

MUUFLETTER for June 2017

Newsletter from Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

SUNDAY SERVICES SCHEDULE

Always at 10:30 a.m.

Porter Meeting Hall, Skidompha Library
Entrance on Elm St., Damariscotta

June 4: In her sermon **"Unraveling Our Messy Nests"** Worship Associate Courtney Belolan will explore how expectations, of ourselves and from others, can get in the way of connecting with the wider world and universe.

June 11: Our worship service, led by Rev. Erika Hewitt, will include a welcoming ritual for our many new members, as well as a Bridging Ceremony for Emma Goltz. Join us for what will be a high-energy, high-love morning!

June 18: "Choosing the Dream" by Rev. Bob Hargreaves, a retired Episcopal minister who lives in Nobleboro. He served as a parish minister for 31 years and for the past 14 has been a volunteer teacher and counselor at Two Bridges Regional Jail.

Our Share the Plate recipient today: *OUT Maine*. Their Mission: OUT Maine supports and empowers lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) young people and their allies in rural Maine. Through affirmation, advocacy, education and guidance, OUT assists LGBTQ youth, 22 and under, in their journey from adolescence to adulthood.

June 25: Live from General Assembly

This morning the New Orleans Convention Center will host the largest annual UU worship service, at General Assembly (GA). Our service at home will include familiar elements before live-streaming the GA sermon by Rev. Mara Dowdall, Senior Minister of the First UU Society of Burlington, Vermont.

July 2: Guest minister Rev. Joanna Lubkin, UU Chaplain at Wellesley College.

**JUNE 24
YAHN & BAKE SALE
A MUUF Fundraising Fun Event
See Page 4 for details!**

Get to Know Your Minister



Rosie Davis (Board member) says, "I came up with the idea of 'Getting to know your Minister' as Rev. Erika is a part of us as we are of her. I thought it would be fun to ask her a few questions. Erika being the good sport that she is, agreed."

These are half of the questions Erika received; she answered the first half in our April newsletter.

• What is your favorite news source?

I usually begin the day by reading Twitter, where I follow a large number of journalists and politicians (I especially love the voices of @ananavarro, @tedlieu, and @JoyAnnReid). Sometimes I read the Washington Post app, but I almost always stream NPR's Morning Edition over breakfast. If I turn on the TV for news, I choose MSNBC.

• If you had to pick a favorite author, who would it be? *Sadly, one of my favorite writers, Brian Doyle, died on May 27th — so I'm grieving his death and re-reading his books and essays. Doyle lived and wrote in Portland, Oregon. Both his fiction and his books of prayers have always held a special place in my heart.*

Before he died, Brian told his friends and fans: "We are only here for a minute, we are here for a little window, and to use that time to catch and share shards of light and laughter and grace seems to me the great story."

• Why here? As a minister, you work at the national level — so why did you pick this congregation four years ago?

In 2013, after over a decade of parish ministry, I felt the need to step outside of the longstanding but unstated tradition among UU ministers of serving larger and larger congregations. I don't like being beholden to convention or to other people's expectations.

Ultimately, I chose to serve the Midcoast UU Fellowship because I suspected we'd be a great match (...and we are). This congregation is a joy to me: even as I serve you, you teach me how to be a better minister. You challenge me and delight me. That makes my life meaningful, interesting, and satisfying.

In addition to how much I love you as a congregation, one of the gifts of serving you is that I can

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Get to Know Your Minister... *continued*

balance it with two other ministries that also bring me joy: working for our Unitarian Universalist Association, and officiating at about 30 weddings per year. To be able to nest these three part-time ministries together while living in Maine is my operating definition of "quality of life" — and that's more important to me than the income and prestige of being the senior minister of a large church outside of Maine.

• **What is your favorite food?** *I don't have one! But a happy moment each day is when I make a cup of tea in the morning. I love raw almonds, leafy greens, and feta. I can't remember ever turning down a glass of red wine. And — having been raised in the Midwest — I never met a carb I didn't like.*

• **Where do you get your shoes?** *When I visit my hometown of Portland, Oregon — and if I have any money left after buying books at the world-famous Powell's Books — I shop at a shoe store called Imelda's. (Yes, it's named after that Imelda!)*

\$500 Reverse Offering — Ripples of Generosity, Ever-Expanding

On Easter (April 16th) we distributed twenty envelopes containing a total of \$500 cash. We asked members & friends of the congregation to use that cash to create more caring or justice in the world — however they defined that. Some of you added your own money to chosen recipient, making our \$500 grow even larger and more powerful.

Next month, you'll hear more about where this \$500+ went. For now, here's a snapshot of just some of the places you shared — and grew — our reverse offering:

- \$100: Salt Bay Area Head Start (in Damariscotta)
- \$45: "Caring for Kids," a volunteer group that provides the Community Christmas program, Snack Pack Program and Friday Sun and Fun in the summer
- \$75: the Pine Tree Society
- \$30: Mobius, Inc.
- \$100+ : a private fund to help a Boothbay family who lost their home in a fire
- \$50: a new group that offers local support to families of those battling drug addiction
- \$20: a young mother in line at the supermarket who appeared to be struggling financially
- \$50+: the Ecumenical Food Pantry

Stay tuned for more personal and detailed stories of your giveaways!



Hospitality Schedule

June 4 - Sandra Barth (Indigo Pod)

June 11 - Kate Pennington (Green Pod)

June 18 - Bob Lightfoot (Red Pod)

June 25 - Rosie Davis /Tiffany Vencile (Blue Pod)

July 2 - Dick & Jennifer Ober (Purple Pod)



President's Message

Hello Everyone,
If you missed our Sunday service on May 21st, I want to share with you our new **Mission and Mission Statement**:

Nurture spiritual growth

Engage in justice

Love joyfully, without limitations

After months of planning, weeks of sharing and a Board meeting devoted to caring, we have come up with a new Mission and Mission Statement that encompasses our passions for ourselves and our community as we head into a new level of expansion for our Fellowship.

Thanks to everyone who shared future goals for our fellowship; where do we see ourselves in five years? How do we best fill our UU needs and the needs of our community? Some folks attended after-worship workshops, others responded by email. Every thought, plan and dream was shared with the Board who then compiled them into a very succinct, meaningful statement; one that everyone can memorize and share when friends ask, "what does the Midcoast UU Fellowship believe in?"

Special thanks to Caity Bogdan (Secretary of the Board and Mission-worker extraordinaire) who worked very hard to make the difficult work of re-visioning our Mission in a way that was thought-provoking, creative and fun.

As our fellowship continues to move forward with our dreams and ideas, we will use this Mission to keep us connected to what is important in our Fellowship and community.

*In faith,
Carol Robins*

*Please make an effort
to say hello and make welcome folks you don't
know during our social time following
Sunday worship services.*

Religious Exploration



by
**Carney
Doucette,
DRE**

*photo of our
Butterfly
Friends
class*



RE Sundays in June:

June 4 – Spirit Play Story: My Many Colored Days – Kate Pennington

June 11 – RE Special focus on Science – Coding with Robots with Caity Bogdan

June 18 – Spirit Play Story:

Our Flaming Chalice – Carney Doucette

June 25 – No RE or childcare

Bridging on June 11

Please plan to attend the worship service on Sunday, June 11 as we bridge Emma Goltz. The Bridging Ceremony celebrates the transition of our youth from their high school experience into young adulthood. Our RE children will come back into worship to be a part of this Rite of Passage with the entire MUUF community.

Guest at Your Table

Remember to bring in your Guest at Your Table boxes if you haven't done so. The children will be counting the money on Sunday, June 4.

Summer Help in RE

The REC is looking for someone to be our Summer Lead Guide in RE. If you know of someone who enjoys working with children and would like to make a little money, please encourage them to contact Carney Doucette at midcoastuure@gmail.com or 975-9994.

Story Basket Makers

If you enjoy doing creative work, consider creating a Spirit Play story basket. Carney can give you a story to create a basket with along with some guidelines and samples. We are working to create stories about MUUF as well. Is there is a part of your history that would lend itself to a story – how you became a Fellowship; a social justice project?? Contact Carney at dre@uurockland.org if you would like to help.

WAIT!

Before you do your spring cleaning,
don't throw anything away!
Consider donating your gently used items
to our **yard/bake sale**

Saturday, June 24th

from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

at the Bailey's, 236 Academy Hill, Newcastle.
Items for sale can be dropped off there at any time, to be stored in their Pond House (would you believe it's in front of their pond!) Just drive down to the end of driveway and place your 'stuff' inside.

If you are available to help set-up
on Friday, June 23rd or
help with the sales on the day of,
please contact Rosie Davis at
rosiesdavis@gmail.com

If you can't stay out of the kitchen
and love to bake,
please contact Sandra Barth at
sbarth1492@gmail.com

Drafting a MUUF Covenant

The Fellowship's Committee on Ministry (COM) has been working to develop a covenant to serve the entire Fellowship. Beginning earlier this year, the COM began the process by soliciting feedback from congregation members through questionnaires, and after-service conversations and work sessions. In late May the COM prepared the draft covenant (below). We encourage all members and friends to review the proposed covenant and give us your feedback.

The COM will hold one more post-service discussion on Sunday, June 4 to review the draft covenant. If you are unable to attend this discussion, feel free to provide feedback to one of the COM members: Kate Pennington, John Adams, Tim Goltz.

Our Covenant (draft)

Building community is an ongoing spiritual practice. We join together to celebrate life in all its beauty and wonder, lifting up each other's joys and mourning each other's sorrows.

Strengthened by our common humanity and inspired by our seven Principles, we promise:

- to be a brave and welcoming community,
- to bring compassion and kindness into our interactions and our search for justice,
- to share in the struggles of our spiritual journeys,
- to challenge each other to live our values.

We strive to nurture our relationships with one another and will communicate directly with one another.

In loving community, we hold each other and our imperfections. When we hurt one another, we will seek to forgive, make amends, and reconnect in a spirit of love.

Book Club - *Amina's Voice*

The Social Justice Committee is sponsoring an ongoing series of book clubs, and the next book choice is *Amina's Voice* by Hena Khan.

This book follows Amina Khokar as she transitions into middle school, where she must navigate the changing relationships with her best friend Soojin, who suddenly seems more interested in hanging out with one of the "cool girls", Emily. Meanwhile she also has to navigate the relationship she has with her family as her uncle visits from Pakistan. Amina begins the novel shy and afraid to share her singing and her opinions with others but when her local mosque is vandalized she finds the courage to speak up.

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The date for discussion is TBD, but everyone is encouraged to get their hands on the novel and begin reading!

Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network

(MUUSAN) hosted its annual Spring Conference and Meeting on May 13 at the UU Church of Augusta. *Photo:* Keynote Speaker, the Hon. Tom Andrews, flanked by our Fellowship members Sandy Barth, Julia Fitz-Randolph, and Carol Robins. Tom is the President and CEO of the UU Service Committee and inspired over 60 UUs from over 15 Maine congregations



about speaking up and speaking out for social justice at home and globally. Tom is a forever UU, and former Maine state legislator and Congressman from Maine's 1st District. Tom now leads the UUSC in its work to challenging the devastating impacts of global warming, the injustice of growing income equality, and the assaults on the rights and dignity of marginalized people throughout the world.

Join MUUF at Pride Portland!



June is Pride month, and on Saturday, June 17, MUUF once again joins other UUs from across the State to march in the the Pride Portland! parade. Pride Portland! is a celebration of southern Maine's LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, ally/asexual) community. But more importantly it is a joyous experience for everyone, and participating — even just attending as an ally — is thrilling and fun.

In addition to being a celebration, Pride events recognize the achievements of the LGBTQIA movement, remember its history and struggles, and raise awareness of the work that still needs to be done. Pride

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PASSAGES

Our MUUF community mourned the passing of another member last month



Alice Melanie Gifford, of Newcastle, died peacefully on May 19 at Harbor View Cottage, in the loving company of her three daughters. She was born on February 20, 1925 in Montreal, Canada. After completing her B.A. in English literature at McGill University in 1947, Alice pursued graduate study in English literature at Brown University in Providence, R.I.

At Brown, Alice met Nathaniel Harrison (Hal) Gifford and they married in 1949. They spent twenty-four years teaching French in Connecticut and Massachusetts while raising three daughters. On several occasions, the family lived abroad for exchange teaching and study in Belgium and France. The family spent nearly every summer in Maine based at their camp in South Bristol and sailing the *Viking*, a wooden Friendship sloop re-rigged as a yawl, and later the *Guillemot*.

In 1976 Alice and Hal left teaching and moved to Maine year-round, where they opened Kennebec Books, an independent bookstore. For twenty years, the store was an anchor in Augusta, stocking books on many topics, with specialties in Maine and local history and children's literature, as well as strategy games. Longtime customers still remember the warm ambiance of a store with pet cats and rabbits and thoughtful conversation.

Alice had been writing poetry for many years, and after closing the bookstore she became an active participant in the poetry community of Maine. Her work received awards and was published in anthologies and in journals (from *Off the Coast* to the *Annals of Internal Medicine*). In 2015, she published a volume of her poetry, *Sailing for Home*.

In 2014 Alice moved to the Lincoln Home in Newcastle, on the Damariscotta River where she and Hal had often sailed. In spite of her late-onset Alzheimer's disease Alice remained active, animated, and adventurous into her 90s. Her wit, intelligence, and warmth endeared her to residents and staff alike in the Lincoln Home community.

Alice was predeceased by her husband, Hal, in 1998. She is survived by her three daughters and their spouses, E. Melanie Gifford of College Park, Maryland; Linda S. Gifford and Stephen A. Cole of Damariscotta, Maine;

and Charlotte E. Gifford and Daniel G. Axtell of Westminster West, Vermont; and her grandchildren, Lydia and Timothy Bedford, Phoebe and Eliza Cole, and Abigail and R. Benett Axtell.

A memorial service will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Augusta on June 29 at 2 pm. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, or The Lincoln Home. (*Alice was a member of the Augusta church before moving to Newcastle and joining our Fellowship.*)

from Sailing for Home

Credo

*You don't have to please god,
you don't always have to please your neighbor
or your father.
If you know the right thing to do, you can do it.
If you find the way to say what is needed,
say it. Never mind that not everyone agrees
with you. It is enough to try.
It is enough to love where love is due
and even where it isn't.
It is enough to lend a hand.
Life is short.*



Pride Portland *continued from page 3*

Portland! also serves to build stronger connections amongst individuals, organizations, and businesses in order to foster and honor inclusivity and diversity. Our presence and visibility make a difference.

As we did last year, MUUF will march with UU congregations from across the State under the banner of the Maine UU State Advocacy Network (MUUSAN). The parade line-up begins at 11 a.m. and the parade begins at noon, marching from Monument Square, down Congress and High Streets to Deering Oaks Park where there will be food, vendors, and entertainment.

MUUF members will be carpooling to the event. Please contact Julia Fitz-Randolph, John Adams, or Kate Pennington if you would like to join us. We hope you do!

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR - WE SERVE
THE COMMUNITY SUPPER ON
WEDNESDAY AUGUST 30!**