



FUSN *News*

First Unitarian Society in Newton

Unitarian Universalist

November 23 - December 6, 2014

SUNDAY SERVICES - 10:15 A.M.

The theme for November is Courage

Nov. 23 - Rev. Erin Splaine

Nov. 30 - Intergenerational Thanksgiving Service

The theme for December is Joy

Dec. 7 - Rev. Erin Splaine - Special Collection

Dec. 14 - Intergenerational Carol Sing Service

Dec. 21 - Solstice Service

Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Services

5:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m.

11:30 p.m.

Dec. 28 - "Quaker Service" - Rev. Erin Splaine

Guest at Your Table envelopes will be distributed Sunday Nov. 23 and collected Sunday Dec. 21. This is a fundraiser for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) which advances human rights in the US and worldwide. UUSC defends worker's rights, the right to clean drinking water and supports healthcare and access to affordable food in Haiti. Gifts of \$125 or more are matched by the UU church in Manhasset, NY.

FROM THE BOARD

The Board of Trustees and many of you who are involved in committee work and event planning at FUSN had an opportunity this past weekend to work with Mark Ewert, a stewardship consultant affiliated with the UUA. The original impetus for bringing Mark in was to assess our readiness to conduct a capital campaign, something that was last done about 10 years ago and which some feel is needed again soon.

From Friday Nov. 14 – Sunday Nov. 16, Mark conducted a "Next Steps Weekend," consisting of meetings with congregational leaders and others. Having now been through the weekend and the congregational self-assessment some of us did leading up to it, I feel that the Next Steps Weekend was an exercise whose value goes way beyond any question about a capital campaign. It offered us an outsider's perspective (yet from someone intimately familiar with UU congregational and fiscal life) on life at FUSN – from our membership, leadership and stewardship cultures, to the soundness of our financial and physical structures, to our governance – even down to our need for a better-constructed flip-chart stand!

The Board, the Ops Council chair, and the ministers met with Mark on Friday evening, and again after the service Sunday. On Friday, he asked broad questions and listened as we spoke about things like the meaning of stewardship, and FUSN's vision and direction. On Sunday, he reflected back to us some of what he'd heard from us on Friday and from other lay leaders on Saturday. He told us he found FUSN a healthy, vibrant congregation with a beautiful and well-maintained building and a bright future. He also shared his thoughts about where some of our

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Staff: Erin Splaine, *Minister*, Meghan Cefalu, *Assistant Minister*, Fran Clancy, *Administrator*, Rowan Van Ness, *Acting Director of Religious Education*, Beth Walton, *Assistant Director of Religious Education*, Anne Watson Born, *Director of Music*, Carson Cooman, *Organist*, Mandy Beal, *Youth Coordinator*, Roberta Humez, *Minister of Music Emerita*, Madison Crosby, *Beadle*.

Board of Trustees: Gregg DiBiaso, Cathy Morocco, Bobbie Sproat, *Chair*, Jacki Rohan, Lesley Sneddon, Jonathan Reuman, Alison Costello and Becca Lozinsky, *Youth Reps*.

Operations Council: Susan Bartlett, *Chair*, Jeannie Chaisson, Judy Curby, Laurel Farnsworth, *Vice Chair*, Anne Hess-Mahan, Andrea Kelley

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strengths and weaknesses lie, and areas in which we might consider some changes.

The Board has a lot of information to sift through, as we think about how to use what we've learned. We're certainly not ready to make any decisions about a capital campaign, but I can say that it's likely we'll have to do some other work before we're ready for that step. Stay tuned – more to come!

I can't close without telling you what a joy it was to participate in Music Sunday. Your enthusiastic response was so heartening, and Anne Watson Born was inspired in her choices of music and poetry, as well as her construction of the entire service. Our stewardship consultant's interlude was a bizarre but necessary intrusion, but the postlude brought us right back into the spirit and brought the house down! How lucky are we, to have such a skilled and inspiring musical and spiritual leader on our staff?!

-In Faith, Bobbie Sproat, Board of Trustees

LUNCH WITH ERIN AND MEGHAN

Wednesday, Dec. 10, noon in the Alliance Room. Yes, there is such a thing as a free lunch! Any and all are invited to join Erin and Meghan for soup and conversation at noon on the 10th in the Alliance Room. Long-time members of the community and those who are retired are especially invited. Let Fran know if you plan to attend so we will know how much soup to prepare. Also, let us know if you need a ride.

SOME NEWS from two excellent local arts organizations:

Project STEP (whose students played here in a memorable concert in October) was awarded the prestigious National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award. Chosen from a national pool of more than 350 nominations and 50 finalists, Project STEP is one of 12 programs across the country to receive the award, which is the highest honor for such programs in the United States. The award is administered by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. Project STEP was recognized for its rigorous, comprehensive year-round classical string training program for minorities that invites them into the world of classical music, from which they have traditionally been excluded.

Last year's winner of the NAHYPA was the Boston Children's Chorus. Their annual Holiday Concert will be on Saturday Dec. 13, at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at Old South Church in Boston. Information here – and look for Olivia Duvall in the scrolling photo banner: http://www.bostonchildrenschorus.org/news_and_events

RE-CONNECTIONS

As the holiday season is already upon us, people have a mix of experiences, from the frantic busyness of trying to get so many things done amidst the added festivities to the joy of spending extra time with loved ones. With so many images painted in the media about what this time should feel like, it's not hard to feel amiss when life doesn't feel as joyful and relaxed as it might.

A new term has even emerged in this day in age-- FOMO, the "Fear of Missing Out." While FOMO often is discussed in the context of living in a day and age where many of us are constantly connected to the internet through our computers and phones and it can be difficult to disconnect from them, I think this concept applies to the holiday season more than ever. There are so many activities and events that we might not want to miss out on. We might feel afraid that we haven't heard about or been invited to things that we might enjoy, even if we wouldn't be able to go anyway.

I would like to invite us to take a little bit time to reflect on what values we really want to lift for ourselves and our families up this season. Is it that we really want spaciousness--time to be at home, to listen to music, and to bake? Is it generosity? Joy? Mindfulness? What can you do to prioritize these values at this time, and how can you let go of that which is not serving you at this time? I hope your holidays are what you most want them to be this year.

-Rowan Van Ness

HOLIDAY DONATIONS NEEDED

FUSN will be sending holiday donations to the Concord prison inmates. The list below are the items approved by the facility (**they can't receive any items not on this list**). Volunteers at the prison will make up gift bags from these donations. Please look for the large decorated box inside the archway door on Washington street, for collections. Items will be collected until Sunday, Dec. 7., (nothing will be delivered after that time)

- white crew socks with 5 inch ribbing
- shampoo plastic bottle 12-15 ounces
- stick deodorant 2.5 size or larger
- bar of deodorant soap 4-5 ounces
- tube of toothpaste 5.8-6 ounces
- white pad of paper 6 x9 or 5 x 8, no wire
- white envelopes 6 3/4, 6 1/2 x 3 5/8.

Questions: Marylou@maryloum89@yahoo.com

Upcoming music events.....and thanks

If you're interested in caroling this year, please contact Anne Watson Born at music@fusun.org. We will be caroling on Friday Dec. 12 and on some other days.

There are many Messiah Sings every year – you could sing it 3 or 4 times every weekend from mid-November on. A worthy addition to the list is the annual Messiah Sing to benefit Project Bread, held this year on Dec. 19, 7:30 p.m. at All Saints Parish in Brookline. This year's soloists, accompanied by full orchestra, are: Kimberly Moller, Stephanie Kacoyanis, Joshua Collier, and the amazing Dana Whiteside. Anne Watson Born, conductor.

Here at FUSN we are fortunate to have so many wonderful musicians who are willing to offer their time and talents in providing music for our worship services. Our first Music Sunday of the year was a lovely example of this, and I would like to thank all of our musicians, dancers and readers:

CreationDancers: Helena Froehlich, Artistic Director, Kirsten Hede-Brierley, Edward Keazirian, Lynn Menegon, Hao Pan and Ashley Reynolds

Musicians: Nancy Hair, Nathan Kimball

Children of the Family Choir: Owen Butler, Maggie Butler; Maggie Brousal-Glaser; Gracen Delamar; Tobias Epstein; Ben Klinman, Charlotte Klinman; Myles Konary, Finn Konary, George Konary; Skye Larson; Siena Lerner-Gill; Meejee Sarvey

FUSN's Intergenerational Chamber Orchestra: Mandy Bass, Jenny Duvall, Andra Hotchkiss, flute; Katharine Axon, Jonathan Axon, David Lawrence, violin; Jim Cook, clarinet; Geoff Wadsworth, flugelhorn, tin whistle, saxophone; George Batchelor, trumpet; Debra Minard, Joe Klinman, cello; Clark Lakomski, trombone; Paul Batchelor, bass. Lois Shapiro, musical director, conductor, piano

Sanctuary Choir members: Bethany Allen, George Batchelor, Ruth Boyd, Karen Burns, Jorgeandres Camargo, Joan Caplan, Jim Cook, Jenny Duvall, Paul Estin, Walter Graham, Eric Haas, Brian Hicks, Michael Horn, Pat Horn, GERALYN Horton, Jud Leonard, Neil MacGaffey, Carolyn Mapes, Debra Minard, Jon Reusser, Jacki Rohan, Judy Ryde, Deborah Selig, Bobbie Sproat, David Stockton, Tai, Sandra Teare, Kate Thibeault, Norm Thibeault, Leslie Warner, Tim Wells, Ros Winsor

FUSN Band: Adam Epstein, Jimmy Frances, Bob MacWilliams, Pamela McA'Nulty, Geoff Wadsworth

Readers: Deborah Bennett, Nanci Butler, Walter Graham, Fiora Houghteling, Mindy Scharlin, Wendy Schwartz, Leslie Warner, Nancy Wrenn

FUSN HOLIDAY FAIR

The Holiday Fair is Saturday, Dec. 6, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Get Your Holiday Shine On! Come one come all to our annual community event right here in the Parish Hall. Enjoy a hot lunch with your FUSN friends. Stop by the wreath table and bring home a fresh green wreath decorated with bright bows. Who can resist the delicious baked goods, colorful gingerbread houses or unique cookies and cakes? Browse the gifts, jewelry and books tables. Tell your friends, your family and your neighbors to stop by. What a wonderful way to enjoy a crisp December day together. Mark your calendar now and bring your friends and family.

MUSICIANS NEEDED

Listen up, all, who have music inside,
Bubbling and burbling--not to be denied!
Holiday Fair time is rolling around,
We need volunteers--where are they to be found?
Volunteers musically inclined to play--
To sing or dance--on that festive day!
To light up the room, aurally speaking at least,
A kind of dessert treat--for the ears--the best feast!
Not fattening, illegal or dangerous at all--
Just pure joy to hear and join in--What a Ball!

So, please do step forward,
Don't be shy, let me know!
I will sign you up, we'll all have fun,
HO HO HO!

-Lois Shapiro

CHRISTMAS TREES



Christmas Trees: FUSN will again be offering Balsam fir trees for the holiday season to our congregation and to the general community. Prices will range from \$25 to \$75—the same as last year. Folks who order and pay in advance during November receive a \$5 discount. Stop by the Tree Guys table during coffee hour, place an order, and think about when you might help out with sales.

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Join us for our Community Breakfast on Dec. 14. 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. Upcoming Community Breakfast dates: Jan. 11; Feb. 8; March 8; April 12, May 17.

VESPERS AT FUSN

The monthly Vespers service with the Vermilion Quartet, Amelia LeClair, director, will be Sunday, Dec. 14 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. Second Sundays at 7:30 p.m.

Deadline for the next Newsletter is **Dec. 2**

UPDATE *from the board chair*

As of this writing, the Board plans to meet this week to consider thoughtfully the ramifications for the congregation flowing from Meghan’s disclosure about her relationship status, taking into account all we’ve heard from individuals and in the open meeting yesterday. We’ll be getting back to you soon, when we have more to share. For the time being, we urge you to keep sharing and listening respectfully to each other, and to feel welcome to come talk to any of us on the Board and/or to Erin or Meghan about your concerns. Remember, the life and health of our community are all about how we hold each other in love.

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