



The NUUS

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

(207) 667-4393

www.uuellsworth.org

Volume 40

No. 10 October 2008

A Month of Sundays

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

Oct. 5 *Openings*

We have walls and windows, doorways and hidden trap doors in our buildings. In our bodies we have a similar array of ways in and ways out. Plants, animals, most living things are like this. But since the walled city went out of fashion our communities haven't been as obvious. What kinds of "architecture" might help us better serve? Do we need courtyards? Front porches?

We will welcome and celebrate our new members at this service. If you wish to join the church and have taken the class or have been a member of a UU church before, please contact Leela to be included. Our next new member service will be on February 8, 2009. Our next new member class will be March 16-18, and our next welcoming ceremony will be March 22.

Oct. 12. *Growing Our Spirit*

This is Association Sunday, when Unitarian Universalist congregations Association-wide celebrate the joy of being connected and the power that we have when we work together. This year's theme, "Growing Our Spirit", directs our attention to theology and learning. How can we deepen our internal life and widen our outreach when it is grounded in education and examined belief?

Oct. 18 (Saturday): Workshop with Mimi

Bornstein, former music director at the Rockland UU congregation. Mimi is full of spirit and good ideas. Do come!

Oct. 19. *Singing for Our Lives.*

Service by Mimi Bornstein

Oct. 26. Samhain

IT'S A PARTY!

UUCE GOODS AND SERVICES AUCTION

Saturday, October 4, 2008

5:00 p.m. Italian Buffet with Wine

6:00 p.m. – 7 p.m.: Silent Auction

6:30 p.m. Live Auction with Jerry Miller

Many wonderful items have been donated by local businesses as well as our own members. Go to www.uuellsworth.org and click on "Events" to view a list of items being offered.

Sign up your friends to attend the dinner. Call Peggge Geiger at 288-2335 or send an email to peggiegeiger@hotmail.com. The deadline for signing up for dinner is Oct. 1.

Plan to pay \$2.00 for a bidding number for the Auction. All who attend this event may register for a door prize. There will be several Raffle items as well.

Proceeds will be divided 50/50 with the THAW Fund: The Washington-Hancock Community Agency's Home Heating Assistance Fund.

Organizers: Sally Bell, Diana Cate, Susanne Forest, Evelyn Foster, Peggge Geiger, and Peggy Strong.

Unexpected Grace

There was a raven flying through the trees outside my kitchen window this morning, long and low, utterly unimpeded by the twigs and branches that make our woods seem nearly impassable. Denise Levertov writes,

It is hard sometimes to drag ourselves
back to the love of morning
after we've lain in the dark crying out
O God, save us from the horror
and then,

on gray mornings,
all incident - our own hunger,
the dear tasks of continuance,
the footsteps before us in the earth's
beloved dust, leading the way - all,
is hard to love again
for we resent a summons
that disregards our sloth,
(*"The Love of Morning"*, Denise Levertov, *Selected Poems*)

But I would offer that perhaps it is not sloth with which we sit, but a clumsiness of the soul, an awkward crashing through the brambles like humans, too long distant from our lives among the trees. We are missing the point--the negative space that allows the forest to breathe, with us as the breath—when we see branches and trunks and not vast caverns and open arenas and cradling arms.

When we go to step lightly on this planet we train ourselves to see once again the richness all around us; when we encounter the gathering darkness we learn once again to work by the light of the moon, and to wrap the clouds snug and warm around our shoulders.

blessings,
Leela

A Musical Weekend

The weekend of Oct. 18-19 will be a musical one at UUCE. We will be welcoming the former music director of the First Universalist Church in Rockland, Mimi Bornstein, to our pulpit on the

19th, and on the preceding (Saturday) afternoon, at 2:00 p.m., Mimi will be facilitating a discussion at the church on our music program which will be open to all interested persons. We are also thinking of inviting music personnel from other UU churches in the general area. Then in the evening at 8:00 (of Oct. 18th) Mimi will be presenting a concert in the church sanctuary. The suggested donation for the concert is \$10/person, and 10% of the proceeds will go to the UUCE music program. This will be a great opportunity for all those who care about music at UUCE to come and spend some quality time with a quality performer.

The description for her worship service follows:

Singing For Our Lives - When we sing we change who we are. When we change who we are we change the world. Therefore when we sing we change the world. Using our hymnals as well as other sources, we will sing ourselves into vibrant spiritual community together as we explore using music as a vehicle for creating powerful healing, transformation and change for ourselves, our denomination and our communities.

And here is a bio of Mimi:

Mimi Bornstein is a professional choral director, song leader, pianist, singer, composer, workshop and worship leader. Her work embraces the healing and transformational elements of music, often focusing on the powerful journeys we take when we sing together in community. Mimi recently resigned from her position of 13 years serving as Music Director at the first Universalist Church in Rockland, Maine, and is now traveling extensively throughout the country performing, directing choirs, and presenting workshops and worship services at churches, regional and national gatherings, and healing and retreat centers. On the local level, Mimi is well known for her work as Artistic Director of the 100 + member Midcoast Community Chorus (more info at mccsings.org). A noted composer, Mimi's work has been sung nationwide and abroad, and is published in a number of collections.

Adult Religious Education

Please take a copy of the Fall/Winter 2008-2009 brochure on the Community Information table in the Community Room. If you have questions about the Adult Ed program, have ideas for future courses, or would like to offer a course, email Sonia Turanski, DLRE, at sonia@uuellsworth.org or call UUCE, 667-4393, and leave a message.

Poetry Night

Our next Poetry Night will be October 8th, from 7 to 8:30 pm, in the board room. Bring your favorite poems to read and discuss. Ogden Nash, anyone?

A Word to Husbands

To keep your marriage brimming
With love in the loving cup,
Whenever you're wrong, admit it;
Whenever you're right, shut up.

A Menu for the Future

This Maine Earth Institute course begins October 7th, from 6:30 to 8 pm in the board room. Karen Wigglesworth, a UUCE member and Maine Earth Institute activist, brings us an engaging and challenging discussion course exploring the connection between food and sustainability. Registration is required.

The program is organized around three key principles:

- An earth-centered ethic promoting individual responsibility for the Earth
- The practice of engaged simplicity to enrich life and reduce personal impact on the Earth
- A dedication to living fully in place and protecting the unique bioregion in which we live

In these classes we will discuss food systems and their impacts on society, agricultural practices that promote well being, and our role in creating or supporting sustainable food systems.

There is an \$18 charge for the course book, which can be shared, and can be refunded at the end of the course. Pre-registration is required. Classes are seven Tuesday evenings through November 18. For more information

contact Karen at karen.wigglesworth@jax.org.

The System Belongs to God

While many are in despair about the violent domination system they see everywhere, Walter Wink believes that ultimately, "The System Belongs to God." Wink, Professor Emeritus of Biblical Interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary, discusses his conclusions in a set of DVD's that will be presented in seven sessions on Sunday afternoons from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. beginning October 19. The classes will be led by Jonathan Thomas and Rev. Sara Hayman. Each class will begin with the playing of a 25-minute conversation between Wink and two other pastors, followed by group discussion. Pre-registration is required.

The course is not an abstract theological discussion. Wink traces the 5,000-year history of violence through Babylonian creation myths, with reference to Old and New Testament biblical texts, and the progression of worldviews that provides context for that history. Wink cites in his writings the Roman Empire's co-option of the early church and how the "radicality of Jesus was soon watered down by the church." Wink refers often to "principalities and powers," one of those common but obscure Bible terms most of us pass right over. Yet daily we deal with "the powers that be"—people that head the government, companies, churches, and even our families. His hypothesis is that the "principalities and powers" of early Christianity are the social systems that sustain life and maintain order, but that subversion of the powers resulted in the Domination System--male supremacy, economic oppression, class distinction, and racism--which Jesus intended to replace. "The System Belongs to God" will challenge us to re-evaluate the "systems" in which we live, whether we couch those challenges in Christian Biblical terms, or in language more common to Unitarian Universalism.

The class will be presented on seven consecutive Sunday afternoons, 1 to 2:30 pm, from October 19 through November 30. For more information, and for an on-line (PDF) discussion guide, contact Jonathan Thomas at jthomas@panax.com.

Religious Exploration

Greetings from the Religious Exploration Program. Fall classes are underway, it's refreshing to see such joyous activity in the RE Wing. We would like to welcome Helen Conway who is working in the nursery. Helen is a sophomore at Sumner Memorial High School and the granddaughter of Bill Conway. Please introduce yourself to Helen. Listed below is the October calendar:

October 5th, 12th and 19th

Nursery with Helen Conway.
Children begin in the sanctuary with their parents.
Spirit Play with Anne Ossanna,
Jr. Youth with Nicole Leahy,
Sr. Youth with Carol Rosinski.

October 26th

Nursery with Helen Conway.
Children 5 years of age and older are invited to attend the Samhain Celebration.
There will be no RE classes this Sunday.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne N. Ossanna
RE Chair



Peace and Social Action

Reverse Trick-or-Treating

On Halloween night, help spread the word about the need for fair trade by reversing the Halloween tradition. The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is co-sponsoring Reverse Trick-or-Treating, in which children will hand out samples of fair trade chocolate to candy-givers, as they go house to house on Halloween night. Each piece of fair trade chocolate they give will be accompanied by a card that describes the social and environmental injustices in the corporate cocoa industry and how buying fair trade chocolate is the solution. Last year, Reverse Trick-or-Treaters brought fair trade chocolate to the doorsteps of over 72,000 houses in the United States and Canada. Parents raved about how Reverse Trick-or-Treating transformed Halloween into a meaningful event, when children could give back to their neighbors and to cocoa-growing communities.

Reverse Trick-or-Treating is an initiative of Global Exchange. UUSC's Peace and Social Action Committee and Children's RE will order some free kits and have them available for pick up at the church. Individuals can also order Fair Trade Chocolate to give to Trick-or-Treaters through Global Exchange at www.globalexchange.org.

Martha Dickinson, PASA

Personnel

Minister

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

President of the Board

Ruth Eveland: 288-5727
president@uuellsworth.org

Religious Education Chair

Anne Ossanna: 565-2057

Music Director

Wayne Smith: 667-9482

Newsletter Editor

Lance Funderburk: 276-3301
lfunderburk@roadrunner.com

Caring Committee

October Birthdays:

Mike Tansey Oct 14
Willow Runningwater Oct. 23
Arthur Dole Oct 25

Margery Forbes writes to say that she will be in Charlemont for another month facing carpal tunnel surgery. She thanks all for their cards.

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, October 8, 2008

Hosts: Janet and Bryce Smith (848-9017)
Topic: Bryce will lead a discussion on Energy Sustainability. Suggested reading: The Sacred Balance: Rediscovering Our Place in Nature by David Suzuki and Amanda McConnell

Wednesday, November 12, 2008

Hosts: Jodi and Dick Faust (664-0227)
Topic: Dick will give us a brief preview of a course he will teach at Acadia Senior College in January: The Broadway Musical. What are some of your favorite Broadway Musicals? What makes them memorable or special for you?

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.



Message from the President

“Would You Please Sign This? Pick Your Favorite”

Many of you know that I served as President of the Board of Trustees once before, from 1997 to 2000 when we were in our “shall we build it—gulp, yes, we’ll build it—we’re building it—we did it!” phase. When I finished my term the congregation presented me with my own copy of the hymnal, in a leather cover made by Bob Dickens.

I carry it to church every week. Some pages are wrinkled and others are a bit frayed at the edge. There are Post-its® marking readings I have used in services I led. I have turned down the corners on some of my favorites (yes, I did used to be a librarian - but this is *my* book), made notes about a few wording changes, and, most importantly, asked you to sign your name on your favorite hymn or reading. (Although Irving Forbes couldn’t contain himself, and signed about a dozen songs. He said it was just like children and he couldn’t pick his single favorite. That’s okay; it just gives me more places to remember him.)

More than seventy-five people have signed this book. Sadly, a number are no longer with us because of death or moving on in other ways. However, they were a part of this congregation and, in my mind, that was important.

So, this hymnal serves several functions. First, it has the words and music we use in our services. I take it with me every Sunday, but I also have it with me at home and sometimes dip into it either to check song lyrics or because I need to see the words in that reading by Dorothy Day one more time.

Second, it is a record of those who have been with us. Mostly that is of interest to me, but sometimes it has been useful to others, such as in planning a memorial service. When I depart for wherever I will leave this book to the UUCE for its archives.

Third, it connects us all in there here-and-now. This book has been in many, many hands. That is something to think about. How many things in our congregation have been touched by so many of us? For those who believe that there are some energy traces left in such a process, just ponder what this object stores. It has to be a truly positive force.

Some people have known exactly which piece they want and have turned right to it. Others have said that they know which one they want to pick but they have to hunt for it. A few have said they can’t remember the title but it goes like this and we have searched together to find the one they mean. And sometimes in this process people have gotten sort of lost in going through the book. When we use it on Sunday it is just a matter of turning to the page with the right number. When you actually look through the book you realize what a wealth of ideas and beautiful phrases and music-that-is-in-your-heart is in it. Most have just signed their names, but a few of you have written very precious and meaningful notes to me as well. (Thank you.)

About every six months I mention this concept to folks and pick up a few more people. I’m on a campaign now to get everyone. I’ll try to remember to ask, but *if you see me and you think of it please don’t be as shy as I can be - ask me for it*. I even have a pen in my bag for this purpose!

At this point I can hear some saying, “Well, that was a weird sort of thing for her to write about. Doesn’t she usually talk about strengthening our community and stuff like that?” Pause. “Oh, I see. Never mind. I should ask her next Sunday...”

Ruth Eveland

From The Board

Minister's Report: If you've been at a Sunday service in September you've noticed there have been some changes that Leela Sinha hopes will make the service more engaging. Leela told the Board that the responses to the changes in the Order of Service have been mostly positive and she and wants to give them a good solid try.

Leela said that UUCE seems to be experiencing low energy on the part of some of its leaders, a trend ministers across the district are also seeing in their congregations. She spoke of the need to steward our people as well as our financial resources.

Treasurer's Report: The Board wants to thank George Marcus for his service as Treasurer pro tem well past his official term of office. He had agreed to serve until a replacement was found and this was George's last official report. Don Martin, who has served as treasurer before, was duly elected to complete the remainder the term.

Excerpt's from George Marcus's last report to the board: "Again I want to express my concern about the financial long term condition of our community. We should realize that the present economy is very stressful for many of us. As a result I believe that there is a probability that our pledge collection will again fall behind increasing our deficit more. As I stated earlier I believe the value of our endowment will have dropped. I would like to remind you that we used about \$37,000 for the roof and the speaker system. We have been fortunate by receiving generous bequests in the last year.

It is my belief that we must make very serious efforts to increase our membership by publicity, advertising, and community outreach. As I stated earlier we should have a long range plan that is realistic and looks at various options over the next 5 years."

He noted that the plate collection is at about 50% of the anticipated amount for this period and attributed it partly to the decision to provide for charitable

purposes during one or more services. Fund raising is about on schedule because the tag sale was held very recently. Rental income is slower in the summer. Most expense items are pretty much as anticipated except for the Worship Committee, which has spent 35% of their budget. However, this covers Leela's vacation period. The kitchen apparently cost \$5,588 more than the money raised, much of this due to a plumbing bill recently received. The balance sheet is essentially unchanged as to the amount of endowment funds at MCF. We do not have a recent statement showing the value of our assets. In view of the recent conditions of the stock market a drop in value of our assets must be expected.

The Board thanked George for his clear perspective and agreed to evaluate our finances carefully (see later in notes.)

Old business: The Board reviewed the draft of the new policy about non-budgeted fundraising. It needs to be revised and will be presented at the next meeting for approval. It requires church related activities to go through the Board and/or the 20-K Task Force. It gives two methods for raising funds for non-church causes, and it limits how people can request support for personal endeavors. If anyone would like to see a copy of the draft, please contact Ruth Eveland.

The Board retreat will be scheduled, probably to November. Some parts of the work previously planned may be done in special meetings between now and then.

New Business: The UUCE Board had previously weighed the concerns about hiring church members for staff positions. It was pointed out that we are here to be together in religious community and employee status changes that, especially when problems arise. Employees can't have a work-free church experience, and our ministry to each other is different. This is a step in clarifying our business practices and being a responsible employer. We will draft a statement about this for consideration at

the next meeting. It will *not* cover anyone who is currently in that status, but would only refer to future hires.

The Board agreed to combine the bookkeeper and office assistant positions into one part-time position. Helen Kazura has resigned as bookkeeper, but has agreed to continue doing the job until we hire a replacement. We would like to thank Helen for her years of service, and to wish her well in her many other endeavors.

Leela reported that some area churches have been broken into and The Board has agreed to look into re-keying the building as one step in providing greater building security. There are cost and use factors that need to be considered. In addition, a small group will look into developing an emergency plan for the Church. It will meet with the police and fire departments, and will also work on plans for other kinds of emergencies (e.g. fire.) If you might be interested in working on this short-term project, please contact Toby Manring or Sonia Turanski.

The Board has agreed to begin some long-overdue financial planning, looking at a five year time-frame. It will have a special meeting in October to map out the process, and will make a report at the fall Parish Meeting.

The fall Parish Meeting is scheduled for October 26, immediately after the church service.

Submitted by Mary Ann Solet, Secretary and Ruth Eveland, President

Sacred Singing Circle

A few of us intend to start a Singing Circle at UUCE. One of us has been singing with Women With Wings, at the Bangor UU Church, for years and has recently begun singing with Voices for Peace. We would like a singing group here at

UUCE with some aspects of Women With Wings. The date and time will be determined once we have a core group. Singers would arrive at a particular time, say 7:00 pm, and after 10 minutes or so, form into a circle at the sound of a gong or bell. The leader would then begin the singing. The singing could include a healing time to think of those in need and a “birthday” time. After an agreed time, say an hour, the singing would end with a closing song. During the singing, there would be no “chatting”, but after the closing song, we could share announcements and such. We could take turns playing the “leader” role, which would include choosing songs to sing and providing copies, as needed. At first, we will probably want to sing from a songbook or printed copies of songs. Our hymnals have lots of good songs, and we have a number of other sources, such as the Wings songbook. Someone can play a tune or harmony on the piano as needed, but I’d hope we’d become a capella, with perhaps some percussion – drums, etc and/or guitar, depending on who is there. At Wings, we sing without anything written down, almost all the time; we learn songs and chants from each other by repetition. At Voices, our leader passes out copies of the songs with harmonies written in. At Wings, harmonizing is done with experience.

This singing circle is not meant as a performance group. The intent would be spiritual nourishment of those gathered in song. Perhaps more like a Small Group Ministry – we could add a time of sharing joys and concerns, or a reading.

Everyone, women and men, who agrees with our guidelines would be welcome to attend, and occasional attendance would be fine as long as we have a core group to keep it going. Should we aim for a monthly, weekly or a bi-weekly gathering? Once we have four or so people who can agree on a time, we will begin! Look for an announcement soon for singing times. If you have any interest or questions, please contact Evelyn Foster, Dartha Reid, Mary Ann Solet or Martha Dickinson. – (*from Martha, 667-5863*)