 9:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall. It's a special Chinese New Year Breakfast featuring vegetable dumplings, scallion pancakes, and steamed buns along with many of our usual delicious items - eggs, pancakes, bacon, sausages, home made white and whole wheat biscuits, fruit, yogurt, jams and jellies, juices, coffee and tea, and perhaps another item or 2. Price is \$4 for adults and \$3 for kids. First timers eat for free. We have high chairs. Clean up help is appreciated. Upcoming breakfasts – March 13, Apr. 10 and May 22.

## EVENING SONG

**Evening Song** this Sunday, Feb. 7, 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 Feb. 16, 9:00 a.m.**

## SERVICES AUCTION



### The Fabulous FUSN Mardi Gras Services Auction

is nearly here. Plan to be at the Fabulous FUSN Services Auction on Saturday evening, Feb. 6 at 6:30 p.m. You can get dinner, drinks (beer, wine and soft), snacks, fun, and a

party for your kids for five bucks!!! And a chance to bid on some really cool stuff like vacation weekends, fabulous home cooked meals, handyman services, child-care, rides to the airport and many, many more. You can even bid on having the use of Barney Freiberg-Dale's Tesla for a day. And since our theme is Mardi Gras, feel free to dress up in your favorite party garb. This will be bigger than the Super Bowl!! So don't miss it!

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