



Midcoast UU News

Minister: Rev. Nancy J. Kennedy Telephone: 751-4091

March 2010

Sunday, March 7 at 10:30 am

A Good Virus

—Ben Barth

Ben, the son of a Unitarian minister, reflects on his spiritual journey from political activism to drug addiction to a transformed life. He lives with his wife Angelica in Wiscasset. His daughter Hannah was our child care provider while she was in high school. He was originally scheduled to do this service on New Year's weekend and was cancelled due to the three day storm, was rescheduled for February 28th and had to be postponed again.



Sunday, March 14 at 10:30 am

The Many Faces of Spiritual Practice

—Rev. Kathleen Allan

Spiritual life is the bouquet, the perfume, the flowering and fulfillment of a human life. —Joseph Campbell

This morning, we will examine some spiritual practices that many UUs find essential to their lives.

Kathleen has conducted many services for us, and we always look forward to her return.



Sunday, March 21 at 10:30 am

Reclaiming Easter Blessings

Rev. Nancy Kennedy

“Easter is, to me, about the inspiration that can be found within the ministry of Jesus the prophet and the words he shared about the Spirit, and the indomitable power of love.”

Sunday, March 28 at 10:30 am

Who I'm Not: In Praise of Negativity.

—Max Alexander

“I'm going to talk about all the things I wish I could be but never will, and hopefully reach some conclusions, about who I really am, through all this negative navel-gazing.”

Max wrote *Man Bites Log* about moving to Maine from a career in Los Angeles and last year spoke to us about visiting Africa and his brother's business ventures there.

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Circle Suppers will be held March 19 and 20. Sign up on Sundays or call Sandy Barth (633-6005) or Sylvia Bailey (563-2105). These are informal suppers of 6-10 people with the host providing the main dish and the attendees providing the rest of the meal. It's a great way to get to know others in the Fellowship.

Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile things, but just look what they do when they stick together.

—Verna M. Kelly

Haiku Tea Ceremony

After celebrating Spring at a fellowship Circle Supper, you may want to continue to praise the season at our third annual Cherry Blossom Festival and Haiku Tea Party. Taking place at the Town Hall, on Saturday afternoon, April 10, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm, it is an opportunity to enter a different world—to sample the beauty of flowers and haiku poetry and participate in the ancient Japanese tradition of the tea ceremony.

I will need several interested helpers to welcome guests and take part in the program.

Mimi Moore, chairperson

UPCOMING DATES:

March 3, Wednesday—Banner Making Day, Phyllis Loney's, Round Pond.

March 7, Sunday—Special Board meeting, 9 am, Edgecomb Town Hall

March 7, Sunday—Membership Committee meeting, after the service downstairs, Edgecomb Town Hall

March 8, Monday—Lunch Bunch/Faith in Action Committee, 12:15 pm, Publick House, Newcastle. Reservations to Joanne Campbell, 832-7565

March 21, Sunday—Board meeting, 9 am at Edgecomb Town Hall

March 22, Monday—Sunday Program Committee meeting, 9:30 am at the Baileys, Newcastle

March 23, Tuesday—Religious Exploration Committee Meeting at Lindy Gifford's, Damariscotta

March 31, Wednesday—Community Supper, 5 pm, Congregational Church, Newcastle

April 10, Saturday—Haiku Tea Ceremony/Cherry Blossoms Festival, 2 pm, Edgecomb Town Hall, sponsored by Poetry Group

April 16 & 17, Friday & Saturday—Energy Fair, MUUF will have a table for environmental information and Equal Exchange coffee, etc.

President's Message

Greetings Everyone!

This has been a busy month for the MUUF. We have been spared many of our neighbor's massive snowfall and that has allowed us to keep our doors open and our plans on track. There have even been some sightings of a couple of blue jays venturing out in hopes of finding new homes and sustenance.

On January 31st at the Special Business Meeting two votes were taken to approve our 2010 revised Budget and to call Nancy Kennedy as our part time minister. Of the significant 2010 Budget decisions are decisions that will be of significance for all of us include: Fair Share reduction in 2010, 10 month funding for Religious Exploration, reduction in funding for the Administrative Assistant, reduction in XXX music XXX. In short, our reduced 2010 income is requiring us to make difficult program decisions and utilize excess funds earned in 2009.

Please reach out to any of the Board members to hear more about the deliberations and the work we are undertaking this year. You are welcome to join us for the Board meetings that are held at 9 am on the third Sunday

prior to the Service. We welcome your participation and input.

On February 6th, twelve Board members and Committee Chairs gathered for a Leadership Planning Meeting designed to prioritize our efforts and focus our energies. We had the benefit of a facilitator, PJ Mears a professional trainer and member of the Auburn Unitarian Church. As indicated in our challenging Budget discussions our efforts in 2010 need to be carefully targeted in order to improve our situation for next year.

Using group exercises and brainstorming techniques PJ assisted in identifying specific areas for us to focus our energies in this critical year. The two themes that were selected for our efforts in 2010 were Growth and Community Connections. A 2010 Calendar was developed with dates and goals for the supporting activities.

The theme of Growth encompasses both engaging new members as well as improving our members and friends relational experiences. A commitment was made to explore a trial new location for our Sunday Services in an attempt to increase our visibility, expand our horizons, and attract new

members. You will also see a new 'Welcome Table' on Sunday morning designed to offer new visitors and guests a chance to speak with a member and learn more about us.

Community Connection was our second theme selected by the group to address the need for greater community participation. In addition, to service in the community, there was a great interest in developing a tighter community within our walls. In early Spring you will be offered an opportunity to participate in the popular Circle Suppers. It was decided that we will limit our fundraising activities to one event in 2010. By using this approach we are hopeful that the entire congregation can support this event - a Blueberry Festival to be held the second week in August. Stay tuned for the announcement of the exact date and location.

The ideas generated at the Leadership Planning Meeting were ambitious in some cases, and remarkably simple and doable in others. Announcements and information will be shared on these activities and events in the Newsletter and at the Fellowship on Sunday. Please do not hesitate to provide feedback and comments.

I will continue to keep you updated in this column as to our plans and I look to encourage everyone's involvement. This year will be filled with activities and will reflect the positive energy that we all felt at our meeting on the 6th. These new approaches are designed to increase membership and stimulate growth, encourage the participation of children and youth, and invigorate our congregation. I believe we will all enjoy an enormous sense of relief and success when we achieve our shared goals for 2010.

Anne Flanagan

Save the Date—Provide Some Input

The board of directors has agreed—with all of your input and help—to hold our first annual **Blueberry Festival on Saturday, Aug. 14** at the Damariscotta River Association's Heritage Center on Belvedere Rd. This fundraiser will benefit us for a specific purpose, and a share will go to the DRA's Nature Education Programs.

A steering committee will meet soon to begin work on the details and seeks input from all members. Some of the possibilities for this community event with an "enviro focus" include a pie eating contest, rummage, craft and bake sale tables, structured games and crafts for children, tables for some other non-profits and the sale of blueberries in various quantities. Please email Lindy Gifford with your suggestions—do it today!

This event will need participation from all our members at many different levels, especially now during the planning stage. There will be a number of subcommittees with a place for you to bring your knowledge and energy. Let Lindy know now about what areas will interest you.

Treasurer's Report

Many thanks to those who have caught up with their 2009 pledges, which was budgeted at \$400 when we approved it on Jan. 31. The actual total to date is \$1277! Also, we have had additional pledge increases of \$900. All of this gives us a little bit of breathing room.

I will provide quarterly reports to the newsletter in addition to any other financial news- good or bad.

David Bailey, treasurer

Coffee/Tea

3/7	Joanne Campbell/Jean Howe
3/14	Kate Pennington/Ellen Tilton
3/21	Baileys
3/28	Sandy Barth

Greeter

Donna Dolham
Mabel O'Brien
Allen Millett
Fredericks

Minister' Message

The trees are coming into leaf
Like something almost being said;
The recent buds relax and spread,
Their greenness is a kind of grief.

Is it that they are born again
And we grow old? No, they die too.
Their yearly trick of looking new
Is written down in rings of grain.

Yet still the unresting castles thresh
In fullgrown thickness every May.
Last year is dead, they seem to say,
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.

—Philip Larkin

My first newsletter musings find me immersed in another season in my tradition—the season of Lent. I will journey with others for forty days and emerge on Palm Sunday. As is true every year, I will honor the season in my own way and will arrive at the end just in time to walk the via Delerosa on my own terms. For me, this annual excursion within is one that begins with ashes.

In the book of Genesis, God tells Adam, “Dust you are, and to dust you will return.” There’s no mixed message there. All human beings are given life, but in the same moment that we take our first breath, we get closer and closer to our last. “Remember... you are dust. And to dust you will return.” That’s humbling news, isn’t it? What is also humbling is that during the next forty days as I am given an opportunity to come face to face with the temporary nature of life and the certainty of death, I will be given pause to wonder if I’ve used this gift of life as God intended. Often this season of reflection directs people to rejoicing in the things they do and are that support what they believe are the hopes the Spirit has for them: kindness, peace, justice, mercy, honesty, love—and become aware of (and commit to change) the things they do and are that do not call themselves or others to be the best that is inside of them. As I sit in reflection, I am aware of the many ways I give joy to the world, and also recognize that I have work to do before I die. In either case, to me it is all good.

Even if you do not observe the season of Lent, I think it is a worthwhile to practice a discipline of making a thorough inventory of one’s self and one’s ways every now and then. If you think that soul searching does

the body good, in the spirit of Lent I encourage you to consider along with me the following: how would you live if you knew that your days were numbered? Would you be more kind? More loving? Would you treat your friends differently? Your enemies? Would you make more time for family? Would you say, “I’m sorry” to the people that you’ve hurt? Would you be more mindful of suffering in the world? Would you want to share a little bit more of what you have with those who have nothing? What would you do? How would you live?

Sometimes people of the Christian faith focus on giving something up for Lent in order to help them to focus on their relationship with the Spirit and how they are using the gift of life. This year, I read a poem in the on-line UCC Maine Conference newsletter suggesting that it is also possible to meditate on God by embracing something new, and beginning a “good habit.” For some ideas, here is a poem they found in the February issue of Pittsfield’s newsletter “Shalom”:

Fast from judging others; feast on the Spirit dwelling in them
Fast from fear of illness;
feast on the healing power of God
Fast from words that pollute;
feast on speech that purifies

Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude
Fast from anger; feast on patience
Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism
Fast from negatives; feast on alternatives
Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness
Fast from self-concern;

feast on compassion
Fast from gossip; feast on silence
Fast from worry; feast on faith

—Author Unknown

Sisters and brothers of the Spirit, Seven as the journey through Lent serves as a reminder that we can’t always get up on our own—that sometimes we need the Spirit’s help, so too are we called to remember that God’s love always reaches through whatever ashes there are in our lives. I believe that although we may ultimately return to dust, dust that we are, we still are loved. As you move through these Lenten days—or whatever your practice of reflection is, remember this: Nothing in this world, even death, can separate you from the love in the Universe. That is the hope that was imposed upon my forehead on Ash Wednesday, and call us forward together: many people on many paths—as we journey toward all that is possible with the Spirit. May the Spirit work wonders amid our reflections in these coming Lenten days.

Blessings, Nancy

RE News

We are starting a unit on food downstairs with the children. February 21 we made Stone Soup (with a real stone!) and served it to the Fellowship after the service. In coming weeks we will be making pancakes, popcorn, & dog treats. On **Wednesday March 31, the Fellowship hosts the community supper at the Congregational Church in Newcastle** and we’re hoping the children can make dishes at home to bring to the Congregational church by 5 pm. We’re also encouraging them to stay and help serve and clean up. More information will be sent home closer to the date.

We will also be coloring eggs at the end of March in preparation for an **intergenerational Easter service on April 4**, and our food unit will culminate on **April 25 with an intergenerational service on ethical eating to celebrate Earth Day.**

Adult RE Groups

The adult RE Group which has been studying the 2004 UUA Report of the Commission on Appraisal is almost done the report. In April we will be starting a new curriculum and the group will be opened up to anyone who would like to join. We would like to start other small groups on other subjects as well. If you’re interested in a particular type of group or subject for a small group to study, please email your ideas to Lindy Gifford at lindyg@tidewater.net.

Community Supper

There will be a Community Supper hosted by the Fellowship at the Second Congregational Church in Newcastle on **Wednesday, March 31. Serving time is 5 pm.** We need helpers and cooks. Please call Billie Flanagan (563-8656) if you are able to provide food, help cook, serve, or clean up.

About Us

Mary Duncan says every week, they're going to get to Fellowship Sunday; and every week different circumstances keep them at home. She expressed the wish to hear Rev. Nancy's Sunday, Jan. 31, talk, when I said I'd bring any CDs of our services to her. Sometimes, it's their long steep driveway and snowcover.

Jean Howe

Welcome to:

Tom and Hilde Roberts
P.O. Box 580
Boothbay Harbor, ME 04538
633-0246
hildegardroberts@gmail.com

Philip and Eliza Morrison
Tillie, Taylor, Connor, and Olivia
1854 Alna Road
Alna, ME 04535
586-6924
phil@morrisonfurniture.com

Please add their names and information to your new yellow Directory.

Directory Change

In your directory, please replace the cell phone number after Rev. Nancy's name as follows:

Minister: Rev. Nancy J. Kennedy and MUUF cell phone number: 751-4091

Sharon Crosbie has made the move she was expecting to:
P.O. Box 94
Wiscasset, ME 04578

Elizabeth Guest
North School Apartments, No. 410
248 Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04101
Tel. No. (207) 721-9536
Cell No. (606)416-1701



Music Notes

Forget March madness and join the Muffles for practice at 9:15 on the 2nd Sunday and practice and singing in the service on the 4th Sunday. We'll also be getting in tune for the Vernal Equinox and Easter season and may tuck in an extra rehearsal. We are also known as the Mufflexibles, so if you are not on our mailing list and would like to join us get in touch with me at krosspt@lincoln.mid-coast.com or 882-8155 to confirm the schedule.

Sue Carlson

Membership Update

The Membership Committee met on Sunday, February 7th. We bid farewell to Elizabeth Guest as she leaves for Portland on her new adventure. Thank you, Elizabeth, for all your work. We'll miss you! Elizabeth's new address will be: North School Apartments, Apt. 410, 248 Congress Street, Portland, ME 04101, as of March 1st.

You will notice the new arrival of a Welcome Table, sponsored by the Membership Committee. We encourage longstanding and new members to stop by for a visit. At the table we will share information about what's going on here at the Fellowship. The table will be tended before and after services by a variety of people, including Membership Committee members as well as other members of MUUF. The person tending the table will be following up with cards to new people visiting the church. Please let us know if you'd like to take a turn and help us welcome newcomers.

Faith in Action

At our February meeting, we discussed the several principles, and upcoming organizations and activities in our area we support and will be working on with you:

Food Pantries: Boothbay Harbor and Newcastle. Buy two of a couple items on your grocery list, like coffee, tea, soups, hot/cold cereals and bring the extra to Fellowship. Jean Howe

Community Outreach: Haiku Tea Ceremony/Cherry Blossoms Celebration—Sat., April 10, 2 pm at the Edgecomb Town Hall. Mimi Moore

Energy Fair: Fri. & Sat., April 16 & 17 at the Damariscotta "Y". Table (no charge for non-profits)—Equal Exchange products (only 4 steps between farmer/grower and our Fel-

Ann Foscett has volunteered to once again send out cards of support to MUUF members in need of get-well wishes or other encouragement. Please let Ann, as well as our minister, the Reverend Nancy Kennedy, know about "Caring" needs among our members and friends. Ann's phone # is 563-8559, and her e-mail address is: arfoskett@roadrunner.com. Rev. Nancy Kennedy can be reached at 751-4091, and her e-mail address is: rev.njk@gmail.com.

The Membership Committee is vital to the growth of our Fellowship, and there are some exciting opportunities that will be coming up. Membership Growth was one of the important areas discussed at the Leadership Planning Meeting on Sat. February 6th. Please join us at our next Membership Committee meeting on Sunday, March 7th at noon at the Edgecomb Town Hall following the service.

lowship table compared to 9 steps for the coffee in supermarkets. June Phillips needs some helpers to cover a few hours. Sue van Alsenoy will be doing the Environmental Display.

CSAs & CSFs (Community Supported Agriculture and Fisheries)—lists of local farms participating. Karen Kleinkopf.

Monthly Sunday for loose collection: to go to local charitable organizations. Discussion with Board.

BLUEBERRY HARVEST FESTIVAL—Sat., Aug. 14—Working with all Fellowship members on sub-committees starting now—ideas and activities, person power at the Festival. Steering Comm. already meeting: David Bailey, Lindy Gifford, et al.

NON-VIOLENCE—A LENTEN CONVERSATION— Congregational Church of Boothbay Harbor (Fellowship Hall)

Wednesday evenings in March, March 3-31

5:30-6 Simple Soul and Bread Meal

6-7:30 Discussions & Presentations.

Led by Sarah Foulger, Rupert Neily, and Nancy Prisk.

Sign up to participate and/or to bring soup or bread. 633-4757

UNIVERSALIST CONVOCATION 2010

May 14-16, 2010

First Universalist Society of Rochester, NY

Keynote: The Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed

"Dragged Kicking and Screaming to Heaven"

For more information please go to nmuc.org/Convo

**SPRING CONFERENCE & ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT**
Friday, April 30, 2010, and Saturday, May 1, 2010
Red Jacket Inn, North Conway, NH

GETTING UNSTUCK:

Nurturing Relational Curiosity as a Means to Break Through

**Keynote Speaker: Rev. Mark Stringer,
First Unitarian Church of Des Moines, Iowa,
2009 UUA "Breakthrough Congregation"**

When Rev. Mark Stringer was called to the First Unitarian Church, Des Moines in 2001, the congregation had been in a 30-year 250-member plateau. The facility could support more members, the Des Moines metro population of over 400,000 indicated that there could be more members, and the congregation leadership claimed they wanted more members. So what was holding them back, and how did they become a 2009 UUA "Breakthrough" congregation, with over 400 members and weekly attendance of over 300? Here are the lessons of one congregation's growth and the hope their story offers to all of us who yearn for more vibrant, dynamic, and growing UU congregations.

**Read more & register online at: ned.uua.org
or pick up forms at Fellowship**

**Talk to Donna Dolham or Lindy Gifford
about carpooling & sharing rooms**

**Fellowship Minister
and Board of Directors**

Minister: Rev. Nancy J. Kennedy

President: Anne Flanagan

Vice-president: Donna Dolham

Secretary: Phyllis Loney

Treasurer: David Bailey

Trustees: Mimi Moore
June Phillips
Jim McQuaide

Nominating Committee:

Steve Cole
B.J. Frederick
Sue van Alsenoy

Director of Music & Pianist:

Kevin Kiley

Director of Religious Exploration:

Lindy Gifford

Administrator: Jean Howe

Newsletter: Lindy Gifford
Donna Dolham

Public Relations: David Bailey
Judy Linker

Committee Chairs

Sunday Programs: Sandra Barth

Music: Suzanne Carlson

Faith in Action: June Phillips



Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
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