



The NUUS

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

(207) 667-4393

www.uuellsworth.org

Volume 41

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A Month of Sundays

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

December 6. *Consider the Source*

Water is only safe to drink if its source is safe. So, too, with the spirit. What preparation do we make for giving? What is it to give freely? How can we make ready?

-Rev. Leela Sinha

(After the service: **Empty Bowls** replaces our usual potluck. Please sign up in advance! If you wish to participate and cannot for lack of funds, please contact Leela: minister@uuellsworth.org or call the church)

December 13. *Going Deep*

Pearl diving has evolved over hundreds of years, from a simple bodily feat to a full sport. When we look within, how do we examine ourselves? What tools from what places aid our search?

-Rev. Leela Sinha

December 20. *Breaking the Surface*

At Samhain we go under; at Solstice we come up for air. What does it mean to breathe again?

-Rev. Leela Sinha

December 20. Evening Solstice Service.

[See notice on this page.]

-Anne Ossanna

December 24, 6:30 PM. Christmas Eve Service

We will have a semi-traditional candlelight service to tell Luke's story of Jesus from our own UU perspective, sing carols, and gather in community.

[Special Note: Our offering this evening will go to the all-Ellsworth Ministers' Discretionary Fund. A number of the Ellsworth congregations contribute to this joint fund. When people from outside our churches ask for assistance, we refer them to

this special fund, graciously administered by the Emmaus Center for the Ellsworth area churches.

Sr. Lucille McDonald screens applicants and distributes funds, or redirects people to other city resources if appropriate. This ensures a fair and equal distribution to all of those who ask for help. But in order for it to work, all of the churches have to contribute. This and Empty Bowls are two of our major sources of funds for this purpose. Please plan to give generously if you can.

December 27. *Renewal*

Toby Manring will be Pulpit Host for the service which will include the UUCE Choir, pieces selected and read by several congregation members and lots of congregational singing.

What a great way to welcome the New Year!

-Toby Manring

Circle of Light

UUCE will be hosting a

**Winter Solstice Celebration on
December 20, 2009 from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

An Ingathering of Music, Meditation, Song and Ritual will begin in the Sanctuary. Bonfire, Making Merry and a Feast will occur following the ritual. Suggested donation of \$5.00/person and \$10/family to benefit The Ellsworth Area Ministers

Discretionary Fund, distributed by the Emmaus Center to Hancock County residents in transition. This is a Family event and all are welcome. Please bring drums and bells!

Unexpected Grace

The stars have been bright, the nights clear and cold--Solstice is midwinter, Samhain was definitely the beginning of the season, and Advent is upon us. Somehow in the northern hemisphere we've got the dark half of the darkening season managed, if we're willing to take all the wisdom of our collective cultures together: Mabon (Equinox) celebrating the last flare of life before the dying season, Samhain (Halloween) which marks the beginning of winter and the turning toward death, Thanksgiving which is a late-season version of Mabon at best and a celebration of genocide at worst, Advent (the four weeks before Christmas) which is about darkness and introspection and anticipation, and Yule (Solstice) the celebration of the return of the sun. We know that as the light withdraws we need something to keep our spirits up and keep us moving. It's far too easy in these early cold days to huddle inside and wait for spring.

What else is possible? This is the season of giving, of gifts, of going on anyway and doing it in the spirit of abundance. How can we be abundant together, abundant and truly joyful? It would be easy to think that abundance comes from money, but it doesn't have to. In these early days of Advent, of introspection, we can dive deep and find the abundance of spirit or wisdom or mischief or laughter or the cup of tea and listening ear or youthful energy or strength of will--what are your strengths?

How will you give generously, now and always?

And how will we, together? What need can we serve?

Blessings for the season,
Leela

Adult RE

The Lifespan Religious Education Committee met on November 15 to review the Fall offerings and begin planning for the Winter and Spring. There will be a variety of new things to do. We agreed that holding the meetings after church on Sunday was the best possible time, at least during the Winter. The committee invites the Youth group to come to any of these meetings

OFFERINGS IN DECEMBER

December 6. Judaism in the Ancient World - last of 4 part series led by Sara Huisjen and Diana Cate

December 13. YULE - A Sacred Sabbat - beginning with information about the sacred circle and the roots of this ancient religious tradition.

Anne Ossanna and Mike Tansey

WINTER AND SPRING 2010

AFTER CHURCH LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFERINGS will be given on Sundays starting at noon and going until 1:30 PM except when potluck - more dates to be given in December.

January 10, 17 and 24. The Seven UU Principles - a discussion group led by Pam Person and Evelyn Foster

January 31. IMBOLG - Sacred Sabbat - led by Anne Ossanna and Mike Tansey

March 21. OSTARA - Sacred Sabbat - led by Anne Ossanna and Mike Tansey

April 25. BELTANE - Sacred Sabbat - led by Anne Ossanna and Mike Tansey
Date to be set - What I observed in Africa - Anne Ossanna - slides and talk - one session

Five Sundays in the Spring - Introduction to Art Therapy - Sue Clark

Have a good Thanksgiving
Pam Person, Chair
UUCE Lifespan Religious Education Committee

Call to Participate in UUA Decisions on Social Witness

Some of you have attended a General Assembly (GA) of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and have shared in the excitement of participating in the decision making process there, together with congregants from all over the world. This winter you can participate in GA affairs right here at UUCE. The UUA calls on all congregations to participate in a number of social witness decisions in the next few months. We will hold a congregational meeting in January 2010 to discuss the issues involved and to vote on the following questions:

1. Do you approve placing the Draft Statement of Conscience (SOC) on "[Peacemaking](#)" on the Final Agenda for General Assembly (GA) 2010?
2. Which five of the following six proposed Congregational Study/Action Issues (CSAIs) do you recommend be placed on the Final Agenda of General Assembly 2010?

- [Ending Slavery](#)
- [Energy, Peace, and Justice](#)
- [Immigration as a Moral Issue](#)
- [National Economic Reform: A Moral Imperative](#)
- [Nuclear Disarmament](#)
- [Revitalizing American Democracy](#)

Background information on all of these questions is available on line at <http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/issuesprocess/>. If you are viewing this article online, just click on the underlined topics above to connect to the documents online. If you do not have easy access to the internet, please ask Martha Dickinson or Ruth Eveland for a hard copy. Each document is several pages long.

Comments are also solicited on the Draft SOC "[Peacemaking](#)" by February 1, 2010 and on the Draft CSAI "[Ethical Eating](#)" by March 1, 2010. The Peace and Social Action Committee will discuss these issues at their December meeting.

- Martha Dickinson, for PASA

UUCE Discussion E-Mail

If you would like to be a part of the UUCE Discussion E-mail list it is necessary to opt-in. You do this by providing your name and e-mail address to either Wayne Smith <wayne@mrlanguage.com> or to Matt Baya <matt@baya.net>. If you have questions about this call Judy Rothrock at 244-3520 <judyhill39@myfairpoint.net>

Haiku for Mary Ann

Artist with words, wool
Woven into our hearts, then
Autumn swept you off.

-Dartha C. Reid

Personnel

Minister

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Wayne Smith: 667-9482

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Lance Funderburk: 276-3301
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Cut Your Own Christmas Tree!

Have the fun of cutting your own Christmas tree and helping UUCE at the holidays.

Place: Dartha and Paul Reid's in Lamoine

Time: Dec. 5th through Dec. 13th

Suggested donation: \$20 for largest and \$5 for smallest.

Call before you come 667-5434

Guest at Your Table

The “*Guest at Your Table*” program has long been an effective way for UU’s to learn more about the needs of others outside our immediate communities and to pool resources with other UU’s around the country to make a significant impact in improving the lives of people in this country and globally. The Peace and Social Action Committee will work with the Children’s RE program to provide resources for our congregation. Our inspiration and materials come from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC), of which some us are members. Last year, we raised around \$250 for UUSC. I hope we can do at least as well this year.

The basic activity of Guest at Your Table 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 send the proceeds to the UUSC to distribute. Look for the colorful boxes at church on November 22. All members and families will be encouraged to take a box and learn more about the work of UUSC. At the end of the collection period, in mid-January, we ask you to put the money from your box into an envelope with your name and information on it.

UUSC promotes and defends the human right to water and is engaged in several projects abroad and at home. The UUSC has a Climate Justice Offset Program to effect limits to green house gas emissions and a Gulf Coast Advocacy Program for victims of hurricane Katrina. In partnership with the American Friends Service Committee, UUSC works in Gaza to empower youth to help lead renewal in their community. Please see www.uusc.org for more information on the many projects UUSC does alone and in partnership with kindred organizations.

For more information, check the website <http://www.uusc.org/guest> and/or see our RE director, Sonia Turanski or Martha Dickinson, chair of PASA. We’d love to have a few more helpers.

From The Board

Attending were Ruth Eveland, Don Martin, Eileen Brennan, Cynthia Perkins, Diana Cate, Anne Ossanna, Judy Rothrock from the Board and our minister Rev. Leela Sinha.

Housekeeping

We have an excellently qualified candidate for R.E. Director, Tom Grogan. He is a ministerial candidate at Bangor Theological Seminary and has led Sunday services here twice in the past year. The Board approved hiring Tom as our new RE Director. He will have transition time during which he will work with Sonia. Purchase of an AV cart and cables for our new projector was approved. In support of Rev. Sara Huisjen's ministry, the Board approved the use of the Board meeting room two Tuesday mornings a month by the Hancock County Home and Hospice agency.

Minister's Report

Christmas Service will be held on Christmas Eve, time to be decided. A new member class is being scheduled. Leela attended a "Growth" meeting in Walpole. Transgender Day of Remembrance is on November, 20th. Ninety transgender individuals have been killed this year. Gay Men's Community Center is opening this week on Foster St. in Ellsworth. Leela thanked Cynthia, Stefanie, and David for putting up 3 roadside signs advertising our church. Our previous signs had been knocked down.

Board Retreat

On November 21 the Board will hold a retreat to discuss the books we have been reading on leadership, governance, and visioning our future. We plan to have some action items by the end of the retreat.

We Are a Justice-Seeking Church

In spite of the disappointing outcome on the November 3, repealing marriage equality, UUCE stood up for our core beliefs in a tremendous show of support and hard work. Nearly everyone among us contributed in ways large and small. We gave space, money, food, phone calls, speeches, blogs, radio and newspaper interviews, organizing and training volunteers, door knocks, house parties, letters to the editor, housing for volunteers, more phone calls, strategic planning, putting up signs, making buttons, wearing buttons, talking to neighbors, poll watching, hugs, encouraging words and did I mention phone calls?

Although we lost the election state-wide, Hancock County was one of three in the state to vote "No." In percentage terms we were second, behind Cumberland County, and the only county voting "No" in the second congressional district.

Thank you one and all. Thanks too for all the concern and kind notes after the election. Special thanks to Leela who pulled together a beautiful candlelight service on Wednesday night following the election for those of us in the church and the wider community to come together with our grief.

So what's next? The fight for full civil rights for LGBT people goes on, but what form, what actions, are still being considered.

As for me? UUCE Green Sanctuary certification, here I come. Care to join in?

Kay Wilkins
667-2901
kwilkins@alumnet.simmons.edu

Message from the President

Lessons from our parking lot

Is our parking lot a metaphor for our congregation? I have been puzzling over the way we use our oddly shaped parking lot for a while. Perhaps I am reading too much into it, but I think we may be able to gain perspective from the way we drive in and turn off the key.

Since I have been a member the lot has grown twice. First, we added the half-circle area toward the Bridge Hill apartments. There were some who were reluctant to cut even one more tree on our property, but we just simply needed a space to put the cars on Sunday mornings. The second time was when we donated the space for Loaves and Fishes to build, and we gained the area in front of their building and the loop around the back.

Now, on some days and for a few events we still don't have enough parking in good weather, and we really don't have enough once the drifts begin to pile up in the snowy months. Those who know about this sort of thing point out that if people who are just poking their heads in our door to check us out don't see enough room in the parking lot or enough empty seats in the sanctuary, they don't feel there is room enough for them to come in. At some point we're going to have to address the need for more parking, and using Route 3 doesn't count. (It can be dangerous and the city doesn't like us to do that.) Also, we can't use the office across the street, so don't even try that one - they have been quite clear about not wanting us there.

So, part of my concern about the lot is whether we have enough room for new folks - room in the lot, room in the sanctuary, room in the Community Room during coffee hour, and most important, room in our hearts. Do we have a way to help people feel physically comfortable with us before they get to know us? Would it help if we designated several parking spots nearer the door as "visitors welcome" spaces? (No, this doesn't mean do away with places for those who need a short distance to the door.)

Would general parking signs help people "fit in" better? Since our lot is so peculiarly shaped it is hard for people to figure out where to put their cars once the obvious spaces are full. There are three lines for slanted parking, and then just a lot of other places where it isn't clear which direction you should face or how you should line up. We could figure out the optimum placement and then post diagrams to help maximize the number of cars we can accommodate - would this be perceived as helpful or unnecessarily directive? (And surely we can at least accept the necessity for a bit of direction in a matter such as this, if not in our theology?) If people would at least be careful about not leaving gaps between cars that are not large enough for another car to fit in, we could squeeze a few more vehicles in. Are we indicating that we aren't comfortable being too close to each other? Have I reached the point of reading too much into this metaphor??

What about this radical idea: have several volunteers in the lot to greet people and help them find a spot! That would be really putting ourselves out there. I'm not fond of standing in the cold, but perhaps we have a couple of members who would find this a good way to be of service to our community. It would serve two purposes: help with the parking, but also help with making people feel welcomed from the moment they turn in. I'm just throwing this against the wall to see if it sticks... (And I can never think of that concept without remembering the kitchen of a fraternity house at Dartmouth in 1969 - 70. (Shudder.))

My last concern is what all the potholes say about us. I know that we can be a (metaphorical) bumpy ride, but the way it is now makes it look like we don't care. They are hard to drive over and can make for perilous walking at night for those of us easily inclined toward sprained ankles. In the past we had one member who offered what we called his "pothole ministry." Even month or two he'd bring a shovel and redistribute the dirt. It helped and was appreciated. Another member has paid for new fill and a piece of heavy machinery to wham in down, which helped but wasn't a permanent solution. There is just something about that lot that won't stay put - it keeps rearranging itself. Do we pave it and put down stripes? Does anyone have any ideas

about how to address this problem without adding a new budget line?

I'm asking for both practical help, and for people to think about this kind of thing. We aren't superficial people and most of us don't pay that much attention to appearances, but when we are trying to make ourselves welcoming everything should be noticed and made the most of. What else do you think we should work on, outside our building, inside our building, and inside ourselves?

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

P.S. One more related thought: we need someone who can print poster-sized sheets to make new inserts for the Wayside Pulpit, our road sign. They can be downloaded, all correctly formatted from the UUA website, but we need someone with a printer large enough to accommodate giant paper. If you can help, please let me know. Thanks!

Down East Discussion Group

The December meeting of the Down East Discussion Group will be on Wednesday, December 9th at noon at the home of Don and Jean Martin in Ellsworth. This meeting is a potluck. Don and Jean will provide the main dish and beverages. Other are invited to bring a vegetable, salad, bread or dessert to share. Also please bring a food item to donate to Loaves and Fishes. The topic for discussion: "What Kind of Holiday Celebration Do You Want?" For directions or questions, please call the Martin's at 664-0309.

Treasurer's Corner

We received a final bill of \$853.11 for connecting the new water line to the building. The water project came in \$1,118 over what was donated for it. When we paid the invoice, it brought our savings account to zero, eliminating any cash reserve.

We received notice that Leela's health insurance will increase in January by 11.5% or \$577.33 per year. Her total premium for health insurance will cost \$5,597.65.

The latest statement from the Maine Community Foundation, which manages our endowment funds, is encouraging. The value of our investment as of January 1, 2009 was \$129,239. As of September 30, 2009, the value was \$147,624. We have also received \$3,990 from MCF as part of the cash distribution to be used for operating expenses. Thus the total increase was \$22,375, a 17.3% increase.

Pledge receipts are doing well running 3% above average. Thank you! Please keep it up. It is important that we reach our pledge goal for this year.

Don Martin
Treasurer



From the Hancock County Cultural Network Calendar

November 30: Global Day of Action for Climate Justice (to stop corporate trashing of our planet).

For details on actions in Maine:

Hillary Lister, 649-5980 or

hillary@maineindymedia.org.

December 4: Author Greg Mortenson talks about his writings on school building in Asia, 7:30 PM, The Music Hall, 28 Chestnut St., Portsmouth, NH. Call 603-436-2400 for tickets and details.

December 5: Maine Fair Trade Campaign annual meeting to recognize gains and victories, plus celebration of tenth anniversary of World Trade Organization protest in Seattle in 1999. Sarah or Daphne/MFTC, 777-6387 or sarah@mainefairtrade.org.

December 5: "Eyes wide open: State, politics and the Alternatives, (Call for a joint reflection on politics, the state and the alternatives. A free, egalitarian and horizontal gathering of independently minded activists), Boston area. Pasquino Colombaro, pcolombaro@gmail.com.

December 10: International Human Rights Day celebrated in Maine. Amnesty International, thesil@midcoast.com or 832-6863. Also try Jan LightfootLane, 453-2353 or janshouse@yahoo.com.

December 12: Sergio Espinoza in the Huanuco Trio performs South American music to benefit Friends of Nuestras Raices, 7 PM, Hope Gateway, 185 High St., Portland. Maria, 727-2071.

December 13: The U.S. Versus John Lennon film shown, 7 PM, Peace and Justice Center, 170 Park St., Bangor. Peace and Justice Center, 942-9343 or info@peacectr.org or www.peacectr.org.

December 16: "Playing for Change" film shown (peace thru music) w/potluck preceding the film, 6 PM, Free Library, Belfast. Call 338-4920 or 338-5639.

Notices:

"Make Noise, Not War" is a response to any proposal by the Obama administration or congress to send more troops to Afghanistan. If there is an escalation, people are urged to go to the Federal building in Bangor or Monument Square in Portland and bang pots and pans or other noisemaking to express displeasure with the move. Besides letting off steam, the strategy is to get media and public attention around the move to increase public opposition. For more on the plan: Mark Roman, 643-2356 or honedsharp47@yahoo.com.

"Mabel's Book" is a directory of almost 100 "farms and farm markets in Franklin, Oxford, and Somerset Counties" found in 2009. Named after local food advocate and activist Mabel Dennison, it describes each farm, what foods it sells, where they sell, hours available, and how to reach them. It also includes maps, ads for supportive groups and the farms themselves, and other agricultural resources. For a copy (free, I think): Western Mountain Alliance, 778-3885 or info@westernmountainsalliance.org.

Starting soon: herbal products and classes offered by Crow Medicine and the Kellogg Street Girls' Medicinal Herb Class to help people learn about and find herbal medicines right in Portland. Health care doesn't have to be expensive medicines and doctors; you can do it yourself too. Sliding scale payment, trades, and Portland hour exchange time-dollars are accepted. For more about herbal products and classes: Crow Medicine, 899-9607 or crow.bones@hotmail.com.

One million dollars may not make huge waves in replacing crumbling housing with new and affordable homes, but it's a start. The Genesis Fund in Damariscotta was awarded that amount from the CDFI (Community Development Financial Institutions) program of the US treasury recently. The money will go to help finance and leverage more money for projects in Bangor, Damariscotta, and on Maine islands, as well as other possible projects. FMI: Genesis Fund, 563-6073 or info@genesisfund.org or www.genesisfund.org.