

# MUUFLETTER for January 2018

HAPPY★NEW★YEAR

## 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*

### January's theme: SOURCES OF WISDOM

**Jan. 7: "Empathy Is a Renewable Resource We Must Constantly Replenish"** with guest speaker David Jester. It is hard to empathize at times; frustrated by the bombardment of daily life, feeling overwhelmed, we get lost in ourselves, forgetting to have understanding for other people's problems, pain, and misfortunes. After 16 years as a firefighter and paramedic in the Midcoast, David has learned to nourish his own empathy and maintain it, even in the darkest hours of his job. He will talk about how to sustain the ability to empathize, and most important, offer simple tips to maintain and rejuvenate your well of understanding and caring for your fellow neighbor. David is a graduate of USM, Magna Cum Laude in Geography/Anthropology degree and with a Masters degree in American and New England Studies. When he is not working as a first responder, he can be found reading, writing, and more writing. He has been published in several publications, two anthologies, and proud to be a member

of the Chicago-based writing group Drinkers With Writing Problems. His work can be found at [www.dfjester.com](http://www.dfjester.com)

**Jan. 14: The Arc of Justice: From the Civil Rights Movement to Black Lives Matter**  
*Rev. Erika Hewitt*

Many of us know the story of the Civil Rights movement—but do we understand it as part of an ongoing, shape-shifting process of racial justice that leads directly to today's Black Lives Matter movement? Rev. Erika will invite us to understand our part in this arc of justice-seeking and justice-making.

**Jan. 21: Wisdom from Unlikely Sources**  
*Rev. Erika Hewitt*

In keeping with this month's theme (Sources of Wisdom), Rev. Erika will explore a few threads in our secular popular culture that reflect and inform our Unitarian Universalist values. (Warning: this sermon will contain spoiler alerts about "The Last Jedi.")

**Jan. 28:** -Join us on this Sunday as we reflect on "**The Stories Hidden in Plain Sight**" - Stories are an important source of wisdom in our UU faith. Caity Bogdan will talk about the importance of casting a wide net for these stories, and how often important, untold stories are hiding in our plain sight.

## FROM OUR MINISTER



As we — the Fellowship and its wider community — prepare to celebrate another Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, I've been reminding myself why I'm so deeply engaged in racial justice work. Why

are we called to center the voices and experiences of people of color? Why do I continue to participate in our Monday anti-racism vigils? **Why do we do this work?**

I understand racial justice as ridding ourselves, (as white people) and our communities of white supremacy culture, so that we can end the systems that uphold and perpetuate white supremacy. In the words of our own Andrew Twaddle, "racism and white supremacy are problems created by 'white' people. 'White' people are the only ones who CAN do the work to eradicate them. People of color can show us how they're affected and point us to the problems they face, but we need to do the work."

I've also come to understand that we don't do this work to be "rewarded;" we do it to be better, wiser, braver white people. We do it because we're trying to build a Beloved Community that's far larger than our own congregation — and larger, even, than our community at large.

Racial justice, then, is not about collecting accolades, patting ourselves on the back, or seeking validation in the form of more people of color coming to our Fellowship. Decentering whiteness entails decentering our need to be rewarded. (I'm struck by

what a UU named Mary Lamb Sheldon says about this: "Thinking of people of color who come to church as rewards for our good work objectifies them.")

"If we are to **live** as Unitarian Universalists," says Sara Palmer, the DRE at the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg (PA), "we need to do better *well outside* of the walls of our congregations. We need to live our faith and beliefs in line at the supermarket and on Facebook and in our minds while we listen to the radio in the car. We need to catch the first thoughts in our heads and say 'Where is this idea coming from? What does this reaction mean? Who am I helping? Who am I hurting? Who am I not even thinking of?' And so we do the work of dismantling white supremacy not to make more people of color appreciate and love Unitarian Universalists, but for more Unitarian Universalists to appreciate and love people of color."

I give thanks that so many of you are on this journey with me: a journey of learning and humility, effort and aspiration. Together, we continue to bring about the Beloved Community — the "all-inclusive spiritual [siblinghood]" to which Dr. King devoted his life.

In faith, Rev. Erika

**Maine UU State Advocacy Network's (MUUSAN) next meeting will focus on strategies to insist that the legislature honors the will of Maine voters to fund Medicaid expansion. Join us Saturday, January 13th from 10 am to noon at the UU Community Church, 69 Winthrop Street in Augusta. Contact Julia Fitz-Randolph at [jfitzra@aol.com](mailto:jfitzra@aol.com) for more information or to carpool.**



## President's Message

Dearest Fellowship & Friends,

By the time the January newsletter has been released we will be on the other side of the busy holiday time of

the year. I am writing this from the still busy side of the holidays, but I'm looking forward to the January rest, where we can all let out a big sigh of relief and enjoy the snow from the comfort of a couch, sipping hot cocoa and warmed by fire. Or at least, those are my plans.

I find this time of year a good time to sit back and reflect, and to look forward and make plans. For the Fellowship, we have a lot to reflect on from this past year! We created a mission for ourselves this past year - *Nurture Spiritual Growth, Engage in Justice, and Love Joyfully without Limits*. We've created a covenant for how to be together in our space and read it together several times. We've done the hard work of improving our financial situation, and I am pleased to announce that we have exceeded our budgeted pledges significantly. And finally, our Fellowship has unanimously voted to call Reverend Erika as our settled half time minister. It has been a big year to look back on.

Looking forward, I know that the new Board is excited to get started thinking about our future plans in pursuit of our mission. I am looking forward to serving the Fellowship as the Board President, and I hope that all of you will feel comfortable reaching out with any questions, comments or concerns.

My cell (732.927.0944) will be in the OOS, and I am always reachable by email ([caitlin.c.bogdan@gmail.com](mailto:caitlin.c.bogdan@gmail.com)) - both of which are also in the Directory. I will keep

in touch here and at service as the Board settles down to the work ahead this year.

Here's to the beginning of our journey with our now settled minister, and yet another year of Fellowship, love and joy together!

In Faith, Caity Bogdan

### "Sources of Wisdom" questions to ponder:

- There's a saying that "Knowledge is knowing that tomatoes are fruit; wisdom is not putting them in fruit salad." What does "wisdom" meant to *you*?
- Who in your life do you consider to be "wise"? Why?
- How do we acquire wisdom? Is it inherent within us, like a seed waiting to sprout? Or is it accessible only through external sources?
- In some parts of the Bible, wisdom is personified as Sophia (σοφία). Religion scholar Elaine Pagels explains that in this view, Sophia "is God's partner, or darling, his delight. The idea is that wisdom is a personified feminine being who is with God and helps him out." How might that understanding shape the way you seek wisdom?
- Our Unitarian Universalist tradition draws from six (official) Sources, one of which is "wisdom from the world's religions." How do we draw from that wisdom without appropriating from cultures to which we don't belong?
- In the hymn "Be Thou My Vision," the words in verse 2 say "honor the beauty and wisdom of time." How have you experienced "the wisdom of time"?
- What's the most unusual way you've gained wisdom? Is there any such thing as a *too*-strange source of wisdom?
- What wisdom do you have today that you didn't have a year ago?

## Spirit Play Stories for January focuses on Sources of Wisdom



January 7 *Mr. Gumpy's Outing* – The Golden Rule

January 14 *Martin Luther King, Jr.* - Learning from Our Past

January 21 *Wise People & the Elephant* - World Religions

January 28 *Frederick* - Wonder & Awe

### Parent Cooperative Beginning

The Religious Exploration Council (REC) is beginning a Parent Cooperative where all parents/caregivers of our children take turns leading and assisting on Sunday morning. With a small Fellowship, it is difficult to find adults who are able to provide this guidance for our children on a regular basis. Lindy Gifford, Kate Pennington and Courtney Belolan have ministered to our children throughout the past year, and Lindy and Kate have done it for years. So to be fair, and allow these folks to have time in worship, we are reaching out to families to help out as well.

Details will be going directly to parents and caregivers. A training video on how to present a Spirit Play story and other resources will be available. And the REC hopes that other adults who feel comfortable working with children also will step up to volunteer. We have a spirited group of children, and we want to show them how special they are by giving of our time and talents.

### Children's Fund

Thank you to all who contributed to the Children's Fund red vase that has graced the altar this fall into December. The children went through a decision-making process, and the vote was split between two organizations that help

displaced pets in disasters. \$50 will go to the following two organizations:

[The Sato Project](#) in Puerto Rico – rescues abused and abandoned dogs, locally called *satos*. Since the devastation of Hurricane Maria, The Sato Project has evacuated over 300 dogs to safety and is working to keep families with their beloved pets, and to help the many animals left behind in the storm's aftermath.

[Wings of Rescue](#) - has flown 1,800 pets to safety after Harvey and Irma. They are operating daily flights to bring in critically needed humanitarian supplies, and on the return flights, they are taking abandoned pets that entered shelters prior to the storm back to the U.S. mainland to make room for pets displaced by Maria.

### Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Education begins

We have 9 children signed up to take OWL K-2 starting on Saturday, January 6. Carney will be facilitating the sessions with some help from a volunteer at First Universalist Church in Rockland and a couple of older children. Thank you to Tiffany Vencile and Deb Lomas for providing their homes and reaching out to other families who wish to participate.

### Welcome to Deb Lomas

Deb Lomas is joining the Religious Exploration Council, replacing Courtney who is committing time as a Worship Associate. Thank you, Courtney for your year of service on the REC. Welcome Deb, Kate, Lindy and I look forward to working with you.

## Hospitality/Membership Corner

In December we welcomed new members Patti Anderson and the Lomas family (that's Deb, Mike, Caitlin and Dylan), all of whom have been attending regularly for at least the past year. In the next few months, we'll be asking our new members for brief bios that we can add to the Newsletter to help everyone get to know each other a little better.

We'd also like to plan regular get-togethers for new attendees and new members. Stay tuned for more information on this in the coming month.

I've asked for volunteers to host a Circle Supper, but so far no one has come forward. Don't be surprised if you get a personal invitation to host one (and it's OK to say no thanks). The Fellowship has done these periodically for many years, and they are always enjoyable and not that much extra work. The host provides the main dish and everyone else brings something to round out the menu. These are not fund-raisers, so there is no cost.

Due to the cold and snow, the Sunday afternoon walks will be postponed for awhile. If the snow stays and it warms up some, we might try a combination of snowshoeing or cross-country skiing. Let Sandy know if this sounds appealing to you and any good spots that you know about.

Continue to show the warm hospitality that this Fellowship has always been known for by wearing your nametag and introducing yourself to a new person at Coffee Hour.

*Sandy Barth - sbarth1942@gmail.com*

Pease join People United Against Racism for our **2018 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day events!**



Last year we hosted the first-ever, interfaith MLK service in the area, attended by more than 200. We followed up with a series of smaller group meetings for discussion and sharing, workshops, books and films—also well attended.

This year we are offering a **series of community-wide events over two days: Sunday, Jan. 14 and Monday, Jan. 15, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.** *Find the full Schedule of Events at the end of this newsletter.*

**May 2018 be a year of growing justice in our community, country and world—and may it begin with us!**

## January 31 First Community Supper in 2018

Our first Community Supper for 2018 will be on Wednesday, January 31! Please volunteer! We always need folks to prepare food as well as serve the meal. Join us at the Second Congregational Church in Newcastle from 4:30-6:30 pm on November 29th. Set up begins at 4:30 pm, we serve promptly at 5, and finish around 6:30. This is a joyful opportunity to help others in our community. Let Tiffany Vencile know about your interest in helping with food, serving, or both at [willeywonka@hotmail.com](mailto:willeywonka@hotmail.com).

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**Sunday December 17, 2017**  
**Members of our Fellowship unanimously voted to call**  
**Rev. Erika Hewitt as our first settled minister!**



**Winter hours in effect for weekly  
Anti-Racism Vigils**

Every Monday from 12:00 to 12:30 pm (just 30 minutes), members of our Fellowship join other Interfaith citizens at the Memorial Park adjacent to the Second Congregational Church to bear witness to the values of respect, acceptance, diversity and pluralism. Everyone welcome. (Signs provided.)

**Hospitality Schedule**

- Jan. 7 - (Indigo Pod) David & Sylvia, Lindy, Stephanie & Isaac**
- Jan. 14 - (Green Pod) Kate, Phyllis, Deb, Tim & Karen**
- Jan. 21 - (Red Pod) Rosie, Bob, Diane, Annie & Billie**
- Jan. 28 - (Blue Pod) Tiffany, Adam or Hannah, Joelle & Kay**
- Feb. 4 - (Purple Pod) Jennifer & Dick, Robin, Bob & Joan**

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**Snowy Sunday? Use Zoom!**

During the winter, your Fellowship leaders may decide to cancel worship in the interest of safety. If that happens **on January 14th or 21st**, Rev. Erika will open her “Zoom room” at 10:30 a.m. on that Sunday for a brief online gathering.

Zoom is a videoconferencing platform. You have the option of using your computer to see Rev. Erika on video, or just use your phone to call in and listen/talk. Erika will lead a chalice lighting, joys and sorrows, a meditation, and group discussion. It'll be shorter and less formal than a worship service, but Zoom will allow us to connect before we go back to our shoveling/jigsaw puzzling/hot chocolate guzzling.

To join by computer:

Go to [www.Zoom.us](http://www.Zoom.us)

Click the blue heading “Join a meeting”

Enter Erika’s designated number: 749-979-5863

To join by telephone only:

Dial 646 558 8656 or 408 638 0968

Enter meeting ID: 749 979 5863

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## Building the Beloved Community

Two days of community gatherings for Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
Sunday, January 14 & Monday, January 15, 2018

From People United Against Racism. All events are free and open to the public.

### Sunday, January 14:

10:30 am: *The Arc of Justice:*

*From the Civil Rights Movement to Black Lives Matter*

Porter Hall, Skidompha Library, Damariscotta

Many of us know the story of the Civil Rights movement—but do we understand it as part of an ongoing, shape-shifting process of racial justice that leads directly to today's Black Lives Matter movement? As part of Sunday worship at the Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Rev. Erika Hewitt will invite us to understand this arc of justice-seeking and justice-making. All are invited.

12:00 pm: *The Perils of Good Intentions: Video Screening & Queries*

Midcoast Friends Meeting, 77 Belvedere Road, Damariscotta

The documentary video by Paula Palmer, *Quaker Indian Boarding Schools*, highlighting the history of the Quaker Indian Schools will be shown. After the screening, Daniel Hall will offer queries to spur reflection and discussion (Quakers queries are questions or series of questions used for reflection and in spiritual exercises.) All are welcome. For more information, call Sue Rockwood at 350-0804.

### Monday, January 15:

9 am-12 noon: National Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

Second Congregational Church, Newcastle

The Baha'i Faith, along with the Lincoln Academy Interact Club; the service fraternity, Alpha Sigma Gamma, and the service sorority, Sigma Sigma Chi, are offering service to the community. Others are welcome to join in providing service by gathering in the basement at 9 am. Call 563-3596 ext.168 or email [kothe@lincolnacademy.org](mailto:kothe@lincolnacademy.org) ahead of the day to arrange service. On the day of service, call 207-350-6526.

**12 pm – 1 pm: People United Against Racism’s Weekly Vigil  
Veteran’s Memorial Park, Newcastle (beside the Second Congregational Church)**

Join us for an hour-long vigil to stand up to systemic racism. Bring your own sign or pick one up from the side entrance of the church. Come anytime in the hour. (And join us on future Mondays: we are there every Monday for half an hour from 12 noon to 12:30 pm.)

**2 pm: Free matinee of the movie “13<sup>th</sup>”  
Lincoln Theater, Main Street, Damariscotta**

The film explores the "intersection of race, justice and mass incarceration in the United States;" it is titled after the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution, which freed the slaves and prohibited slavery (except as punishment for a crime). After the movie, Rev. Erika Hewitt of the Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship will lead a post-screening conversation.

**5:30 pm: Community Potluck Lunch and Discussion Panel  
Second Congregational Church, Newcastle**

All are invited! Please bring a dish and join us for a potluck dinner with a moderated panel of expert guest speakers. Two panelists will reflect on their experiences as activists in the Civil Rights Movement fifty years ago while others will share how they are currently active in today's anti-racism movement. There will be a time for small group conversation and engagement with the panelists afterward. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn, to reflect, to connect with others and to get more information.

**People United Against Racism is committed to:**

- internal study and reflection about privilege and racism
- fostering dialogue in our community about dismantling racism
- public witness

**Our work includes:**

- weekly anti-racism vigils in Newcastle’s Veterans Memorial park
- yearly interfaith Martin Luther King, Jr. Day services (January 15th, 2018)
- sponsoring dialogue circles, book studies, and other events
- communication of anti-racism events through our email list & contacts with local press



# Photo Gallery

December 17, 2017

## Telling the Christmas Story

*Second annual intergenerational “pageant from the pews.”*

