



# CROSSROADS



The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Area Church at First Parish in Sherborn

November 2011

## Service Information:

November 6 –  
Rev. Detering preaching

November 13 –  
Guest preacher for UU  
Urban Ministry

November 20 –  
Rev. Detering preaching

November 27–  
Kate Landis preaching

## Minister's Message

By Reverend Nathan Detering

Dear Friends,

Hard to believe it is November! I am excited to introduce us to November's theme for spiritual practice – *Gratitude: The Practice of Reverence*. Please see below for the questions for reflection, remember you can also find fuller resources for each theme on our website ([www.uuac-sherborn.org](http://www.uuac-sherborn.org)) and share your thanks to our team of Worship Associates who are the ones behind developing these themes us. The team is led Maureen Gormley, and includes Alex Businger, Howard Teibel, Peggy Homer, Julien LeFleur, Jud Wolfskill, Rita Ghilani, Peggy Homer, and Bev Kirton. Thanks to all!

*With love,*

Nathan

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## Monthly Spiritual Theme

### **Gratitude: The Practice of Reverence**

*John Milton wrote: "Gratitude bestows reverence, allowing us to encounter everyday epiphanies, those transcendent moments of awe that change forever how we experience the world."*

*In order to make sense of this statement it may be helpful to know the root meaning of these words.*

*Reverence has its origins in several languages. From the old French it means "awe, respect, to be wary of." The root word "ver" or "wer" means to become aware of.*

*Gratitude comes from the Latin "gratus", meaning thankful, pleasing, thankfulness. Also from the Latin "gratia" which means favor, esteem, regard, pleasing quality, or goodwill. "Gratus" is related to the modern word "grace" and is the short prayer said before a meal which expresses thanks for the food before us.*

#### **Thoughts/questions for discussion and discernment on your own, around the table, or with each other**

- *What sets the stage for helping you experience gratitude? Are there people, places, or situations that promote and/or elicit gratitude? What gets in the way of experiencing gratitude? Do moments of gratitude instill in you a feeling of reverence towards that for which you are grateful? Or does reverence in this context imply too much of a separation between you and that for which you are grateful? Does revering, or being in awe of something, necessarily create gratitude?*
- *Can gratitude be taught or is it innate? Should one be grateful for certain things?*
- *What does real gratitude look like?*
- *Does gratitude bring forth reverence or does reverence bring forth gratitude? How does one express reverence or irreverence? Do you agree that a contemporary meaning of irreverence implies humor and a lightness of thought?*

#### For our younger members:

- *For what are you thankful? What are some of the ways that you can show you are thankful?*

## **REflections**

**Kate Holland, Director of Religious Education**



Well, October was a great month and our annual Halloween pot luck on Oct. 22 was a wonderful event. Many fun costumed friends showed up and the haunted house in our new space was even bigger and better this year! Thanks to all that worked on this event to make it such a great success.

As we move into November, we have many new and exciting things coming up. As some of you may have heard, we will be trying out a new model of conducting Religious Education this year. For four weeks (Nov. 13 and 20 and December 4 and 11), two sessions in the fall term and two in the winter term,

we will be experimenting with the Workshop Rotation model. We intend to have these workshops enhance the multigenerational service of December 18th.

So what is workshop rotation model and how does it work? Workshop rotation will be for children 1<sup>st</sup> grade and up. For four weeks, we will set aside our normal curricula and work with the kids to give them a better context for the multigenerational service on December 18<sup>th</sup> which is themed around a solstice theme and winter holidays in general. Why do we as Unitarian Universalist celebrate them and what do they have to do with our faith tradition? So when the children are sung out of the service each week for these four weeks, we will meet in a circle in Alliance Hall to have a time to talk about this theme.

At the end of this time, we will send the kids to their workshops. There will be four workshops, one on music, one on cooking, one on drama, and one on art. Each workshop will reflect the theme we are talking about and each class will take one week to visit each workshop. Each workshop will have a workshop leader and the teachers in the classrooms will be “shepherds” for their class. They will assist the workshop leader in their projects each week. We are excited to try this new way of doing Religious Education and to give our multigenerational service better context for all of the children in our program.

The last Sunday in November is the Religious Education committees annual Soup Sunday. The children and their adult helpers will make three warm and wonderful soups to share with the congregation during coffee hour. So we can share the wonderful Thanksgiving tradition of sharing a meal with our church family. Also on this Sunday we will be doing a fund raiser for the Empty Bowls Project (to find out more about Empty Bowls Project go to [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empty\\_Bowls](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empty_Bowls)) We will be selling beautiful bowls made by the children in our Religious Education program. We will ask for a donation of at least \$5 for a bowl but if the spirit or you budget allow you to give more that is great. You need not buy a bowl to get soup at coffee hour that Sunday. All the money that we raise from our Empty Bowls will go to local food pantries to help them feed those in need.



With Gratitude,

Kate

## Membership

by Katherine McHugh

### **Warmth, Welcome, and Worship Miranda, Jud, and Susannah Wolfskill**

New members Miranda and Jud Wolfskill bring a depth of thought and intelligence to their UU faith, and along with their beautiful 4 and a half month old daughter, Susannah, they bring much joy to our UUAC community.

Miranda was raised in the Congregational church in Wellesley Hills and enjoyed her experience there very much. During the annual Christmas pageant over the years, she had roles as an angel, the mother Mary, and is even noted as playing the first baby girl Jesus at the church! It was in her early teen years, they she began to question the veracity of a 'white-bearded man' as a construct of God as well as many of the traditional Christian teachings. It was a wonderful female minister at the time that gave her the latitude to explore her own beliefs. It was this minister that noticed Miranda's gift of working with the youth group and encouraged her to perhaps pursue a career where she would work with children. This turned out to be an excellent suggestion as she has been a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher in Wellesley for over 10 years!

Growing up in Columbia, S.C., Jud's family was loosely Presbyterian. Yet the culture that surrounded him in Columbia was one steeped in a more evangelical and fervent type of Christianity. During his high school years, Jud became a member of a youth group called Young Life (fundamentalist Christian Crusaders for Christ) for a time. He quickly discovered that he didn't like it, and was troubled by what he felt to be their hypocritical stance on many issues. He published a poem about his experience in a local literary magazine (much to the chagrin of the organization) and it is something that he feels proud of to this day. He was finding his own unique voice in terms of his beliefs.

During college, Jud was fascinated with a particularly charismatic professor who propped an orthodox Anglican Christianity; they had many lively and thought provoking exchanges. While he eventually came to terms with what was for him a more existential understanding of religion, he continued to feel a strong need for a spiritual life. After to moving to Boston after college, he began attending First Parish in Cambridge. Here was a church and a faith where he felt in agreement with the ideas and felt comfortable with the familiarity of the Protestant service.

Like Jud, Miranda was fascinated by various aspects of religion and drawn to the study of various and comparative theologies. She was a Religious Studies major in college, focusing on Eastern studies, along with many aspects of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Miranda has been perpetually drawn to "what unites us all, what divides us all." She was also intrigued by the female theologian Mary Daly who was able to articulate the Bible and its teachings through a specifically feminist perspective.

It was in meeting Jud that Miranda was exposed to the Unitarian Universalist tradition. She immediately found it to be a wonderful reunion, "combining the comforting pieces of what she had been raised in while intellectually resonating with me." Both Jud and Miranda have found the UUAC to be a warm community, full with interesting and stimulating people. Jud was initially drawn in by" Nathan and his sermons, as well as the welcoming people."

Jud has recently been promoted to Systems Engineer for *The Support Group*, where he builds software and databases, along with project management. Things you might not know about Jud: He is a published poet, with one of his poems published in *The NY Quarterly*. In addition, he loves mountain biking in the desert.

Along with Miranda's career in education, she has always loved participating in the performing arts. She has been both an actress and a director, and would like to get back into productions once little Susannah graduates a little from rice cereal!

Please join us in welcoming this wonderful family into our community!

## An Intern's Journey

by Kate Landis

### The Good, the Bad, and the Complicated

As Halloween approaches I am reflecting on heroes and villains. It is usually easy to tell who is a good guy and who is a bad guy in popular culture- think of the snarling scoundrel versus the big-hearted innocent on reality television shows or in romantic movies. The characters are assigned a camp early, and they remain a villain or a hero for the duration of the program. This makes it easy for us to know who to root for, and who to despise.

Is life ever this simple? Does it seem easy to distinguish who is a villain and who is a hero? Do people stay good or bad for the duration of their lives?

When life seems too clearly divided- when I am confident that I can tell the heroes from the villains- I know it is time to crack open a novel. This week I read Ian McEwen's book *Solar*, the story of a scientific genius (or is he?) who is so busy navigating his cluttered personal life he can't focus on the renewable energy research that is his life's work. His life is cluttered for good reason: he is a womanizing, selfish, cheating man. He is a hard character to care about, because there are only a few moments when he is anything but despicable. As a reader seeing the world through his eyes is difficult because he is so unpleasant, and when he does do something good it is hard to believe. However this is why I read fiction- to be reminded that no one is wholly villain or hero. McEwen's antihero is an unfaithful partner and negligent father whose life is consumed with finding an energy source that will allow humanity to continue on this planet. He oddly balances cruelty to the people closest to him with a great passion for saving millions of people he will never meet. While I wouldn't consider him a role model- or even a pleasant dinner companion- he does have good qualities. He isn't all bad. Remembering this character's multi-faceted nature makes me less likely to assign the people I meet to the hero or villain category.

Reading novels reminds me that no one is wholly villain and no one is wholly hero. Like a well-written fictional character real people are complicated and impossible to categorize. We all act in ways that are laudable and in ways that are hard to understand. Let's leave the good guy and bad guy designations to the costumed trick-or-treaters, and realize that it is never that easy to know who to root for in real life

## Denominational Affairs

by Jill Carroll

UUAC will again participate in **UU Service Committee's GUEST AT YOUR TABLE** collection. Boxes, along with the *Stories of Hope* booklet, will be assembled by our youth and available to everyone on **Sunday November 20th**. Please pick one up on your way out of the sanctuary. Donations will be **collected on Deck the Halls Sunday December 18th**. We would appreciate a check made out to UUSC in place of the change you collect. There will also be envelopes available if this is more convenient for you than the box.

During the holidays at coffee hour we will be selling **UUSC greeting cards** and **Fair Trade organic chocolate bars**. GAYT donations and sales will go to support UUSC's ongoing commitment to worker's rights, a sustainable environment, ethical eating and a living wage in the US and around the world. UUAC also will benefit from a small profit from the sale of the chocolate bars.

On another note...The UUA's COMMON READ for 2011 is *Acts of Faith* by Eboo Patel. This book "makes a case for all of us, particularly youth, to promote pluralism through engagement in interfaith dialogue, education and social work". The book is available at the UUA Bookstore.

## Interfaith Hospitality Network Returns in November

We will once again be hosting a small group of homeless families with children at UUAC on **November 13 through 20**. Those who have participated in this ministry agree that it is very heart-warming to know that we are providing food and shelter to these very deserving people as they try to improve their situation. The families stay overnight in our classrooms and eat their meals with us. We need people for setup and takedown, serving dinner each night, staying overnight with our guests, purchasing supplies and doing laundry.

Anyone who has not participated previously must have a CORI background check, and attend an IHN training session prior to interacting with the guests. Notify Joan Hunter ([ibh\\_11@verizon.net](mailto:ibh_11@verizon.net)) if you need a CORI form.

Feel free to ask Joan Hunter or Barbie Breer ([wmbarb1959@comcast.net](mailto:wmbarb1959@comcast.net)) if you have any questions about IHN.

## Salvation Army Dinner November 23

We will be serving dinner at the Salvation Army in Framingham on **Wednesday, November 23** the night before Thanksgiving). Meatloaves (in disposable foil pans) may be brought to the church on the 23rd between 10 AM and 4 PM, and left in the kitchen.

There are NO frozen meatloaves from the last dinner so we need more this time than usual.

We also need people to serve and clean up. Dinner is served promptly at 6 PM. Please let Delycia Feustel ([Delycia@comcast.net](mailto:Delycia@comcast.net)) know if you can help. This is a good outreach program for children (age 8 or over).

## UUAC Photo Directory

**UUAC Picture Directory Needs YOU!** -- Let's put names with faces. Each family receives a complimentary 8x10 portrait and directory for participating. Be sure to sign up at coffee hour or go directly to the online appointment booking site by clicking here: <https://www.securedata-trans14.com/ap/unitarianuniversalistchurch1/index.php?page=10> . **Photography dates are December 8, 9 & 10th.**

We also could use some friendly faces to help on the days of photography. Please sign up for a spot at coffee hour on the volunteer sign-up sheets. This is a great way to get to meet people!

## Local Community Happenings

### Lions Club Blood drive:

November 17th at the Sherborn Community Center from 11-7pm.

### Cornerstone Forum:

Social and political change is sweeping the globe, especially in the Middle East. Since late 2010, pro-democracy protest and revolutionary movements have emerged in 12 nations in that region, the most famous being the "January 25 Revolution" in Egypt.

Underneath this upheaval is an even more profound change: the use of social media, technology and the Internet to promote revolution and report on that revolution to a worldwide news audience.

In this year's Cornerstone Forum, Sherborn's own Charles M. Sennott, a longtime foreign correspondent who has reported on the frontlines of Afghanistan and Iraq and most recently the "Arab Spring," will speak about "Digital Revolution."

A pioneer in new media, Sennott is the executive editor and co-founder of GlobalPost, a new international news site which has received considerable industry acclaim since its launch three years ago. Sennott will delve into how demonstrations in Egypt this year marked a turning point in the use of social media, like Facebook and Twitter, to affect change.

The forum will be held Sunday, Nov. 6, at 4 p.m. at the Sherborn Community Center, 3 Sanger St.

Funded by local foundations and through members and friends of the Pilgrim Church in Sherborn, the Cornerstone Forum seeks to encourage the public discussion of ideas and issues which have a strong social and ethical impact on the town of Sherborn and the wider world. The program is free. Donations are welcome.

Read more: [Charles Sennott to speak at Cornerstone Forum at Sherborn's Pilgrim Church - Dover, MA - Dover-Sherborn Press](http://www.wickedlocal.com/sherborn/features/x485798683/Charles-Sennott-to-speak-at-Cornerstone-Forum-at-Sherborns-Pilgrim-Church#ixzz1cZoWN2wK) <http://www.wickedlocal.com/sherborn/features/x485798683/Charles-Sennott-to-speak-at-Cornerstone-Forum-at-Sherborns-Pilgrim-Church#ixzz1cZoWN2wK>

**Unitarian Universalist Area Church  
at First Parish in Sherborn**

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**Worship Service: Sunday Mornings at 10:30 a.m.**  
Crossroads, the newsletter of the UUAC, is mailed to all members and pledging friends via electronic mail. The newsletter may be viewed at the church website. Printed copies can be picked up at church.

**Crossroads Listing Policy**

Submissions to Crossroads are always welcome and may be e-mailed to [uuac@uuac-sherborn.org](mailto:uuac@uuac-sherborn.org) (word format preferred); or typed/legibly handwritten copy may be dropped off in the Church Office by noon on the deadline date.

We are happy to publish any announcements about UUAC, UU-sponsored events and other non-profit activities of interest to the community. We are sorry we cannot list for-profit announcements.

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