



CROSSROADS



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

October 2011

Service Information:

October 2nd — Kate Landis,
Student Intern Minister,
preaching

October 9th — Rev. Maddie
Sifantus, our guest in the
pulpit

October 16th —
Rev. Detering preaching

October 23rd —
Rev. Detering preaching

October 30th —
Kate Landis preaching

Minister's Message

By Reverend Nathan Detering

Dear Friends,

Many of you have told me how much you have been appreciating the ways which our monthly *Themes for Spiritual Practice* are deepening your spiritual engagement here at church. I am excited to introduce us to October's theme — *Vision: The Practice of an Open Heart*. 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) 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

Theme for October - Vision:

The Practice of Waking up to the Holy

Questions for discussion and discernment on your own, around the table, or with each other...

Our Unitarian Universalist tradition teaches us that the 'holy,' or the sacred, is in the world and not apart from the world. But how do we notice the holiness we seek? What vision is required of us to see the sacred within common 'stuff' of life? And how does our world view impact our ability to fulfill our faith's promise to 'dwell together in peace, seek truth in love, and to help one another'?

Think of a time when you 'woke up' and realized a personal blind spot? What woke you up?

What is your vision for what is possible in the world? How do you nurture that vision? When you or others disappoint you how do you begin again to connect with your vision?

What makes something or someone 'holy'? What exercise or pastime helps you to feel human, connected, in touch with what is holy or sacred to you?

Do you allow yourself to get lost in something? If so, while doing this, do you feel a spark of the divine? As you go through your day, do you give what you are doing your full devotion, taking time to attend to the sights, smells, and sounds around you?

When do you feel you are removed from what is most sacred, holy to you? What is limiting your ability to connect with your sacred space? Is it simply perspective?

What helps you live with your longing for more?

How do you direct your focus, on the present, the past or the future? Do you wish you could be more focused on the present? If so, what in the past or the future consumes you? What in the present do you wish you could embrace and experience more fully?

Reflections

Kate Holland, Director of Religious Education

What a great start to the church year! We are so excited about having all of our classes in our own church building this year! We are also busy getting Our Whole Lives parents oriented as we will be doing two sections of this wonderful curriculum for our 7 & 8 graders and with our 10, 11, and 12 graders too. We will also be doing a pilot run of a class for parents entitled "Parents as Sexual Educators" curricula written by our own Jane Detwiler. We are quickly gearing up for the Fall Religious Education Food drive. Food will be collected on October 16 in each child's class room. Look for more information to come home with your child on October 2. We are also very excited to start planning for the annual Halloween potluck on Saturday, October 22nd. Put it on your calendar now so you will be sure to join us for this great event.

This month's spiritual theme is "Vision: waking up the Holy". I think our children are often more in touch with the "holy or sacred". They live in the moment and marvel at the joys and wonders of the world around them. Our busy lives often make us "grown-ups" miss this. This month maybe take the time to go walking with your child in nature. You could even try a walking meditation with them, asking them to notice the sounds, smells, sensations (the feel of the wind, the feel of their feet on the ground) and noises around them. If we teach our children to take time to be quiet and reflect early in their lives, we help to teach them to find quiet places to feed their spirits and search for what touches them as "Holy".

Some of my favorite children's books on searching for what is "holy" are:

The Family of Earth by, Schim Schimmel

Miss Rumphius by, Barbara Cooney

The Mountain that Loved a Bird by, Alice McLerran

The Wonderful Happens by, Cynthia Rylant

With Gratitude,

Kate

An Intern's Journey

by Kate Landis

Wage Peace by Judyth Hill

Wage peace with your breath.
Breathe in firemen and rubble; breathe out whole buildings and flocks of red wing blackbirds.
Breathe in terrorists and breathe out sleeping children and freshly mown fields.
Breathe in confusion and breathe out maple trees.
Breathe in the fallen and breathe out lifelong friendships intact.
Wage peace with your listening: hearing sirens, pray loud.
Remember your tools:
flower seeds,
clothes pins,
clean rivers.
Make soup.
Play music, learn the word for thank you in three languages.
Learn to knit, and make a hat.
Think of chaos as dancing raspberries, imagine grief as the outbreath of beauty or the gesture of fish.
Swim for the other side.
Wage peace.
Never has the world seemed so fresh and precious – Have a cup of tea and rejoice.
Act as if armistice has already arrived.
Don't wait another minute.



What is the opposite of terrorism? Peace-making? A person ready with open arms? A friendly check-out clerk, a bright blue fall sky? A child telling knock-knock jokes? How can we wage peace?

Does it seem impossible, waging peace in a world of chaos? Breathe in that chaos and imagine dancing raspberries. Exhale your laughter and swim, fiercely, for the other side. Wage peace with each breath, and let the world be fresh and precious again.

Often mis-attributed to Mary Oliver

Membership

by Katherine McHugh



Humor and Heart

When you first meet new member Melissa Partridge, you will immediately notice her warm manner, quick wit, and an active mind passionate and engaged in the world around her. We are fortunate indeed to have Melissa and her two boys, Jack (7) and Charlie (4), adding to the vibrancy of our UUAC church community.

Melissa, a native of San Diego, was not raised formally with any specific religious tradition. Her Mom was a Methodist and Dad was Catholic. Her paternal grandmother however was devoutly Catholic, and so when it was time for holidays and the like, she and her older sister would attend Catholic services. It was with a certain irony that Melissa attended the Catholic University, Villanova, and did attempt to learn more about the beliefs and tenets, briefing attending mass. The general sense for her was a not a positive one, and she still yearned for a spiritual home, but was of yet, uninspired.

Serendipitously, in early 2009, she was chatting with friend, fellow Holliston resident, and member Alex Businger, who spoke enthusiastically about where she and her family attended church. Melissa began by “hanging out in the back”, and week after week Nathan’s sermons were “hitting home” for her. His words fell on her ears like he was speaking directly to her (you can relate perhaps?). Together with the friendliness of the congregation, Melissa felt a yearning being answered, a void being filled. She found a faith that resonated with her.

Her sons, Charlie and Jack, enjoy their religious education classes and the fun of coffee hour, and there is something special for them when they are all in the pews together. As Melissa says, “It’s the total experience.”

Melissa currently works as the Special Assistant to the Office of Innovation, Partnerships, and Development, a newly formed initiative at the Boston Public Schools. A lifelong educator who loves children, she is hoping to get a “family volunteer day” set up sometime soon here at the UUAC.

Something interesting about Melissa that you may not know: She is a wine expert and has worked at wineries in Napa and Sonoma as a wine educator, making the discernment of tastes and the history of wine accessible to everyone. Her hope is to take the idea of wine tasting as an elite pastime and open it up as a joy for all.

There is much to know and love about Melissa and her family. Please take the time to introduce yourself, the Partridges are a pleasure!



Denominational Affairs

General Assembly 2011

Every day at General Assembly is an all you can eat, spiritual and intellectual, breakfast buffet. This year in Charlotte, being my first time attending, I gorged at the trough all four days, and then threw myself on the hotel bed each night, just hoping to digest in my sleep. Fortunately I scribbled a few notes here and there, so I have a little something to share. But for full coverage of GA, including down loads of the workshop and lectures (for a small fee), click on <http://www.softconference.com/UUA/amh.asp>. If you are interested in what happened during the plenary sessions, dealing with the business and governance of our faith, you can also find that info at the UUA website or try asking questions of our own Pat Manley, who was recently elected to the UUA board of trustees, representing our District.

Can you imagine sitting down to worship with 4,000 other Unitarian Universalists? I had that opportunity on several occasions, including the Opening Celebration, which began with a joyous musical parade of colorful banners from what seemed like hundreds of churches across the country. It was a goose bump moment as I sat with four members of UUAC, feeling like a small part of something much greater, celebrating the 50th anniversary of when the Unitarians and the Universalists joined to form our UU movement.

A typical GA day is broken into four or five, 75 minute sections, with up to 20 workshops or lectures going on simultaneously. I often chose workshops relating to pastoral care or theology and spirituality, but there were many other interesting categories such as: social or environmental justice, lifelong learning (RE), multicultural growth and witness, and stewardship and development. What a treat to meet the folks from the UU church in Richmond VA at their workshop on Lay Pastoral Care programs! They have a model program, which we drew from heavily in setting up our own lay pastoral care ministry at UUAC several years ago. I also got a hoot out of a very energetic workshop on being an Evangelical UU. Two ministers took turns describing how Unitarian Universalism has basically saved their lives and how important it can be for others who are searching for a community of faith free from judgment and dogma. We need to spread the word, they said. "There are people out there looking for us, and we have no business keeping us to ourselves." Amen and Blessed Be to that!!

Bill Sinkford, John Buethrens, Peter Morales and other UU hot shots...it was a thrill to hear them. "What binds us as a faith, should be what we love, not what we think," said our UUA president. "Individualism is the spiritual disease of our time." Karen Armstrong gave an amazing keynote address on her new book and life theme: "The 12 Steps of Compassion", and Rev. Kaaren Anderson's Sunday worship sermon is well worth downloading!!

Any spare time was spent in the "exhibition hall", that UU strip mall where vendors sell PC t-shirts, intriguing books, colorful silk scarves, jewelry, and ceramic chalices. Also in this hall are information's tables belonging to a multitude of UU related groups: UU Christian Fellowship, UU Humanists, UU Community Ministers, Addiction Ministries, UU Trauma Response Ministries, Standing on the Side of Love, and UU Women's Federation...to give you a sampling.

Experiencing this conference with Katherine, Gage, Mike and Pat was a great blessing for me. Although we rarely attended the same workshops, we met up most nights like family gathering for dinner. We digested our day along with the fine southern cooking. I hope you'll think about going next year. Check out the UUA website for info about the 2012 "Justice GA" in Phoenix, Arizona—June 20-24.

Submitted by Becky Sheble-Hall

Zero Waste Team News



Black Gold: A Year of Compost and Other Zero Waste Team Actions

It's been almost a year since we've formed the Zero Waste Team here at UUAC Sherborn, following the UU Principle of respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we are all a part. We began as part of the climate action group 350.org's global day of climate action last October.

Our first goal was to work toward zero waste coffee hours, and we began our efforts by setting up a composting program for organic materials: food scraps, paper napkins, coffee grounds, and such. This effort (through some fine-tuning) just yielded our first batch of screened and very rich compost. We have expanded our goal to include zero waste events; the upcoming Emma's Revolution performance on Sept. 30th will be our first zero waste event.

We also researched the specific recycling requirements of our trash hauler. Zero Waste Team members could then help people sort materials appropriately into recycling, composting, and waste bins during coffee hour. Next, we determined the container needs around the entire building, and purchased recycling and compost containers for the common areas and offices. We also bought some "waste only" side cars (small bins) that hang on the paper recycling containers; that is because big trash cans are no longer needed!

Clear signage with pictures helps everyone to sort materials, which we provided. We also made posters, using examples of actual items that are typically generated, placing them directly above the appropriate containers - one for paper/cardboard, one for bottles/cans/rigid plastic containers, one for compost, and one for trash. We hope this helps with sorting decisions. We are committed to sharing our process, such as demonstrating composting results, with the entire community. Outreach and education are an important part of our mission.

The Zero Waste Team is investigating which items to purchase and use to coordinate well with our new recycling and composting efforts. For example, paper cups and plates that are not coated with plastic are easier to manage. We can recycle paper cups if the excess liquid is drained, while uncoated paper plates and napkins compost right along with food waste.

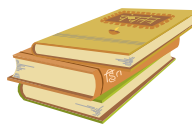
Thanks for the enthusiasm, support, and feedback from the entire congregation. For help with making your next event zero waste, or for questions, concerns, or comments, please contact us. Claire Sullivan is our chairperson: lpjsmom@verizon.net. Also, if you would like to join the team or try us out for a while, we welcome your participation.

--Dianna Vosburg, dianna@vosburg.net

Covenant Group Sign-Up

Covenant Groups provide an opportunity for spiritual exploration and ministry in a small-group setting (6-10 people). Each group, led by a trained facilitator, meets monthly to connect through individual sharing as well as group discussion. If you are interested in possibly joining a Covenant Group, please contact Pam Kading Webb @ pskwebb@comcast.net and/or fill out a registration form which can be found in Unity Hall.

News from the Good as New Shop



The Good As New Shop will have a one day **1/2 price sale on Wednesday, October 12th**. Come in and pick up some wonderful bargains on clothing for all ages as well as linens, books, glassware and china and other bric-a-brac. Hope to see you there!



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 (jbh_11@verizon.net) if you need a CORI form. There will be a training session at UUAC on **Tuesday, November 1** at 6:30 PM.

Feel free to ask Joan Hunter or Barbie Breer (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.

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

UUAC Happenings:

- Mark your calendars for **Worship Wednesday**, the evening of November 2nd. More info to follow in the weekly email.
- **Quilt-A-Thon** happening here October 15th in Alliance Hall. Contact Craig Cohen at mcraig-cohen@gmail.com
- **Halloween Potluck Party!** -- October 22nd at the church. RSVP to Kate Holland, dre@uuac-sherborn.org by October 17th.

Local Happenings

WOODLAND THEATRE COMPANY

presents



October 7th—9th, 2011

For more information, visit:
www.woodlandtheatre.com

Sherborn Community Center

3 Sanger Street, Sherborn, MA

BRINGING BROADWAY HOME!

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

11 Washington Street, P.O. Box 158
Sherborn, Massachusetts 01770-0158
(508) 653-1422
<http://www.uuac-sherborn.org>

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 (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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UUAC STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

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