

CROSSROADS

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

September 2011

Service Information:

September 11 -
Homecoming Sunday.
Rev. Detering preaching

September 18th -
Reverend Detering
preaching

September 24th -
Reverend Detering
preaching

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Minister's Message

By Reverend Nathan Detering

Dear Friends,

Welcome back to another church year at UUAC! With the building expansion complete, the strategic planning finished, and a strong core of leaders on board, Now Is the Time for our congregation to live out our promise of nourishing our spirits, welcoming those we have yet to meet, and helping to heal the world. There is much to look forward to in these opening weeks of the year, much too much to list there. Thanks to the hard work of our administrator Erika Schaad, you can learn all about church activities and programs from the new calendar system. Just go to www.uuac-sherborn.org and click on the **Calendar** button.

When we return to worship together this month one thing you will notice is an invitation to engage together a series of spiritual themes and theological concepts – one each month through the cycle of the year – to help us deepen our individual faith practices and provide spiritual renewal. At least one Sunday worship will touch upon the theme through readings, music, the sermon, or the children's message. In addition, some of our covenant groups - small groups of adults who gather once a month with a trained facilitator - may use their monthly sessions to reflect together on how the theme touches their lives (contact Pam Webb pskwebb@comcast.net to register). Finally, questions for reflection and readings will be offered each month in worship order of service, in the newsletter (see page 2 of this issue!), and on the **Themes for Spiritual Practice** page on the website. The themes for 2011-2012 are:

September – *An Open Heart: The Practice of a Generous Spirit*

October - *Vision: The Practice of Waking up to the Holy*

November - *Gratitude: The Practice of Reverence*

December - *Waiting: The Practice of Living in Time*

January - *Epiphany: The Practice of Discovery*

February - *Resilience: The Practice of Hope*

March - *Community: The Practice of Encountering Others*

April - *Freedom: The Practice of Exploration*

May - *Earth: The Practice of Sacred Space*

June - *Sabbath: The Practice of Saying No*

With love and anticipation,

Nathan

Monthly Spiritual Theme



Theme for September - An Open Heart:

The Practice of a Generous Spirit

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

While it is true that religion is often seen as one of the major sources of conflict and problems in our time, it also true that each major faith has at its core an ethic of compassion, an ethic of opening your heart to engage the joy and pain of others. In this way it can be said that how we treat others (more than what or how much we believe) is the test of spirituality.

When and how do you engage with the joy and pain others? Do you ever feel that for your own safety you need to close off from the world? How does having a closed heart show up for you and in others....cynicism, fear, anger, blame? Are you able to stand in some else's shoes?

What are some practices that help you keep an open heart? How do you act when your heart is open? How do you act when you feel closed?

Do you wish that you were more generous in spirit? What limits your generosity toward others? What expands it?

How do you think you're supposed to be if you're being generous in spirit? Are these actions selfless or do they feed the giver and receiver?

Sermon/Service titles

September 11th – *“Homecoming Sunday and Water Communion” Join old friends, make new connections, and pass on the legacy of liberal religion to our children in this first service of the church year. Remember to bring a small amount of water from a place that is important to you or that you visited over the summer (“symbolic” water gathered from kitchen sink will do the job as well!).*

September 18th – Rev. Detering preaching; First Sunday of Religious Education classes.

September 25th – Rev. Detering preaching.

Reflections

Kate Holland, Director of Religious Education

I am so excited to start this church year and frankly I feel a bit drunk with space right now (a feeling I am fairly sure will not last long). The space alone is not the only exciting thing happening this church year. We will be offering the Our Whole life curricula for students in 7, 8, and 9 grades as well as students in 10, 11, and 12 grades. We will be trying out a new model of Religious Education workshop rotation, the last two weeks of November and the first two weeks of December that will center around our multigenerational service on December 11. This service too will be redone and we are envisioning what that service will be to hopefully make it a deeper worship experience for all ages gathered there. We will be offering our first week day service on Wednesday November 2. This service will combine dinner and worship for all in the middle of the week.

As well as all of those things, we are working with Nathan to adopt monthly worship themes. There will be questions and sermons around the themes. I will try to include ideas for families on how to work together to engage these themes with children and youth. This month we are working with the theme of "*An open heart: The practice of a generous spirit*". This is a great theme to start off our church year. I think most of seek ways to encourage our children to generosity. One of the simple ways to work on something small to help your child work on generosity is to put them in charge of bring food to church on Sundays for the food pantry. A few years ago we gave out groceries bags with our church logo on them (we still have plenty if you need one) Let your child be the one to be sure that you bring a few non perishable items for the food pantry. This will open up the opportunity to have many great conversations about why we need to support food pantries and what your values are around generosity.

If you and your family would like to share some books on generous spirits this month my Google search suggested you might look for the following books at your local library:

"Giving" By Shirley Hughes, ages preschoolers

"As Big as an Egg: A Story About Giving" By Rochel Sandman, ages preschool

"Money Trouble" By Bill Cosby for ages 4-8

"Mr. Tanen's Tie Trouble" By Maryanne Coco – Leffler for ages 4-8

"A perfect Porridge: A Story about Kindness" by Rochel Sandman, ages 9 – 12

I can't wait to see every one!!

Kate

Communications

by Katherine McHugh

A FAITH WITH FEET | Nun Tuck's Almanac

How to articulate the Unitarian Universalist message more succinctly? When asked the question, "What is it you guys actually believe?", the response is often times begun with "well", "um", or an occasional pontificating that renders the listener bleary eyed.

Of course, the question itself is a misguided one. You do not have to share a certain belief or set of beliefs to be a part of our liberal free thinking faith tradition. Instead, a soundbite answer (which our culture has a penchant for) is this: "We are a faith with feet." A cornerstone of modern Unitarian Universalism is SOCIAL ACTION. We place great value on living out our faith in works of love and justice and efforts on behalf of the most marginalized in society.



It is well for us to remember this. One of the major forces in 20th century theology, a tireless proponent of social action and volunteerism was Unitarian minister, social activist, writer, and scholar James Luther Adams (1901-1994).

A Harvard and Andover Newton professor for decades, popular with his students for his unabashed passion and candor, Adams vehemently fought against the tendency of religious liberals to be theologically content with vague slogans and platitudes about open-mindedness. He believed, having witnessed the atrocities of WWII, that liberal churches must dig a little deeper or they would be rendered irrelevant and impotent in face of the world's evil. He stated this conviction loudly and frequently.

Adams advocated volunteerism across a broad spectrum of issues as a powerful and necessary component of an authentically free spirit in a free church. He penned many essays and articles focusing on the theology of voluntary associations and social ethics, on topics ranging from politics to the grotesque in the arts to AIDS.

He spoke with his feet as well. Adams was interrogated by the Gestapo and almost thrown in prison while in Germany under the Third Reich for his association with the Underground Church Movement. Using a home movie camera, he filmed Karl Barth, Albert Schweitzer, and others, to spread the underground resistance to the Nazi regime.

At home, he worked tirelessly for an independent grassroots political organization whose goal was open and honest government. He interpreted participation in voluntary associations, whatever the character of the government, as the chief means by which beneficial social change has been effected throughout history, and as key to the meaning of human history.

James Luther Adams described the free church as "a body of believers freely joined in a covenant of loyalty to the holy spirit of love, intentionally inclusive of dissent, governed by its own members and fiercely independent from government control, **with the reign of the spirit of love among members to be seen in their voluntary assumption of responsibility for the just character of their whole society.**"

His influence continues to extend to the many institutions his former students of many faith traditions now serve, some with high distinction. He was impatient with lifeless abstraction and wanted to know what you were DOING, what are your stories, about how your service work is working or not, what are the struggles?

This is at the heart of our Unitarian Universalist faith. To be worthy of our rich religious history, we must strive to be nothing less than a faith which is intellectually accountable and moves the spirit to action. Pledge to be doing something that calls to your heart and helps to heal the world.

Adult Programs - Coming Events For September

Is This All There Is: Building a Theology for the Everyday

A six-week class led by Rev. Nathan Detering, Dr. Gail Donaldson, and student minister Kate Landis **beginning September 20th**

Beginning in September, Rev. Nathan Detering, Dr. Gail Donaldson our student minister Kate Landis will lead a six-week class called "*Is This All There Is: Building a Theology for the Everyday.*" Like the first time this class was offered two years ago, these classes will help you to clarify your own spiritual and religious beliefs, and to also educate about the great thinkers and rich history of our faith tradition. Gail, Nathan, and Kate will guide you through a series of daily questions which will require some effort on your part. While you may spend only a few minutes every day on this quest, these questions and daily reflections will ultimately help each of us learn how our Unitarian Universalist faith can help guide us in our everyday life.

If you are interested in joining the class, please email Nathan at minister@uuac-sherborn.org. The class will meet over seven Tuesday evenings, beginning September 20th at 7:30p.m.

Auras and Chakras and Meridians...Oh My! with Linda Crawford

Sunday, Sept. 25th at 12:15 in Unity Hall

Have you ever wondered what people are talking about when they say "meridian" when they mention their acupuncturist, or "chakras" and their yoga class or "aura" and their Reiki healer...or maybe you've never heard any of these words before. Curious? Join us and participate as our own Linda Crawford (with over 25 years' experience studying and teaching on the subject) gives a 3 hour introduction to energy psychologies and the human energy field. Explore its mysteries; learn a simple energy practice that can shift a stuck belief or feeling...and more. Questions? email Gage Heath at heathswanson@rcn.com.

Join the Choir!

New singers are always welcome. Come to practice and see how much fun it is to be part of the music ministry of our church. It is not necessary to have choral experience, just the ability to sing in tune. Contact Laura Jensen, Music Director (music@uuac-sherborn.org) or Cathy Leonard, Music Committee Chair (musiccom@uuac-sherborn.org) for more information or just come to practice on Thursday night at 7pm..

Good as New Shop News

GOOD NEWS FROM THE GOOD AS NEW SHOP

The Good As New Shop will be open on Sunday, September 18th after the service until 1:00 for your shopping convenience. Still need some back-to-school clothes? Still need an extra baking pan? Looking for a special book? See what you're missing when you are unable to visit us on Wednesdays!

Social Action

1500 Acts to End Hunger - Donations Needed

Welcome back to another church year. Despite our best efforts, we have fallen behind in our 1500 Acts to End Hunger program and have about 835 items to collect in the next 4 months if we are to meet our goal of 1500 items donated. And remember, we match those 1500 items dollar for dollar so that A Place to Turn, the emergency food pantry servicing the metrowest area where our donations go, can buy much needed perishable items.

Hopefully the energy of another church year will translate into a resurgence of giving after the summer off. Just an item or two each week can help so much. Marked baskets for donations can be found in the rear of the sanctuary and at the North entrance to the church. Many thanks from the Social Action Committee.

Suggestions for donated items: canned soups/stews, pasta & sauces, white rice

Submitted by Barbie Breer

Wall Space Task Force

Over the summer a small group was convened to guide the process of filling our beautiful new spaces in a way that promotes our principles and mission and that represents us as a congregation. Practically speaking, this ranges from bulletin boards to window shades, from artwork to community photos and historical artifacts. While a few small elements have already been put in place, look for more to come throughout this church year. First up will be bulletin boards in Unity Hall for use by our various ministries. We look forward to seeing the new spaces become ever more reflective of our Unitarian Universalist faith and congregation.

Submitted by Peter Gormley

Upcoming Events:



Friday, Sept. 30 @ 8pm

UU Area Church at First Parish in Sherborn

\$15 adv / \$18 door

Adv tix @ www.emmasrevolution.com/live

Smart, funny, informative—

like Rachel Maddow and Jon Stewart with guitars.

All proceeds will support the social action efforts of the church

News from the church office



Welcome back! I hope everyone had a wonderful, restful summer. I know I did but, I am looking forward to another year with this wonderful congregation.

Over the summer, I had some time to revamp our whole calendar system. Please take a look by going to our website and clicking the calendar button on the home page, or from the news and event sidebar.

Please remember, if you need to use space in the church, it must go through the office in order to avoid space conflicts.

If you have any feedback or questions regarding the calendar or space reservations, don't hesitate to call.

Your Loyal Church Administrator, Erika Schaad

NOLA Yard Sale - SEPTEMBER 24, 9-3pm

The NOLA Yard Sale takes place, Saturday, September 24 from 9-3pm, rain or shine! In preparation for this BIG event, we need your help.

Donations

We are in the process of setting aside space at the church where you can drop off your gently used items on September 22 and 23rd. (Remember, we're not accepting clothing, luggage, TVs, microwave ovens, refrigerators, mattresses, cribs, car seats, and air conditioners). If you are unable to deliver your donations to the church on either of these dates, please contact George Clattenburg @508-881-8099 to schedule a pick-up.

Volunteers Are Needed to:

- Sort and price items before the sale. (Molly Howes: molly.howes@comcast.net or 508-785-0522).
- Join the fun! Volunteer to take a 2-hour shift staffing a table the day of the sale. (Molly Howes: molly.howes@comcast.net or 508-785-0522).
- Pick-up donated merchandise prior to the sale. Access to a van or truck is ideal. (George Clattenburg: 508-881-8099).
- Bake, bake, bake! Homemade goodies for our ever popular Bake Table. Please contact Darrah for a list of needed baked goods. (Darrah Bryans: de-bryans@gmail.com or 508-650-0325).
- Donate plants to our Plant Table. (Gage Heath: heathswanson@rcn.com or 508-872-5765).

Note, If you have a young person in need of community service hours, working at the Sale is a great way to earn credits. Please contact Molly Howes if your son or daughter would like to help out or if you have any questions.

Tarps needed in all sizes. Note to be confused with the government's *Troubled Asset Relief Program*. Please contact Nancy Levy 508-653-5607 or nancyalevy@verizon.net if you have a tarp we can borrow for a few days leading up to the Yard Sale.

Shop the Yard Sale and bring your friends and family, too.

Remember: All proceeds from the Yard Sale will be used to purchase construction materials for our November rebuilding trip to New Orleans.

Caring Ministries

We, the Caring Ministries at UUAC, share a covenant with our congregation to help one another in time of need.

The **Caring Committee** provides short-term, physical help to individuals and families within our congregation who are in need. While we cannot offer emergency or ongoing services, we can offer our collective love through support with:

- meals
- rides for medical appointments, transportation to church events
- check-ins for those who feel isolated

cards for celebrations as well as hardships, and help to organize resources during times of crisis

Because it is sometimes difficult to ask for help, the Caring Committee relies upon our entire congregation to identify and communicate the needs of our parishioners.

Our **Lay Pastoral Care Ministers** offer emotional and spiritual support to individuals and families going through difficult challenges. We are called to be a caring presence and witness to those struggling with:

- bereavement, death and dying
- illness and medical difficulties
- marital and personal crises

other life-altering events

Lay Pastoral Care Ministers participate in training to educate and enhance their ability to be a supportive, pastoral presence. We do not counsel, perform therapy or offer advice. In all contact, we honor confidentiality.

Contact

Caring Committee: caring@uuac-sherborn.org or Sara McKenzie (sarajane39@comcast.net) to ask for help or volunteer.

Lay Pastoral Care Ministers: caring@uuac.sherborn.org



**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

Minister:

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Director of Religious Education:

Kate Holland
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Membership Development /

Communications Coordinator:

Katherine McHugh
508-653-1422/
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Music Director: Laura Jensen

401-787-3032/ music@uuac-sherborn.com

Sexton: Kevin O'Gorman

508-653-1422/ sexton@uuac-serborn.org