



The NUUS

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Ellsworth
121 Bucksport Rd., Ellsworth, ME 04605

(207) 667-4393

www.uuellsworth.org

Volume 40

No. 12 December 2008

A Month of Sundays

(All services at 10:30 a.m.)

Dec. 7. *The Little Drummer Boy*

What do we bring when we come empty-handed? We also launch our Guest at Your Table initiative today, the UU Service Committee project that helps to feed hungry families.

Pot Luck Lunch

Dec. 14 *Gathered in Mystery*

There's something magic about sharing space and time. What is it?

[Stay after service for an informational meeting about models of small group gathering. See page ___ for more information.]

Dec. 21 *Circle of the Sun*

Sally Rogers writes, "Children are born in a circle of the sun." What is it about the shortest day that brings us together? We will mark the winter Solstice and celebrate the return of the light.

6:00 p.m. Evening service There will be a pagan Solstice ritual in the evening (See page ___ for more information).

Dec. 24, 7:00 p.m. *Christmas Eve*

This is a traditional service of carols and stories celebrating Christmas and our Christian and pagan heritage. We will have our fire communion this evening as we pass the flame from hand to hand for the candlelight portion of the service. This is the third of the four communions we celebrate together, lifting up the beauty and strength of our shared community.

Dec. 28 *Always Learning, Always Growing*

Sonia Turanski, UUCE Director of Religious Exploration and Education

Leela's Office Hours

Just a reminder that Leela has changed her office hours from last year. She is now in the office Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 1-4 with some exceptions, including second Wednesdays of the month when she is at her UU Ministers Association meeting all day and first Tuesdays of the month when she attends the Ellsworth Area Ministers Association meetings at lunchtime and comes in around 2. For up-to-date details see her blog's schedule page:

<http://lsinha.wordpress.com/schedule/>

Advent Reading Series

ADVENT READING SERIES: Advent is a time in the Christian calendar for quiet and contemplation, preparation and waiting. For those of us in the northern hemisphere, it's a great time to curl up with a book by the fire. We don't have a fireplace at church, but come to one or both of these Tuesday evening sessions with a short (five minutes or less) favorite reading and we will share and reflect on what we have heard. DECEMBER 9 and 16, 6-7:30 PM. Email Rev. Leela Sinha at minister@uuellsworth.org with questions; please call or email Sonia Turanski (sonia@uuellsworth.org) to let us know you're coming.

Unexpected Grace

Connections are made slowly, writes Marge Piercy, sometimes they grow underground. What we know about connections is what we know about plants and collagen and muscle and sinew: they stretch and bend, they link and tangle, they are briar patch and spider's web; they are organic and mysterious and precious. Reach out, keep reaching out, keep bringing in. We are forever engaged in finding the places where fingers interlock, where hands clasp, where arms embrace. It is not a once-and-always but a today and tomorrow and forever thing. There are as many ways to love as there are hearts in the universe, as many understandings as span the gap between earthworm and eagle, and still we are tying the ties that bind. We want to know and be known; we want to sink into the familiar, we want to lay our heads on our grandmothers' shoulders and sleep, without having to say or do, without having to know, without having to prove anything except that we merely are. And some of our lives are like that sometimes, and we are blessed. There is little sweeter than being known without saying a word. This kind of knowing grows underground; it rises up from fifty million little conversations and words passed from hand to hand. It comes from shared experience and shared commitment; it comes from life lived in company with other life.

We have tried here to compress our shared life into an hour on Sunday morning. We need more. Especially in times of struggle, we need each other more. Not just for deep emotional sharing, although that is present and vital, but for pleasure in good company, for companionship from day to day, for people connected to people. Over the coming months we will be trying things: website things, things at church, things in each other's homes. We are looking for fun, for joy, for enjoyment, for enrichment, for sweetness together. We are building ways to know, really know, that we are not alone.

In this advent season we are in a time of introspection and preparation, not just for winter, but for our future. We are laying the mat of roots

that will hold us steady in high winds and high waters. This is where the connections begin: we are growing underground.

Let us be together, and let us be together richly.

blessings,
Leela

Personal Ministry Statement

Would you like to share your personal ministry statement? If you would, please email Rev. Leela Sinha at minister@uuellsworth.org. If you haven't written yours yet, look for the schedule of workshops elsewhere in this newsletter. Ruth Eveland will be guiding groups through the process this month. It's a fun, easy, fast way to articulate why we make the choices we do. The board and several small groups kicked off the process, and now we'd like to hear from everyone else. We all have ministries. We all have talents. Let's get explicit and organized about them!

Personnel

Minister

Reverend Leela Sinha: 667-4393
minister@uuellsworth.org

President of the Board

Ruth Eveland: 288-5727
president@uuellsworth.org

Director of Religious Education and Exploration

Sonia Turanski: 667-4393 (H); 266-9530 (cell)
Sonia@uuellsworth.org

Music Director

Wayne Smith: 667-9482

Newsletter Editor

Lance Funderburk: 276-3301
lfunderburk@roadrunner.com

Religious Exploration and Education

Hello All:

GENERAL NEWS

Lifespan RE Task Force: I will be forming an ad hoc, multigenerational, lifespan RE task force to meet early in the New Year, hopefully around mid-January, 2009. The goal of this group will be to brainstorm on the visioning and implementation of the most engaging and satisfying future RE program reflecting the lifespan concerns of the congregation. I anticipate that this task force will meet twice during the spring and will report its findings to the respective RE and Adult RE committees. All are welcome to participate – this will be a multigenerational task force, drawing from the full span of our community. If you have any interest in participating or if you would like to nominate another, please contact Sonia.

New Years Clean-up: The rooms in the RE wing are in need of a good cleaning. Of immediate concern are the contents and organization of the closets: we need to empty them out, purge anything that doesn't need to be here, and stow what we do need in a better way. A few willing souls have volunteered to help move things around (thank you especially to Cynthia Perkins) but before we can do that we need to make sure that nothing important is inadvertently disposed off.

NOTE: If you have or know of anything stashed in an RE closet that you care about – please come collect it or bring it to my attention by or before Sunday, Dec. 16th.

Anything still here after Dec. 16th is fair game left to the discretion of the cleaners.

Guest at Your Table: Dec. 7th marks the kick off of our annual Guest at Your Table fundraiser. Jr. and Sr. Youth will be passing

out collection boxes during our monthly potluck.

Community Night: We are looking to institute Community Night here at UUCE, a mid-week night when many of our community events and classes can be held. We'll keep you posted as this develops. In the mean time, if you have ideas for classes or activities that you would like to see here at UUCE, please let Sonia know.

YOUTH RE NEWS

Dec. 7th, 14th, & 21st (solstice), – Youth group led by Carol and Nicole.

Dec. 28th – Rights and Justice room organizing and decorating party. Come and help make this room special for our youth and teens.

Coming soon:

Jr. and Sr. Youth Field Trip to Emmaus House: Parents – we will need permission slips, so be on the lookout and make sure to sign and return them.

Way Cool Sunday School: we hope to inaugurate a new format in our Sunday youth program. This new format will give us the greatest flexibility to work with our various resources and participants. The basic idea is that 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month the youth & teens will meet with a teacher for a curriculum led session. The second Sunday will be devoted to a social action activity, and the 4th Sunday will rotate between various special events like music, movement and youth led ritual. This format will allow RE teachers to have a more flexible commitment, and will allow our community adults an opportunity to engage and support our youth with whatever specific talents they have to bring. We are also looking forward to creating a youth group specifically for 8-12 year olds under the leadership of Nicole Leahy.

(continued on p. 4)

(continued from p. 3)

ADULT RE NEWS

November saw the wrapping up of several successful fall Adult RE classes: the Second Sunday Discussion Group, Living Well Later in Life, A Menu for the Future and, This System Belongs to God. Congratulations to all the leaders and participants for an engaging season. Upcoming events include:

Advent Readings with Reverend Leela Sinha: An opportunity for contemplative reflection. Tuesday nights Dec 9th, 16th - in the Sanctuary. (See Leela's note in this newsletter) Open to the Public.

Introduction to Islam with Sonia Turanski: Bring a bag lunch to this fast paced and informative introduction to the history and practice of Islam. Sundays, Jan 11th & 18th from 12:30 – 2 pm (after coffee hour). Open to the public.

Advanced UU Class with Rev. Leela Sinha: This advanced class will give you an opportunity to reach deeper into articulating one's own faith practice. Tentative schedule: Tues – Thurs evenings, Feb 3, 4, 5. For those who have had an introduction to the basics.

Choices for Sustainable Living with Karen Wigglesworth. Tentative schedule: 6 Sundays after church, starting early Feb. Open to the public.

Submitted with Aloha (love) and Mahalo (thanks),
Sonia Turanski, DLREE
sonia@uuellsworth.org

Treasurer's Corner

I will be sending out pledge statements the first of December. It is an excellent time to make an extra payment to the church before the end of the year for tax purposes. I am concerned that we are falling behind in pledge receipts. Since we approved a deficit budget of \$18,000 for this church year, it is important that we do not exceed it. With everyone's effort, I am confident we can reach our

commitment. This month we received a special donation of \$432.96 to the kitchen renovation fund from former members of the church. The donation equaled the outstanding balance on the renovation. I want to congratulate Betty Massie for bringing the kitchen renovation to an end with a balanced budget. If you have any questions or thoughts, please do not hesitate to call me. I would enjoy hearing from you.

Don Martin, Treasurer

Building Opportunities For Connection

The congregation has several successful ongoing small group ministries that are organized by geography, but there has been significant interest in several other models of small-group gatherings as well. Small groups that gather regularly for fellowship and discussion are a wonderful way of forging and deepening relationships, and they provide a chance to have some of those deep and engaging conversations that just don't always fit into coffee hour. Plan to stay for this informational meeting DECEMBER 14 AFTER SERVICE to find out what the other options are and give input about what would interest, inspire, and invigorate you. We want to hear from you! Please call or email Rev. Sara Husijen (formerly Hayman) or Rev. Leela Sinha (minister@uuellsworth.org) if you have questions.

UUCE Tech Committee

The UUCE Tech Committee is creating a survey asking how people currently use and ideas/suggestions on how they want to use the UUCE website in the future. This will be up at: <http://uuellsworth.org/> survey by the 1st of December. For more information contact matt@baya.net

Winter Common Reading

When the ice is thick or the snow is blowing it can be harder to gather at the church. We will still have plenty of events this winter, but we are also trying something new. In January we will announce a winter common reading--a single title that we can all read and reflect on this winter if we wish. Come spring thaw, we will schedule several discussion groups about it. If you have suggestions for what the book should be, please email them to Rev. Leela Sinha (minister@uuellsworth.org), and look for the announcement in the January NUUS.

Name Tag Posse Needs a Deputy

Remember us? We're the crew, which will make nametags for new folks or for those who have a new role at church and want their nametag to reflect that. We also make nametags for losers – those who have misplaced their nametags, that is. However, two of us are headed for Florida, leaving Deputy Rothrock on her own until early March. Is there someone with computer graphic skills who could help out until I return? I'm happy to do what minimal training is needed and will provide clip art and templates. Please see me before mid-December when this snowbird flies away, and yes, this is a mixed metaphor.

Sheriff Kay Wilkins

The Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry's purpose is to serve the health of the congregation by periodically reviewing the effectiveness of all the congregation's ministries. Ministry is not just about the work of the minister, though it includes that. As we all currently have the opportunity to work on statements of our own personal ministry, this concept of congregational and individual ministry will hopefully become clearer and more meaningful.

Members of the Committee are available to hear concerns, suggestions and ideas about how the ministry of the church can improve, grow, and involve all of us in ever more satisfying ways. As concerns and ideas come to the Committee they may be referred to another committee or the congregation for action or response. The Committee members (listed below) hope you will talk with us by phone or in person about your thoughts on our shared responsibility for ministry, including any concerns about current ministry issues.

Although discussions within the meetings are held in strictest confidence, these discussions often inform and direct the committee's follow-up with the congregation.

Committee Members: Bob Dickens (667-7925), Merideth Norris (374-3885) Judy Rothrock (244-3520), Fran Stehman (244-4122), Tom Stipe (667-8628), and Rev. Leela Sinha (667-4393).

The Care Committee

The Caring Committee is compiling a list of birthdays. Please let us know of dates of family and friends from your birthday books. Send to Evelyn Foster at ewfoster@verizon.net or call 667-1800.

December Birthdays

12/05 Wayne Smith
12/08 Betty Massie
12/08 Don Martin
12/11 Sally Bell
12/24 Steve Votey
12/26 Martha Dickensen
12/31 Susan Walsh

Due to the change in format for Joys and Concerns, the reasons for which we now better understand, The Care Committee requests your help in keeping us informed of anyone who could use a note to congratulate, sympathize, or support them. Please contact us by email or by leaving a note in the basket at Sunday service. We are ready and willing to minister to the church congregation but can only do so if we are aware of the needs.

Karen Wigglesworth & Dartha Reid

Singing Circle

Everyone is welcome to attend our UU Sacred Singing Circle. For the time being, we gather the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM in the RE Wing of the church. We sing for about an hour and then share our thoughts and ideas. We are currently singing songs from our hymnals and other songbooks, particularly songs from Women With Wings. We are not a performance group, rather our aim is the spiritual nourishment of those gathered in song. If you would like to be a part of this singing circle but cannot make the time, please let us know as our time is certainly subject to change.

Martha Dickinson, 667-5863 or marthad@zwi.net

Guest at Your Table

We will launch the *Guest at Your Table* program on December 7, 2008, with distribution of the materials through the RE program and at potluck after the worship service. The *Guest at Your Table* program is an effective way for UUs to learn more about the needs of others outside our immediate communities and to pool resources with other UUs around the country to make a significant impact in improving the lives of people in this country and world-wide. Our inspiration and materials come from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC), of which a few of us are members.

This year's *Guest at Your Table* program celebrates the **60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, which was adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948. Our UU values are thoroughly consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but many countries, including our own, have a long way to go. For instance, article 5 proclaims "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment". Article 6 reads "Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law". The full text of the UDHR is at

<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>.

The basic activity is that we each place a colorful box sort of a piggy bank on our dinner table, or some other convenient place, and put money into the box as we think of feeding and caring for a guest-at-a-distance. We will collect all the boxes in January and send the proceeds to the UUSC to distribute. Everyone is encouraged to take a box and learn more about the work of UUSC.

For more information, check the website www.uusc.org and/or see our RE director, Sonia Turanski or Martha Dickinson, chair of PASA.

Martha Dickinson
667 5863
marthad@zwi.net

Summary Of Parish Discussion On Joys & Sorrows

Held on November 9, 2008

After the service on Sunday, November 9, 2008, more than thirty members and friends stayed “to hear each other, in ministry, together, on the topic of the meaning of joys and sorrows, and how it fits within our forms of worship together.” The discussion was sponsored by the Growth Team. Most people spoke; several people had contributed written comments that were read. People were generally respectful and many points were raised. Most people were in favor of having a participatory version of J&S, but willing to allow for some flexibility in terms of how it was managed. It was not a voting meeting, but an open-ended discussion. Many people expressed their satisfaction with the discussion process.

Below are many of the phrases that were used:

- direct
- in (someone’s) own voice
- important to others
- helps identify individuals/get to know people
- why I come
- support from others
- unattractive at beginning
- community building
- has been abused
- management dilemma
- immediate impulse makes it genuine
- basket is a valid alternative
- miss hearing detail and personal voice
- have minister take the microphone around and look people in the eye as they talk
- vehicle for Caring Committee to know what’s going on
- form of ministry to others
- unspoken (depiction of) ministry to visitors
- different form of ministry
- in favor of old way
- its purpose is connection
- doesn’t have to be only one way to do it
- have gotten a lot out of both speaking and hearing
- more often than not am happy to hear what is said

- when I react badly to what is said I try to figure out why I’m having a bad reaction
- have team of people to work with people who misuse it
- meaningful
- may be other ways to share
- appreciate the more dignified and spiritual approach to worship from Leela
- uncomfortable
- trying to understand why it is so important to others
- profound and moving sense of community
- conflicted feelings
- this is a good discussion; hadn’t appreciated the varied feelings
- don’t throw out baby with bath water
- can be sense of “spiritual hijack” in worship service
- don’t vilify those who don’t like it
- ask people to say it in only one sentence
- let the minister have an opportunity to try things, to provide leadership
- like the idea but not always what is said
- importance is for the speaker not the listener
- is personal time that should not be filtered
- takes a lot a time sometimes
- should be for major issues; some topics are what I judge as of minor importance or interest
- find another forum outside of the regular worship service
- a way to keep in touch

There will be further discussions with the Worship Committee to consider the alternatives proposed. If you didn’t have a chance to add your thoughts yet, please contact Leela Sinha (667-4393, leela@uuellsworth.org) or Cynthia Perkins (422-6263, cynthiaperkins6@msn.com).

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee's planned meeting for Dec. 7th has been canceled. We are going to wait until January.

A note from Angela Bouchard:

I am not a "joiner." Socializing with others is a challenge for me. As an introvert, I do well in solitude. One of my greatest passions in life is solitary hikes in Acadia National Park, often on abandoned or remote trails at 5:30 in the morning or well after dark on the carriage roads. As a child, I experienced years of sexual, emotional and physical abuse, so I do not trust easily. Previous church experiences were anything but positive or spiritually helpful to me. So given all that, how did I end up here?

First of all, I was blessed in marrying my husband, Henri. He was the first person I could trust to love me and stand by me, no matter what. He neither hurt me nor stood by and allowed me to be hurt. Twenty five years later, he is an every-day blessing in my life...someone who encourages me to put aside my fears and grow, to walk in the path of my own higher good.

Bellydance became the first community where I could give up my preference for near invisibility. Middle Eastern dance gave me back pieces of myself I'd given up as lost. It became a spiritual practice for me in a safe community of women where I could learn to be in the sacred space of my own body and experience dance as a moving prayer.

Being in the dance troupe gave me Toby as a friend, and when she mentioned what a dynamic new minister you'd found, I was curious and hopeful enough to attend one Sunday morning. I felt welcomed. I even knew a few people. Among you, I heard poetry and found grace and beauty. And I experienced people of varied backgrounds and beliefs acting with kindness and respect for each other week after week.

I am so grateful to have landed among you, after giving up hope of ever finding a church I could belong to. Thank you for being so enticing a group that even a solitary soul like myself felt a longing to sit among you. I feel so very blessed to have found you.

I hope you realize how blessed you are in your minister and in the company of each other. I hope you recognize that collectively, you are a spiritually alive pulse in this community. What you have is enough to overcome fear. What you have is enough to inspire commitment, joy, trust and a belief in possibility.

Winter Solstice Choir

"If you can walk you can dance. If you can talk you can sing." The UUCE music committee wants to affirm this Zimbabwe proverb by forming a special choir to sing at the morning service on Sunday, December 21st. Everyone is welcome to participate in what may become the renewal of a tradition at UUCE -- a choir open to all, composed of people who love to sing. We will sing music appropriate to the winter holidays, particularly the solstice, and plan to have a good time doing it! All are welcome. Four rehearsals are scheduled for Sunday mornings, 9:00 to 10:15, on November 16th and 23rd and December 7th and 14th. To participate in the Sunday service on December 21st, you should plan to attend at least three of these rehearsals plus the last practice on the 21st. Please sign up in the community room or call Janine Galeski (359-2483) or David Towle (288-4121).

Message from the President

Being together...

It seems that everything I am working on at the moment is centered around strengthening the way we are together. I've heard that some people are concerned that we don't seem to know each other very well and we don't do much together. Long term members look around and there are familiar faces missing. Some new folks have found connections and some are still searching.

We have our Sunday worship together, and coffee afterwards - if someone will volunteer to make it. (We used to provide snacks as well, but that was resting on too few of us, and it was a hardship for some to offer to feed that many.) We have classes and some small group ministries. We have our clean-up days, and our great services auction and dinner.

But it doesn't seem enough to many people. *We are yearning for interconnectedness.* We want to know each other at a deeper level.

This is why we are trying to talk more about ministry within our church. Ministry is the idea of being in service to each other. If we think of our times together, regardless of whether it is a conversation at coffee hour or a committee meeting or a work session, as a form of ministry - of being present with each other, in support of each other - then our time together takes on a deeper meaning.

Being together in covenant...

When we are together in ministry, we are making a promise to each other. It is a commitment. In "church language" it is a covenant. When you consider what experience in your life with UUCE has been the most memorable, almost inevitably it involves fellow congregants. Even if the moment you think of first was something that happened in a worship service, then there were others present with you, adding to the experience.

The Growth Team came back from its last workshop with lots of ideas for developing and reinforcing our bonds. When Leela and Sara roll out the next incarnation of small group ministry (also called, not surprisingly, "covenant groups"), give it a try. We'll be setting up some regular nights to get together to share food and do some fun things. When the rest of the ideas have been shaped beyond their "wouldn't it be cool if" stage, we'll let you know.

In the meantime, if a group wants to get together for fellowship or to work on something, go ahead and do it. The point is to be intentional with each other, to make a commitment.

This doesn't always come easy to me; I'm inclined to lurk around the edges. But I can truly say that if you throw yourself into something, the reward for participating is so much more than if you just dip your toe in.

We come to church to be with the spirit. That spirit resides in each and every one of us. Touch the spirit - it will warm you all the way to your core.

And, once more, from the beginning...

Here are some new times to gather to go through the Personal Ministry Exercise, which was described in the November NUUS:

Sunday, December 7th (during or after potluck)

Thursday, December 11th - 4:00

Sunday, December 21st - noon-ish

If you get a couple of people who are willing to give it a try, let me know and we'll find a time. (Have papers, will travel...)

We'll offer an option to "do it yourself" next month, but I strongly encourage you to try it with a group.

Yours in ministry,
Ruth Eveland,
President of the Board of Trustees

From The Board

[Note: Our secretary, Mary Ann Solet, was unable to be with us, since she is still fighting a nasty bug. This summary is an “impressionistic” version based on Ruth Eveland’s scanty jottings.]

The most important news from our minister, Leela Sinha, is that she and our Community Minister, Sara Huisjen (formerly Hayman) will be revitalizing our small group ministry program. There will be more information available in January. This will create another opportunity for people to gather to create community. She is also contemplating the idea of a “common reading,” a book that as many as wanted would all read. There would be some formal discussions set up, but it would also allow for a variety of less-structured conversations. If you have a title to suggest, please let Leela know. (I’ve already got two books to throw into the pot!)

We have hired an office assistant/ bookkeeper, Caitlin Tunney. She will be in the office Monday and Friday afternoons between 1 and 5, and also either Tuesday or Wednesday. If you need to email her (especially re calendar items!!) send it to office@uuellsworth.org. While she will be picking up a number of tasks, she is concentrating on the bookkeeping first. Give her a chance to settle in! **We owe our bookkeeper for the last three years, Helen Kazura, a BIG THANK YOU.** She is remaining with us in covenant, but her personal ministry is currently leading her to work with rescue dogs and she needs the time to devote to that work.

Financially, our heads are above water, but we may be approaching some whirlpools. The biggest immediate concern is how well pledges will be met. Our Treasurer, Don Martin, will work with Caitlin to send out statements during December so that everyone will be aware of where they stand. Don will also be leading a small working group to do the preliminary work on a five-year financial plan. If you have thoughts about our budget, please get in touch with him at 664-0309 or Jzmartin2@verizon.net.

Toby Manring is gathering information to develop an emergency preparedness plan. If you might be interested in joining this short-term team, please contact her at 664-0340 or tmanring@roadrunner.com.

David Towle, Building Maintenance guru, reported what he had learned about the process and costs of joining up with the city water supply. The Board gave him the go-ahead to take the next step of getting bids, and also to research whether there might be some grant sources to help fund the project. Aside from being a permanent solution to our problematic well, it would also allow us to reclaim space in the Community Room by removing the storage tanks which have been necessary to supply the sprinkler system.

We reviewed the discussion that was held after the service on the 9th to talk about the place of joys and sorrows in our ministry. There is a complete summary elsewhere in this NUUS issue. Follow-up discussions will be held by the Worship Committee.

Remember that there is time set aside at the beginning of every Board meeting for Congregational Comment. No need to call ahead - just show up at 7 (we do begin on time.)

UUCE Down East Discussion Group

The Down East Discussion Group is open to all and welcomes new members. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at 12:00 noon. Bring a sandwich for yourself. Beverages and dessert will be provided by the host of the month. For directions, please call the host of the month.

Wednesday, December 10, 2008 Pot-Luck Lunch
Hosts: Don and Jean Martin (664-0309)
Topic: Jean will lead the discussion: Can we “Un-Plug the Christmas Machine”? What brings you peace and joy during the holidays and what doesn’t?
Suggested Reading: Unplug the Christmas Machine by Jo Robinson and Jean Coppock Staeheli.

Small Group Ministry Openings

We have several openings in our Small Group Ministries group. We meet in the Brooklin-Blue Hill area. If anyone is interested please contact me. Willow Runningwater: 359-8934.

Listening Assist System Coming

After testing two different assistive listening systems, thanks to a demo program provided by the UUA, the Board has approved the purchase of a Williams Sound PPA375 Hearing System with 4 receivers and earphones, the less expensive (~\$750) and actually more effective of the two systems that we tested. The FM transmitter will connect directly to the current sound system and each user will have a wireless pocket-sized receiver for individual volume control. We will have three different styles of earphone available for try-out and anyone can bring their own headset as well to plug into the receiver. In fact, individuals may purchase their own receiver from Williams Sound if they wish to be assured of having one available for use. We will monitor the demand and may be able to find the funds to purchase additional receivers and headsets. The system may be on the scene by the time you receive this newsletter. Try one out! Contact David Towle (dtowle@mdibl.org) for further info.

Many thanks,
David

Circle of Light

Celebration A Winter Solstice

December 21, 2008

6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

The Unitarian Universalist
Church of Ellsworth-667-4393

6:00 Ingathering of Dance, Song, Poetry and
Meditation.

7:15 Bonfire and Making Merry

7:30 Feast*, Dancing and Spiral

*Suggested donation of \$5.00/person,
\$10.00/family to benefit

The Ellsworth Area Ministers Discretionary
Fund

A fund distributed by the Emmaus Center to
Hancock County residents in transition.

All are welcome

Fiddles, drums and bells encouraged

Childcare provided for children under the age
of 5

February (Fun)draiser

A winter fundraiser is being planned for Valentine's Day, Feb. 14th. Please be in touch if you would like to help. There will be a dinner followed by musical entertainment. We are looking for folks to prepare food for the dinner, especially wonderful desserts made of chocolate. And we are hoping for some musical groups of all sizes.

Proceeds will be split 50/50 with Loaves and
Fishes.

Contact Jean Martin or Peggie Geiger