



FUSN News

First Unitarian Society in Newton

Unitarian Universalist

March 20 - April 2, 2016

SUNDAY SERVICES - 10:15 A.M.

The theme for March is Calling

3/20 - Music Sunday

Come, lamp of every heart...

3/27 - Easter - Multigenerational Service

The theme for April is Justice

4/3 - Rev. Erin Splaine and Multicultural Ministry

4/10 - Youth Service

4/17 - Dani Negus, Youth Programs Coordinator

4/24 - Rev. Erin Splaine

MUSINGS

*Come, lamp of every heart, come, parent of the poor;
all gifts are yours.*

This Sunday, March 20, is our spring Music Sunday service - the service that features the many FUSNites who bring music into our services throughout the year. Our dancers will move to a beautiful Romance by Robert Schumann, played by Mindy Scharlin and Lois Shapiro. The Flute Choir will play a set of pieces by George Frideric Handel, arranged by Geoff Wadsworth, who has also arranged the song "In My Life" for our chamber orchestra. Our band will play a hymn or two and will rock the house on Susan Werner's tune "Help Somebody", with Jenn Bradbury soloing.

The Music Sunday service is not only a celebration of our wonderful musicians, but is also a time for all of us to be in worship together. The central image of Sunday's service is light - light that, as the ancient prayer "Veni sancte Spiritus" says, can "heal the hurt within." The Sanctuary Choir will sing selections from *Lux Aeterna*, by Morten Lauridsen. The composer writes: "*Lux Aeterna*--Eternal Light--is an intimate work of quiet serenity centered around a universal symbol of hope, reassurance, goodness and illumination at all levels...[It] is fashioned on texts from several different Latin sources, including the requiem mass, each containing a reference to Light."

We will also welcome a young cellist, Tayja Sallie, from the string training program, Project STEP. Tayja will play a movement of the Saint-Saëns Cello Concerto. The benefit concert for Project STEP, sponsored by the FUSN Music Committee, will be held at FUSN on Sunday April 10 at 3:00 p.m. Tickets will be available at coffee hour.

**PROJECT
STEP**
BENEFIT CONCERT
IN MEMORY OF JUDITH SANDLER
TRIPLE HELIX PIANO TRIO
A FAR CRY & PROJECT STEP
TICKETS AT DOOR OR ON EVENTBRITE

SUNDAY APRIL 10, 2016 @ 3 PM
AT FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY IN NEWTON
WORKS BY: PIAZZOLLA, SCHUBERT & MORE
PROJECTSTEPBENEFIT.EVENTBRITE.COM

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

Following a suggestion from Erin and the Board, the congregation voted at last June's annual meeting to begin the process of renewing FUSN's status as a Welcoming Congregation. After a long winter of turmoil and hard feelings within our community, constrained within endless hours of shoveling snow, many hoped that engaging in this work would be a step toward healing.

An Assessment Team was empaneled, and began its work over the summer. The team's goal was to collect information from the community about how accepting and supporting we thought we were on issues of sexual and gender identity and expression. They began with a survey form provided by the UUA for this purpose, and decided to expand its scope.

The original Welcoming Congregation work in the early 1990s affirmed FUSN's explicit openness to gay, lesbian, and bisexual members. The certification renewal process recommended by the UUA broadens the spectrum to include people who identify as transsexual, queer, questioning, and intersexual. Because controversy within FUSN had been sparked in part by disagreement over family and relationship structure, the assessment team rewrote some of the existing questions from the UUA's survey and added others to explore our attitudes about single-parent, polyamorous, and other non-traditional families.

The Welcoming Congregation Assessment Team laid out its findings in a very thoughtful report presented to the Board of Trustees in January and to the congregation as a whole in a lively and well-attended meeting after service in early February. We have chosen not to disseminate the report electronically yet, pending submission to the UUA for review and comment, but printed copies are available in the FUSN office. It is a remarkable document. If you haven't read it yet, it deserves your attention.

The team found great variation in our attitudes about some subjects, and implied accord in others. Its report does not make specific recommendations about our next steps, but rather presents a range of possibilities. The discussion is framed by the two crucial questions: "What is our vision of an ideal Welcoming Congregation?" and, "How important—against the myriad of competing priorities facing (us)—is it to reach that goal?" The second point echoes Erin's recent observations about how busy and perhaps

FROM THE BOARD (continued)

overextended we are as a community, as, for instance, in her sermon on silence (Feb. 7).

Some of us have seen continuing this process as yet another committee to organize, to schedule yet more meetings into lives already too scheduled. Others have pointed out that it dovetails nicely with other movements already underway, such as the Multicultural Ministry Initiative, which are attempting to widen our views of the world. And yet others note that we've already begun implementing small steps along the way: amending the language of our Chalice-Lighting reading; providing stickers to allow congregants to specify their preferred pronouns; and the energetic workshop on Transgender Faith led by Alex Kapitan last month (at which I learned, among many other less-mundane things, that the abbreviated title "Zr." is read aloud as "zee-ster.").

That is where we are. The Assessment Team's work is done. Your Minister and Board do not feel we can answer the questions of vision and engagement without feedback from you. We are now calling for a team to consider FUSN's next steps and propose an implementation plan to the congregation in time for our next annual meeting. We imagine that this will once again be an effort that primarily involves information-gathering, integrating the UUA's standards for maintaining Welcoming Congregation status, the suggestions of the Assessment Team, and the reactions of individual members of the congregation.

We understand that volunteering to take on an open-ended task is daunting. We are asking for volunteers anyway, with the understanding that one of this team's first tasks will be to define its tasks. The questions underlying the Assessment Team's work may be answered by our community's response. *-Eric Haas*

SUMMER SUNDAY SERVICES

Summer Sunday services at FUSN are lay-led and informal, taking place at 9:30 a.m. in the Parish Hall. We are now collecting proposals for this coming summer. Contact Curt Lamb with any ideas for a service you might consider leading, or would hope that others might lead. The Worship Committee will provide lots of support in structuring a service, providing music etc. Curt.Lamb@the-BAC.edu or 617-895-8208.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

This past Saturday, March 12, we had the pleasure of hosting our Spring New UU class! We are very excited to welcome this group of newcomers and new(ish) individuals who are seeking community and a home at FUSN. Several FUSN leaders joined us for our class and explored a range of topics with the participants, including how FUSN works, what programs FUSN offers, how to get involved, and what makes FUSN special. Two leaders then led our attendees on an amazing tour of FUSN's historic building. The New UU class is one aspect of my job that I greatly cherish. From listening to everyone's diverse spiritual journeys to hearing how newcomers already feel welcome at FUSN, it's always an inspiring experience.

The Member Services Committee's next newcomer/new(ish) FUSNite event takes place in just a few weeks! Anyone who is new(ish) or still feels new at FUSN is cordially invited to a potluck dinner at the home of Brenda and Pete Roberts on Saturday, April 9 at 6:00 p.m. It's a great, low-key way for newcomers and recently new FUSNites interested in UUism and FUSN to meet and spend time with one another. There will be time to ask questions, discuss our congregation's services and activities, as well as time to just get to know one another. Please RSVP to me, ash@fusn.org, with the total number of attendees (children are very welcome) and what dish you would like to bring. We really hope to see you there and look forward to sharing this experience with you!

Another piece of good news is that we are almost finished with finalizing the directory! Please keep an eye out for an announcement for its release on Facebook and the listserv as well as in the order of service. If you are not subscribed to our mailing list or Facebook group, please also let me know, and I will be sure to add you!

While my role at FUSN includes welcoming and assisting newcomers, please feel free to contact me ash@fusn.org or 617-527-3203 or drop by my office if you are a long-time member! I would love to hear how things are going for you at FUSN. I hope to make FUSN feel like a home for all - newcomers and long-time members alike.

-Ash Engel

RE MUSIC SUNDAY

Sunday, March 20 is Music Sunday in our RE Program as well! RE Council member, Barbara Brousal-Glaser, has taken the lead in coordinating three great workshops--Singing with our Music in RE Coordinator, Ellie Foster; drumming with K-8 Music Teacher, Adam Epstein, and dancing with Helena Froehlich, our Creation Dance Director. Pre-K will have their normal class this day, and nursery care will also be available.

EASTER EGG HUNT

We are excited to announce that we will be having our annual Easter Egg Hunt this year! Nancy Mattei and her daughter, Sara MacGaffey, have kindly volunteered to coordinate it again this year. We would not be able to have the egg hunt without them, and we are so grateful to them for investing their time and energy into this family-friendly activity. The egg hunt will take place outside by the playground after services on March 27. Be sure to come along and bring your children - it is sure to be a fun activity for all.

RE SUNDAY

Religious Education Sunday: May 22! All FUSN children and youth, Pre-K on up, will be preparing to lead components of the service, from hymns to homilies. As Religious Education is not just for children and youth, we will also have some adults in the service. We hope to see you all there. Please be in touch with Rowan, rowan@fusn.org if you have any questions or would like to help out!

YOUTH MINISTRY BROADCAST

Thank you for tuning into another week of the Youth Ministry Broadcast. March 5 was Coffee House and the turn out was amazing! We had a full house with so many incredible acts! A huge thank you to everyone who put so much time and effort into planning such a great event! Another thank you to everyone who attended Coffee House 2016!

For the next few Sundays, youth will be working on planning the Youth Sunday Service, which will be April 10! We hope to see you all there!

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Join us for our next monthly Community Breakfast, the best way to start your Sunday, on April 10 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. Upcoming breakfasts – Apr. 10 and May 22.

EVENING SONG

Evening Song April 3, 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 March 29, 9:00 am.

GLAUBE OHNE GRENZEN?

Faith without borders? In June 2017, several musicians from FUSN – and maybe YOU – will go to Germany to participate in the Assembly of Unitarians in Europe. We are so honored and thrilled to have been asked to present a concert at the assembly and to help provide music at the worship services during this event (which is similar to our General Assembly). To learn how you can participate and/or support our musicians, come to a meeting on Sunday April 3, in the Chapel from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.

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