



Midcoast UU News

Interim Minister: The Reverend Danielle Di Bona

Telephone: 350-0210

January 2009

Sunday, January 4 at 10:30 am
Change: Quality, not Quantity
—David Bailey

Our newly elected board president, David Bailey, has led a number of services in past years and has held various Fellowship offices, including a previous stint as president about 10 years ago. In his working life he was a newspaper journalist, a radio news and sports announcer, a technical writer, graphics buyer and a commercial printing production manager. He and Sylvia celebrated 50 years of marriage in May and have traveled extensively. They reside in Newcastle, where he serves on the town Planning Board, and have been members of MUUF for 14 years.



Sunday, January 11 at 10:30 am
Life Span Faith Development
—Rev. Danielle DiBona et al

Join Danielle and Fellowship members as we once again break into small groups to explore our faith together. (People really loved it last time!) For all ages.



Sunday, January 18 at 10:30 am
Huston Smith and the transcendent unity of religion.
—Dana Sawyer

Dana Sawyer is professor of religion at the Maine College of Art and author of *Aldous Huxley, A Biography*. He is currently writing the authorized biography of Huston Smith, the famous scholar of world religions.

*Because of your smile,
you make life more beautiful.*

— Thich Nhat Hanh



Sunday, January 25 at 10:30 am
Will the Real Martin Luther King, Jr. Please Stand Up?
—Rev. Danielle DiBona

Our interim minister leads us in a slightly belated commemoration of Martin Luther King Day.

About Us

We celebrated with a decorated cake Roger and Mary Duncan's 68th Wedding Anniversary Sunday, December 28th, the actual date being a week earlier. And Roger wrote and gave the "Reflection" for that service, while Mary entertained us all with a story, written by her mother, for the Time for All Ages. We salute you, Roger and Mary!

**Remember our website:
www.uumidcoast.org
for more information!**

UPCOMING DATES:

January 11 Sunday—The new Board will hold its first meeting downstairs at the Edgcomb Town Hall. Meetings are open to all members of the Fellowship. David Bailey, president, welcomes suggestions for the agenda via email or telephone.

January 12 Monday—Sunday Program Committee 9:30 am at Baileys.

January 12 Monday—Lunch Bunch 12 noon at the Public House, Newcastle. RSVP to Joanne Campbell, so that she can make reservations.

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Save the Date for the Winter Youth Con: SpiritUUality and the Arts

When: Feb 27-March 1, 2009

Where: Bangor, ME

Who's planning and coordinating? The Bangor youth group and Wendy Erickson, interim DRE

Registrations will be emailed the first week in January.

Questions? Email Benette Sherman at bsherman@uua.org

	Coffee/Tea	Greeter
1/4	Balch/Matrai	O'Brien
1/11	Salvo	A & B Flanagan
1/18	Foskett	Wolf/Neal
1/25	Barnes/Howe	Pennington
2/1	Barth	Kortemeier

Minister's Message

Dear Ones:

Last Sunday was my first opportunity to sit with you as you worked as a community to determine the direction of the fellowship by discussing and voting on a 2009 budget. What I learned from this exercise is that you, as a community, feel strongly about your connection and responsibility to the UUA and the New England District. I was very proud that you voted to pay the fellowship's "fair share" to both. I have been in many UU churches that had much more money and who chose not to fully support our Association and Districts. Each year at General Assembly, those who attend from "fair share" churches receive a purple ribbon that says "Fair Share" to attach to their nametags. This June, when I arrive in Salt Lake City, I will have the honor of receiving a "Fair Share" ribbon because of each of you.

I also learned that you, as a community, value children. You value the children that we see in our church, but you also value the children of our future....those who have yet to find our doors and those still to be born. This value was obvious by the lively discussion on funding a (very) part-time Religious Exploration directory and the decision to fully fund that position.

Additionally, I learned that you, as a community, want and expect good music, while at the same time recognizing that there may be sacrifices that must be made in this area, as we had to cut the music budget. How the money will be used has been handed over to the music committee.

This community has impressed me with your willingness to be up front and honest with each other during these discussions and your ability to see what this fellowship needs for its future.

What I did not see and wish to share with you today is any sense of sacrificial giving. Although all columns were open for change, we did not discuss the possibility of changing our pledge line. We did not discuss what it would mean if each one of us increased our pledge, even a very little bit. We did not discuss the fact that 10 of our members do not pledge any amount of money to

our church. We did not discuss what it might look like to talk at length about sacrificial sharing of our time, talent and treasure. I would like to propose that, during this most difficult economical time, this is the time to offer even more to the church that we all love. I would like to propose that each of us pray and/or meditate on what it would mean to us....physically, mentally and spiritually, to increase our pledge to the church by 5%. I would like to ask the 10 members who have not found it in their hearts to pledge to this fellowship that I know they love...to pray and meditate about pledging 1% of your income. I would like to suggest that each one of us, who love and value this fellowship and who have dreams for it—s future, to give sacrificially of your time and talent as well as of your money. We heard this past Sunday that we need adults to step up and volunteer for Religious Exploration. Now is the time! How else might we share our talents? What gifts do you bring to this beloved community that will help us both reach our financial

goals and our community goals?

Why am I asking this? Because I have a vision of what this community could be to each other and to the world with just a little more sacrifice on our parts. The new year is upon us. This is the time that we make new resolutions which, if you are like me, we break within a month. Let each of us pray and meditate on what absolutely unbreakable resolution we are willing to make to this fellowship for the year 2009. What sacrifice are you willing to make for this community? What are you willing to do over and above what you do now for the life of the Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship? Is it a financial sacrifice? Is it a sacrifice of time in the sanctuary so that you can honor our children by spending a Sunday "downstairs?" Is it a sacrifice of a talent that you have that you will offer to MUUF for no charge? You decide.

May each of you be blessed with health, joy, growth and love in this new year.

With many blessings,
Rev. Danielle

RE News

From the DRE

I and the RE committee are very grateful for the Fellowship's support of our RE programming. Sunday December 28, at the special meeting on the budget, the Fellowship voted to restore full funding to the RE program, despite the difficult economic times. It was clear you all understand that a thriving RE program is essential to the long term health of the Fellowship. I and the committee will also be doing everything in our power to hold RE costs down. We will be trying to keep use of paid caregivers to a minimum, but for safety reasons, we need to have at least two adults or older youth downstairs, whenever there are children present. So we will need plenty of volunteers! If you think you can help us, please email or call me: lindyg@tidewater.net 563-1736. And thank you all for your support!

Lindy Gifford, Interim DRE

Upcoming in RE

January 4: there will be multi-age children's programming available downstairs. (We still need a bit more time to get First Sunday programming, with differentiated age groups underway.)

January 11 will be Life Span Faith Development with small groups for all ages upstairs, with Danielle DiBona and others.

January 18 & 25 will again be multi-age children's programming downstairs.

February 1 will be a special inter-generational celebration for all ages upstairs. Bonnie Ginger will lead us in an Imbolc service, marking the halfway point between the winter solstice and spring equinox, Saint Brigid's day (originally she was a Celtic goddess) and the roots of "Groundhog Day."

March 1 "First Sunday" programming starts.

President's Message

As we begin a new year, I urge you all to join me in moving our Fellowship forward to a more secure future and a stronger position in the wider community. You voted to engage an interim, part-time, minister to lead us in our quest. The plan now is for her to be with us twice a month, providing continuity in our search for growth - in programs, in membership, in service to our fellow citizens.

We all need to be mindful of the diverse beliefs among us, including those that are closer to the Judeo-Christian traditions and those that are basically agnostic, and all that are in between. I was reminded recently that we cannot assume that all who attend our denomination's services are Democrats or liberal independents. This tendency seems to have alienated some of our more conservative and Republican members and friends.

Journalist Sally Quinn recently said she now sees divinity in the everyday world. "My image of God may not be the personal God so many pray to. But, yes, I do believe in the everyday preciousness of life. That is what I call God."

Here in the middle of the Midcoast our small band of religious independents can provide the opportunity for more children and adults to celebrate the preciousness of life. Let's begin by truly getting to know each other.

Perhaps we could each prepare a brief biography and collect them in a 'handbook' form. We can also begin gathering in small groups for pot-luck meals, or even just dessert. Invite some members that you don't know very well to your home—without a formal 'circle supper' program.

Most importantly, please feel free to speak to me about anything you feel I need to bring to the board, because we have only one purpose, to serve our Fellowship—which is not an entity, but a group of individual members.

—David

Green Sanctuary Gleanings

1. Plant some trees: on your own property, in your community, or pay to have it done (helping to reforest the rainforests is a great idea). Could be a Christmas or New Year's gift.

2. Replace at least one of your old appliances with an Energy Star™ one. Continue this resolution each year until all have been done.

3. Go to <http://www.foodnews.org/walletguide.php> and download a copy of the list of fruits and vegetables that are ranked according to their pesticide residue. Carry it with you when you shop so you will know which ones you should spend the extra money for the organic variety. The top 5 with the highest pesticide load are peaches, apples, sweet bell peppers, celery and nectarines. Lowest are avocados and onions.

4. Unplug all your electronic gadgets before going to sleep every night. "The Department of Energy estimates

that in the average home, 40 percent of all electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are turned off. Add that all up, and it equals the annual output of 17 power plants, the government says." www.nytimes.com/2007/06/14/technology/14basics.html

5. Use water filters/purifiers rather than bottled water. www.toxicfreeme.org for more information. This site is maintained by the Natural Resources Council of Maine.

Jean Howe has placed a handy pamphlet from the National Resources Council of Maine on the table by the name tags and June Phillips' Equal Exchange store entitled "Clean and Healthy Housekeeping."

Thank you, Jean.

Don't forget to recycle your Christmas tree.

From the Lowernine.org Newsletter: One Year On

October marked the one year anniversary of lowernine.org's official arrival in the Lower Ninth Ward. Last October, lowernine.org was donated and began rebuilding the home on El Dorado Street that acts as our headquarters/volunteer housing facility. This fall, however, marks the second anniversary of founder and executive director Rick Prose's first trip to New Orleans post-Katrina - a trip that sparked the idea that unskilled volunteers could play an important role in the rebuilding of homes in the Lower Nine.

Starting with nothing but a will to help one family recover what was taken from them on August 29th, 2005, the organization was granted 501(c)3 tax-exempt status, has raised enough money to remain in opera-

tion for the past year, hosted over 700 volunteers from all parts of the country, and returned nine families to their homes to date.

In addition to rebuilding, our volunteers have performed a variety of jobs, including vacant lot maintenance, neighborhood cleanup, community gardening, surveying, organizing a neighborhood farmers' market, and offering volunteer assistance to other nonprofits in the community.

"This neighborhood has welcomed us with open arms," says lowernine.org's Director of Development Laura Paul. "Our ability to bring people together from all over the country and put them to work rebuilding this community is so meaningful. We are all lucky to be a part of the process, and we all feel that,

whether we stay for a day or commit for the long haul. The residents feel that, and they respect and welcome it."

Executive Director Rick Prose adds, "This all started very much on a wing and a prayer. A year ago all we had was a commitment of financial support sufficient to keep the organization afloat for a few months. We had our house donated along with some basic tools and equipment, but we had no paid staff and no idea if we would be able to generate enough interest among volunteers to make this thing work."

"Well, it has worked. It is working. And we're getting folks back in their homes. Kind of amazing, eh?"

For more information go to www.lowernine.org

