



NEWSLETTER

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF BELFAST
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UU Church Of Belfast Now On Facebook!

IN THE WINTER EDITION of *UU World*, Rev. Peter Morales, President of the UUA, wrote that we need to “get religion.” He said getting religion was taking ourselves seriously as a religious movement, of being faithful to what moves us most deeply and to what we hold sacred, and realizing that religion must be practiced in community with others.

“The religious journey, as described in all the great religious traditions,” Morales continued, “is a journey of moving beyond the prison of the self. Spiritual development is about connecting with others and with the world. We begin with love for another person, then move to loving those around us; eventually we extend that compassion to all humanity.”

One might pose the question: How does our small church in Belfast, Maine, do this? The answer is by utilizing the Internet, specifically by having a page on facebook.

For those not familiar with facebook, it is a social networking site that at this writing has 800,000,000 (this is not a misprint) active users! These users exchange messages, share photos and videos, and follow and interact with the companies and causes that they care about.

In December, 2011, a taskforce was put together to develop a facebook page for our church. The members of the taskforce were me (Neva Allen), Jessie Knight, Jacqui Lee, Jeffrey Mabee, Sarah Nicholson, and Rick Fitzsimmons. I designed the

page, and all of us worked on adapting the policies and procedures recommended by the UUA to fit our church. Once we had everything done, it was submitted to the Church Council and was approved. The page was launched right away!

Facebook is free to join. When you join, you make a profile page which is also called your “Wall.” Once you have your profile page, then you can either have facebook connect with your email list to find your friends that are on facebook, or you can search for them individually. When you find your friend’s page, you click the button “add a friend.” Your friend will now receive an email saying that you want to be their friend, at which time your friend can accept or deny your request.

If they accept your request, then you and your friend can now exchange all of the above. Also, any time your friend posts something in their status on their page, you will see it in your newsfeed, which is also called your “Home.” You can search for pages of businesses or causes that you’re interested in too. When you find them, all you have to do is click the “Like” button on the cause or business’ page. Now you will see when things are posted on this page. Here is a really good website that might be helpful:

<http://computer.howstuffworks.com/internet/tips/how-to-sign-up-for-facebook.htm>.

This is what you will do when you want to see what is posted on the UU Belfast page. Just search for “Unitarian Universalist Church of Belfast, Maine,” and click the “Like” button.

Also once you “like” a page, you can interact with it. For instance, let’s say that you just attended the New Year’s By the Bay dinner at the church. You can post on the church facebook page what you thought about it, or if you took pictures or videos, you could post these too. This means that we will be able to share videos of our wonderful choir, Reverend Deane’s and others’ sermons, and pictures and/or videos of our congregation’s activities.

For those who do not want to join facebook, you will be able to look at the page, but you won’t be able to post anything. Here is the website

The Utterly Unbelievable UUCB Online Auction coming soon!

The auction will kick off April 1st on Bidding For Good’s website! We are looking for a few people willing to ‘roll up their sleeves’ and join the task force to help with catalog development, sponsor solicitation, promotion, etc. We are especially looking for a person who has a high comfort level with online computer work. The Auction Task Force will be looking for volunteers to solicit items from local businesses in February. We need to raise at least \$7000 to support the church’s operating costs. Contact Jenny Kirchoff ASAP...please help get this auction off the ground.

December Sunday Services

Services are at 10:00 AM at the UU Church of Belfast, 37 Miller St., behind the Belfast Free Library. Please call 338-4482 for more information.

Children, infants and new faces are always welcome. Please join us!

FEB. 5

A Good Death?

with Linda Buckmaster

Wandering off into the snow like an Eskimo is one fantasy of a good death that some have. As a culture that expects to control life, our fear of the chaos of death can lead us to these fantasies. What is a “good death” and how can we prepare for it?

FEB. 12

Stone Soup

with the Belfast UU Youth

Our UU Belfast youth tell the fable of Stone Soup, an old folk story in which hungry strangers persuade local people of a town to give them food in this lesson of cooperation. An empty cooking pot, filled initially by travelers with stream water and a stone, is garnished with nutrients and seasonings by local villagers until a delicious and nourishing pot of soup is enjoyed by all. Stone Soup will be served following the service as a hospitality treat.

FEB. 19

Churches of Peace

with Rev. Deane Perkins.

We have talked about “Paradise” as a viable historical and theological context for Unitarian Universalists. What might that look like concretely? How can we give this meaning in today’s world?

FEB. 26

Creating Peace

with Rev. Deane Perkins

It is important as a congregation that we have a vision, that we have a sense of who we are and how we are unique, and that we are clear as to how we wish to “nurture the spirit, and help heal the world.”

MARCH 4

The Art of Giving — Stewardship

with Rev. Deane Perkins

Giving is a spiritual practice. Living fully is a spiritual practice. The way we see money is a reflection of our spiritual lives. Stewardship then, becomes an art as we give and live through our spiritual self.

for the page:

<https://www.facebook.com/uubelfast>.

Chip Curry, D. Andrews, and I are the three administrators who will monitor the facebook page. Our job will be to make sure that the posts are appropriate. Like the UUBB, political posts or propaganda will not be allowed. Also, we ask that classified ads not be posted. We want the

posts to be about our church and our members. We are available to answer any questions, and to post events and meetings for those committees that don’t have anyone on facebook.

The facebook page is a representation of the spirit of our church. Everything that is posted will not only be shared among our community, but it also will be shared with oth-

ers looking for a spiritual community. This is just one more way how our small Belfast church will reach out and extend our compassion to all of humanity.

Nev

Coach Hare Column

The Church Council may sometimes seem invisible to the congregation, accomplishing most our work behind closed doors, though closed only to keep the cold out, as there’s always an open invitation for anyone to attend our meetings. From time to time you may be aware of what we do (adjusting the annual budget requests, approving policy, working with committees), but you might not be aware of how we do it. You’ve been hearing the term ‘right relationship’ for some time, first from Mary Wellemeyer, then from Lane and me sharing our experiences at GA, and also from Deane Perkins. It’s important that the Council and minister are able to work together, in right relationship, maintaining an atmosphere of respect, trust, and cooperation, one in which differences are freely voiced and accepted.

To that end, the Council had its annual retreat in August, at which we gained self and group awareness of our skills and needs and we developed a Working Agreement that sets our expectations for how we work together.

We continued enhancing how we work together by recently completing a covenant in a process that began in November when Mary Higgins, the NNED Executive Director, conducted a Start-up Retreat for the Council and our new minister, Deane Perkins.

She explained that this covenant for the Council and minister is a promise made to the others and enforced

February hospitality

Feb. 5	Corliss Davis & Cathy Mink
Feb. 12	RE Soup for all!
Feb. 19	Phyllis Coehlo & Lynn Biebel
Feb. 26	Gina Cressey & Bill Cressey

February greeters

Feb. 5	Judith Simpson & Marion Brown
Feb. 12	Ezra Kreamer & Francine Brown
Feb. 19	Jacqui Lee & Judith Grace
Feb. 26	Jane Moffitt & Anna Wood-Cox
March 4	Judith Simpson

through good will. Paraphrasing from Mary, those involved in the covenant promise to: do everything in their power to maintain the covenant through their behaviors and spirit; go outside their comfort zone to call the others in the group into compliance with the covenant, and; when the covenant is broken (and it WILL be), forgive oneself and others, and then begin again in love. We held a special Visioning Meeting in December to brainstorm ideas and then completed the covenant in January. The text is below:

Unitarian Universalist Church of Belfast Council Covenant

WE, THE MEMBERS of the Church Council and minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Belfast, covenant to strive to:

- Hold the health and welfare of the congregation in the highest regard in all our actions.
- Be authentic in love: open, present, genuine, honest.
- Judge opinions, ideas, and systems, but not people.
- Talk to people, not about them.
- Respect each other's physical, emotional, and spiritual boundaries.
- Maintain our senses of humor.
- Engage in deep listening.

- Be aware of and express feelings and needs, and make clear requests.
- Accept responsibility and honor commitments.
- Reach beyond our comfort zone.
- Forgive one another and ourselves when we make mistakes.

Whew! That's a lot to live up to, but so worthwhile. Yes, each of us will struggle with keeping all the promises, and yes, being fallible, we will each fail at times.

As a spiritual group working within a faith community, we are prepared to forgive and begin anew in love. (See #11.) At our last regular meeting one Council member, who has served on several organizations' Boards of Directors, said "I always look forward to attending this one and I always leave with a smile." What a ringing endorsement – our commitment to right relationship must be paying off!

The congregation can also formally engage in right relationship by creating a covenant, an affirmation of and commitment to our shared needs, values, and principles.

The covenant is a means of clarifying our expectations of one another and creating a safe environment in which the congregation can thrive. Are you ready for one? Let me know.

Blessed be, *Debbie Baily*
Church Council Co-chair

Stewardship 2012***Looking back, thinking ahead***

As we gather in our full sanctuary on Sunday mornings, amazed by the dozens of children coming forward for the story for all ages, it's hard to grasp how far we've come in just two

WHO'S WHO & WHO TO CALL

Minister

Rev. Deane Perkins **338-4482**
minister@uubelfast.org

Administrative Assistant

Maret Knight **338-4482**
Email: office@uubelfast.org
office hrs: Mon. & Thurs. 8:30-12:30

Church Council

Debbie Baily **338-4143**
Rick Davis **930-3562**

LifeSpan Education

Sue Coe **691-5153**

Children's Religious Exploration

Danielle Bannister **342-2096**

Music

Lila Nation **338-5002**

Finances

Roger Lee (treas) **338-6837**

Sunday Services

Jeffrey Mabee **338-4408**
Dan Kirchoff **975-4134**

Membership Chair

Diane Braybrook **338-0609**

Social Action

Stephen Allen **338-0613**

Congregational Life

Chip Curry **930-3590**
Jasmine Fowler **342-3260**
Corliss Davis **930-3562**

Buddhist Sangha

Judith Simpson **338-0579**

Caring Circle

Ezra Kreamer **338-0129**

Welcoming Congregation

Patty Smith **338-5802**

Safe Congregation Committee

Karen Ireland **338-0142**

Sound Coordinator

Cary Bradford **338-8448**

Hospitality

Chris LeGore **589-4421**

Greeters

Marty Daniels **338-0129**

Newsletter

Douglas M. Coffin **567-3707**

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years!

In February 2010, the newsletter's lead article was a summary of three congregational meetings held that January to explore who we were as a congregation, and whether or not we were ready to make the financial and philosophical leap to a full-time minister. Council Co-Chair Joanne Moesewilde spoke for the congregation in saying that "We have everything to gain in spiritual growth, nurturing and support in our individual and collective UU journeys by having a full-time minister in the UU Church of Belfast."

February 2011's newsletter – just one year ago - led with an article about our hard-working fundraising committee. Later in the issue, the Search Committee reported that they had narrowed their search to three pre-candidates - all very hush hush to the rest of us! The Stewardship Committee announced the theme for the year's pledge campaign: "Let's Finish the Job" - a phrase borrowed from the Search Committee's book for ministerial candidates, *We're Building a Church*.

So where are we in February 2012? Quite obviously we have our new full-time minister, Deane Perkins. What a difference he – and our newly energized congregation - have made in just a few months!

- Our new YRUU youth group meets every Sunday evening, and the youth are busy raising funds for a spring break service trip to New Orleans with Deane and his wife Sue.

- Our sanctuary routinely sees 100 or more adults on Sunday mornings.

- A Non-Violent Communication class offered by Deane this fall attracted an average of 15 adults each week over a thirteen-week period.

- The Congregational Life committee sponsors weekly events that bring

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all ages together to enjoy activities ranging from cookie-baking to a full-moon walk.

- Exciting new adult programming is being planned with Linda Buckmaster's leadership.
- Deane's first "New to UU" series of classes in January attracted 20 potential new church members.
- The choir – with more than 20 regular members – barely fits in the corner of the sanctuary!
- With 12 young teens, the Coming of Age class has more participants than ever.

• Our RE program serves an astounding total of 60 children and the number is growing weekly!

So many of these growth areas involve our children - the future stewards of our church and of the planet. What a gift it is to watch them learn and practice the UU principles from a very young age! But growth has its challenges: class room and meeting room space is at a premium. And our hard-working and talented staff needs to be more fairly compensated for their work and, in some cases, needs to have their hours increased to handle our growing church life.

The draft 2012-2013 budget recently proposed by our Church Council points the way to an exciting year ahead. Watch for details from your Stewardship Committee as to how we can all step up and contribute to the excitement.

Please mark your calendar for two events in early March: an all-church Stewardship Kickoff Party on Saturday, March 3rd (including a free dinner and fun entertainment) and our Sunday Stewardship Kickoff Service on Sunday, March 4th.

In the meantime, if you were not able to attend church on January 22nd, you may have missed Mandi

Hubbard Thomas' moving testimonial. Mandi's powerful, inspiring story was a gift to us all! To paraphrase UU Minister Michael Durall, "Sharing what we have is how we accomplish what we are called to do in this time and place." No one has addressed this more eloquently than Mandi. We hope you will take the time to read her story which is printed in a separate section of this newsletter.

Chris LeGore

Broadening Horizons

Youth Plan Spring Pilgrimages

Our 12 COA youth get set for their Boston trip and our 5 YRUU's (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) ready themselves for New Orleans ... with their sights on opportunity and excitement. Why do we plan these trips? Jessie Knight says it distinctively, quoted in the latest edition of UU World, "I feel accepted in this faith; I can be myself in this faith; this faith makes me feel supported and loved ... Unitarian Universalism builds community, and we are strengthened spiritually through this community."

The UUA encourages these pilgrimages for our youth, as a combination of fun, help in building community, and as great learning experiences for everyone involved. They help make our heritage a real part of the lives of our youth.

The Boston area's concentration of Unitarian Universalist points of interest makes it one of the top destinations for UU trips. This year all members of the COA group as of January, 2012 will be eligible to go on the trip, scheduled for May 11-13, 2012. The trip will start off with a tour of UUA Headquarters on Friday afternoon and end with attendance at a

Sunday service at one of the many UU churches in downtown Boston.

Complementary lodging has been established at the Friends House in Cambridge, and other elements of the trip are being coordinated by the RE Lifespan Committee with input, of course, from Danielle and the youth attending. Meals will be a mix of self-prepared food in the Friends' kitchen and adventurous dining in Cambridge and Boston. There are many options to fill the weekend's itinerary, accessible with "T" passes and short walks. Transportation to and from Boston is being planned. Four adult chaperones will accompany the youth in accordance with UUA guidelines, two men, two women; we have many volunteers willing and able.

Early spring in Boston is refreshing and beautiful, and the group will breathe it all in with their usual energy and quest for learning. As Jeremiah Chaplin says, "Going to Boston means a whole new experience in a different place. And it will be really interesting to see the UU headquarters and how big it is." Avery Kreamer adds his own enthusiasm – "I think it will be a lot of fun and a great time because I like traveling with my friends and it's what I want to do when I grow up – travel."

The COA trip to Boston follows the return of our YRUU Group from New Orleans, a whole new experience for the youth of UU Belfast. Deane Perkins created this opportunity soon after his arrival to our church. His experience involving UU youth on pilgrimages to South America destinations, Habitat for Humanity projects, and other humanitarian programs to help rebuild New Orleans has translated into a lifetime experience opportunity for our Youth Group. They will travel with youth

FROM REV. DEANE PERKINS

DEAR FRIENDS:

Sue and I have been here in Belfast now for six months. The whole issue of time—whether or not it has any real meaning, how fast or slow it seems, how other cultures understand it and so on—has always intrigued me. I have few, if any, answers. But I do know how rapidly this time seems to have gone by for me, how enjoyable it has been, and how grateful I am that my time this past six months has been with you.

I had the chance to be with the COA group for dinner and a movie during their latest sleep over at church. And, of course, I am working with Danielle and Sue with the YRUU group. Your children are an inspiration, and they are also hilarious! But as a church community we all nurture, support, and affirm all of our kids. The youth group will be asking soon for your support monetarily to help them in their efforts to go to New Orleans. They will be sending out a letter to family members, friends, and yes, members and friends of the congre-

gation to ask for donations. The money goes into a general pool, assuring that everyone can go. While fundraisers like date-night and fair trade coffee help, the majority of the money to reach our goal of \$13,000-\$15,000 (airfare alone is over \$600/person) will come from donations. The youth group will be acting as emissaries of our church, doing good works in our name. They will be seeking your support.

Sue is taking some vacation time in Arizona right now. I will meet her soon (I will be gone for two weeks), and we will both engage in one of our favorite activities—looking at hundreds of rock, gem, mineral and jewelry dealers from throughout the world in the city of Tucson, and making some modest purchases for our own hobby. Such fun! But rest assured that we will be returning to Belfast in a timely manner.

My best wishes to you all.

Fondly,
Deane

and chaperones from the Bangor and Ellsworth UU churches – 12 youth and 3 adults total – during their Spring Break from school for one week of strenuous and gratifying work.

Lodged in a dorm-like area on the top floor of a UU church, they will join with 50 other UUs from around the country. The Center for Justice and Ethical Living is housed in the church, and they will provide our group with an itinerary for the week. This could be to help fix up homes,

work at a community garden or animal shelter, trek throughout the city providing energy-efficient light bulbs, help construct a kitchen for a church that was severely damaged, and so on. These are all things that prior youth groups Deane has led have done. "To the outside world it seems that New Orleans has revived itself, but there are still thousands of people who remain displaced and who have not been able to return home. We have worked for Habitat for Humanity and other similar

Mandi Hubbard Thomas' Stewardship Testimonial – January 22, 2012

I have been a member of this church for eight years and they have been the very best eight years of my life. Prior to that, I had a happy life too. I had just given birth to my first son, Dylan, I was engaged to be married, I had a good career, had just come from a solid education and a life of travel. That should be enough, right? But it wasn't. Something was missing.

My first church service was a membership Sunday in 2003 and it really touched me. When the congregation sang to its new members, "And I'll bring you hope, when hope is hard to find," I was really moved. But still, having grown up with a negative church experience, I was hesitant. I had placed myself in the back row next to the door and as soon as the postlude finished, I was up and out. Nobody wants to be the person in the hospitality room with their coffee and their cookie that nobody wants to talk to.

So, I made it as far as High Street, when I heard a voice calling me from behind. Surely that voice could not be for me. Surely they were not chasing me down the street! I turned around and there was our beloved David Demere, bless his heart, leaping and bounding down the sidewalk towards me. He stood on the corner of High Street and Miller Street for the next twenty minutes and told me about himself and asked me about myself. He shared with me why he loved this church and why I should come back. And I came back.

My second service was even better. I had barely gotten the last words to the first hymn out of my mouth when the woman next to me turned to me and said, "Hello! My name is Sarah Nicholson. When are you joining the choir?" I just kind of looked at her for a moment when she said, "And this is my wife Lila and she is the director and we meet on Thursdays at 7pm and would this Thursday work for you?" I told her

I thought that it might. Talk about assuming the sale!

The point is, I have never been welcomed so sincerely, so enthusiastically, so entirely, as I have been welcomed into this church. I have loved and sang music for the entire 34 years of my life, but it wasn't until I sang with this incredible group of people that it completed me. Still, after my first four years at the church, I felt like the new guy. I sang in the choir and I pledged what I thought at the time was a generous amount, but I still didn't realize just what it took to run the church from a volunteer or money aspect. It seemed like there was always the constant pleading for pledge increases and volunteers and I felt pressured by it.

One day, I was talking to a friend of mine about how she pledges at her church. She told me that her minister had given a sermon about giving and she was so inspired by it that when she went home that day, she immediately created a budget. At the end of the month, after all of her bills were paid, it didn't seem to her that there was a whole lot left over. She really had to think about what she spent her money on that she did not need. She quit smoking the next day and started giving \$6 a day to her church, a total of \$2190.00 a year! I was blown away. My pledge wasn't even close to that.

My friend is a single mother of two, works for the same company as I do and makes the same amount of money as I do. I knew that it wasn't that her church meant more to her than my church meant to me. So I went home and analyzed my own budget. Do you want to know what I discovered? I gave more to my hairdresser each year than I gave to my church! I spent more on dinners out, than I gave to my church! Surely the highlights in my hair and over-priced tapas were not more important to me than my church. After that discovery, I was able to more

than double my pledge. The truth is, this church has given far more to me than I have ever given back to it.

Giving has never felt so good! I sincerely mean that. Writing a check for our church does not feel like writing a check for a new transmission or for my property taxes. It's not the kind of spending that hurts. Giving to this church has become a part of my spirituality and watching this church grow as a result of our giving, has made me realize that we are all stewards of this place we come to every Sunday. Watching the growing parade of children march out of the sanctuary on Sunday, my own children included, gives me a very deep sense of pride. We are doing something so right here.

Increasing my pledge had also inspired me to increase my time here as well. When I was asked to sit on the Council as Secretary, I jumped at the chance. I really had no idea at the time what it was the Council actually did for two entire hours once a month. I pictured it as more of a tea and cookie chit-chat session. Boy, was I in for a shock! Sitting on the Church Council for a year really gave me an understanding of the big picture. What happens here is so much more than one hour on Sunday morning. It is possible only because of the countless hours of time spent by dozens of members who believe that the gift of our time is ministry. It is possible only because of the money we give as well.

I am pleased to sit on the Stewardship Committee this year. I am amazed and inspired by the energy and efforts of Chris LeGore, Corliss Davis and Roger Lee, who gives to this church in every way possible. I encourage you to open your homes and your hearts to the canvassers who will be contacting you in the coming weeks.

As we continue to grow, we must continue to give too.

Mandi Hubbard Thomas

organizations to help rebuild New Orleans," Deane tells the group as they prepare for this experience.

Mika McKinney certainly understands this mission. When I asked her to comment about the New Orleans trip, she asserts: "I want to be involved in this project because I anticipate the experience will broaden my awareness of others in ways similar to visiting another country. I believe I will find meaning in helping other people to restore their lives and reestablish a sense of happiness. As a bonus, I expect this experience to help bond our Youth Group as well as create connections with other church Youth Groups for future projects. When I return, I hope to have learned more detail about the nature of the hurricane and the real damage the event caused in people's lives as well how it feels to be part of an effort to offer genuine help. I also expect to learn about my own tolerance and willingness for this type of work and where my limits are for giving freely to others." She closed with "Wish us well", and I anticipate we all will have a place in our hearts for these courageous and spirited youth as they embark on a new adventure for themselves and UU Belfast.

The COA and YRUU groups will be spearheading fundraising projects in the next few months to pay for their trip expenses as they represent our Belfast community in a larger world. We hope their efforts will be valuable to you in exchange for your donation/payment to these causes. Personally, I am grateful to watch these youth in action on Sundays, at retreats, and in the community where their commitment to the principles of Unitarian Universalism is enthusiastic and far-reaching.

Makenzie Barnhart expresses her

gratitude for the experience; "This trip to Boston would mean so much to me. A few months ago, my family and I moved to Northport from Thomaston, and we were looking for a church to go to. As soon as we found this church, we fell in love with it. I for sure know that when I look back at my childhood when I get older, the memories that will stand out most will be the ones I had with this church. And I think that the trip to Boston will be something to always remember for me, and for the rest of the Coming Of Age group. I love the kids, and everything that comes with it. I think it would be such a nice privilege to go to Boston."

I think that says it all.

Susan Coe, RE Lifespan Committee Chair, with help from our youth

Membership Committee

New Member Sunday is Feb. 19 which follows very well attended *New to UU* classes held in January. Join in the celebration of our newest members. And we'll have cake!

Missed the *New to UU* classes last month? Not to worry, Deane will be offering another session in the spring.

As our membership grows, the need for more volunteers on the Membership Committee grows as well. Perhaps this is a good fit for you! Corliss Davis would love to hear from you if you are considering joining the group. She can be reached at 930-3562 or cdavis5468@roadrunner.com

Diane Braybrook

Green Sanctuary news

The Green Sanctuary is once again Co-sponsoring the **CSA Fair:** Feb. 26th, 1:00-3:00 PM.

Meet local farmers and fishermen to

celebrate and learn about the many ways to enjoy local foods while supporting these enterprises in a meaningful way.

Farms with Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs ask you to commit to purchasing a share of the coming harvest before the season begins. The benefit? You get to provide the farm with much-needed capital in the off-season while getting your locally grown food direct from the farm at a fair price.

Meet Your Farmers and Fishermen is taking place in over a dozen locations across Maine. Each location is sure to have plenty of local flavor, including local foods tastings and sales of food and other products from local farms. In addition to farms with CSA shares, local fishermen with Community Supported Fisheries (CSF) shares will also be present in some locations. Come by the church and check it out.

Northwest Earth Institute discussion course on Global Climate Change

Beginning Sunday, March 4th

Are you interested in quality reading, thoughtful discussion, and good company? Would you like to know more about the changing climate and ways we can help as individuals? If so, consider joining the discussion course this March. The group will meet Sunday evenings from 6:30 - 8:30 beginning March 4th and ending with a guest speaker on April 1st.

Please email or call Jasmine Fowler (jazzpf@gmail.com 342-3260) to register by February 19th. Course books are \$20 and there will be two books available for borrowing, to be returned to the church when the course is over.

Guest Speaker April 15th

The Green Sanctuary Committee is organizing the Sunday service for April 15th. We are happy to announce guest speaker Jim Merkyl will be presenting the homily. Jim is a speaker, consultant and adjunct Professor at Unity College. He is the author of the book, "Radical Simplicity" and the founder of the Global Living Project. He will speak on the topic of Climate Change, and personal responsibility particularly as it relates to the UU principals and spirituality.

Congregational Life

Two January activities have found different ages of our congregation having a lot of fun together! Ice skating on the new Belfast ice rink was a big hit. Friday night Game Night had 19 adults and 6 kids racing around the sanctuary playing hilarious games led by Karen Ireland and Alex Chaplin as well as more "se-date" board games in the Hospitality room. As this is written there is a book group for January as well.

February will be full of fun things to do.

On February 1 at 6:30 PM Jennifer Howard will be showing us how to make a simple doll. She says, "Each doll has its own style, flaws, personality. Often I have no idea what it will look like until it is completed. Sometimes I follow a pattern, sometimes I don't. The purpose of the doll is simple: bring joy." These dolls will be made by hand. Participants are asked to bring a few scraps of soft fabric, scissors, thread, sewing needle and a bag of filling/stuffing (Reny's sells for \$1.99 a bag). Jennifer will provide optional patterns, fabric markers and encouragement.

- The week of February 5th (night depending on weather) there will be a



Game Night at the UU Church.

full moon walk with Joanne and Morten Moesswilde. Check the UUNews for the date.

- February 8 at 6:30 PM will be Valentine making with Karen Ireland. Karen will share some of her supplies but participants are asked to bring anything you have that you would like to use in creating beautiful one-of-a-kind valentines. All ages are welcome.
- February 22- book discussion with Jacqui Lee- book to be determined. Send Jacqui any suggestions.
- On February 29 at 6:30, Deane Perkins and Sue Cobb will be sharing photos of their 2005 trip to Christianity's earliest sacred places in Turkey and other locations throughout Europe.
- Save Saturday, March 3rd for the hoUse sUpPers (formerly called Carousel dinners). A time to get to know members of the congregation over a meal together.

If you haven't been to one of the Congregational Life activities yet, please join us to have fun, learn something new and most importantly get to know others in the congregation.

Social Action Committee

We would like to thank everyone who completed our survey. The top three actions that you want to pursue with us are:

1. The Accessibility Project
2. Economic Inequality
3. Working with the Peace and Justice Group of Waldo County.

We also want to thank you for your Action and Special Collection Plate suggestions. We will be looking at all of them as we plan for this coming year.

Watch for future developments!

It's not too late!

"Standing On the Side of Love" This Saturday, February 4 at 7:00 PM, a large number of the many musically talented members and friends of our church will be hosting the pre-Valentine's Event, "Standing On the Side of Love." And guess what the theme is? LOVE, LOVE, LOVE. There will be singing galore--solos, duets, trios, small ensembles in English, French, Spanish, and Italian, and lots of instrumental music, too-- string quartets and piano

solos, so bring those you love, be it spouse, lover, or yourself, and join in an evening of sheer entertainment. Proceeds will go, in part, to support unexpected expenses in the music program, and the remainder to support the church in general.

One of the unexpected expenses to our music program is the addition of the Ellsworth UU Choir to the Multi-Choir Festival, March 25, in Bangor. Last year we were able to purchase enough new music for our choir to sing with the other three choirs, and this year we've grown to four, plus us.

Our choir loved participating in the festival last year--a chance to sing with other UUs, a chance to sit down for a potluck supper and talk with UUs from around the mid-coast area, and a chance to discover what other churches in the area are doing.

You might have noticed that our own choir keeps growing as well, so we have expenses for music and folders for the new members. We're thrilled to have these wonderful voices join us, and if you've been thinking about joining the choir, now would be a great time since we're just beginning to work on the new music for the Choir festival.

Whether you will be singing with us, or supporting us from the pews, we hope you can be part of this exciting annual event.

*Lila Nation
Music Director*

B&B Program

Planning and advertising is underway for our seventh season of the 2012 UU Church of Belfast bed and breakfast fundraising program. The B&B program generally runs from May through October, although a few of our faithful volunteer hosts are will-

ing to take reservations year-round.

New B&B volunteer hosts are always needed (especially for in-town or near-to-Belfast locations, and for the summer and fall seasons). Hosts are asked only to provide guests a room and a light breakfast, with all proceeds going directly to the church. And they always have the choice of accepting or declining reservation requests. Host volunteers also will tell you that it is a fun and enriching experience to meet other UU's from around the US! Every year we have to turn away reservations because we don't have enough hosts. Won't you consider volunteering? If you are willing to take even one booking it would be a great contribution to our church.

Also, if you have relatives or friends who would like to visit our area, please keep us in mind for possible housing alternatives.

Thanks once again to the following hosts of the 2011-2012 season: Su Wood, Dereka Smith/John Langhans, Chris and Michele Schmidt, Cathy and Cliff Mink, Bill and Kathy Kreamer, Steve and Tasana Collins, Happy and Cary Bradford, Don Barrett/Pam Page. They made it possible for the program to bring in \$2,225 in our 2011 season!

For more information check out our B&B page on the church website:
<http://www.uubelfast.org/bb/>

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Hannaford Gift Cards

What is a Hannaford Gift Card?
The Hannaford Gift Card is a pre-paid card that is similar to a gift certificate and can be used to purchase merchandise at any Hannaford Supermarket.

How do I use the Hannaford Gift

Card?

The Hannaford Gift Card is simple to use. Upon swiping at the register, it deducts the order amount from the card. You can use it to purchase merchandise at any Hannaford Supermarket in NH, VT, MA, NY and ME.

How do I find out the balance on my Hannaford Gift Card?

At the register and on your receipt, or check online at www.hannaford.com. On the home page, look for the Services section in the lower left-hand corner. Click on Gift Cards, there you can check on the balance on your card.

Should I throw away my Hannaford card?

No. WE RECYCLE the cards and collect them in a labeled black box, which is attached to the Fundraising bulletin board in the hospitality room.

Does the Hannaford Gift Card ever expire?

No. However, when a card is not used within two years, the card will become inactive. If you have a card with a balance that has not been used for more than two years, we can request a replacement for you.

Are there any restrictions on what I can purchase with my Card?

No. In fact you can also purchase prescriptions with it. However, it cannot be used to purchase Money Orders, Money Transfer Services, pay Utility Bills or pay for Returned Checks.

Can I receive cash back on funds I have placed in my Hannaford Gift Card?

No. Hannaford Gift Cards may be redeemed for merchandise only.

I lost my Hannaford Gift Card. Can you cancel or replace it?

Perhaps. If it hasn't already been cashed in, Hannaford can cancel it and issue a new one.

Volunteer of the Month

Jessie Gower

Jessie Gower signed our membership book 15 years ago, but she feels as though she made her first real commitment to the church last year.

Not that she wasn't active in earlier years: Jessie helped with RE a few times when Jane Dopheide led the program as a volunteer, and more often while Jennifer and Ian Howard directed RE. Jessie also helped with hospitality, as a greeter, and with special events, "mostly doing a lot of clean-up," which is comfortable for her.

But Jessie became increasingly aware that she was holding back somehow—more than living and teaching in Winterport and raising daughters Emily and Katie, now in their twenties, explained. "For years I was keeping myself in a peripheral place in my mind, and so I *felt* like I was on the periphery of our church," said Jessie.

After feeling embraced by church members during several life challenges, Jessie gradually realized that the church had grown more important in her heart than she had made it in her energies. "*One day I thought, OK, am I just going to stay here on the edge, or am I going to make a commitment and do the best I can with it?*"

Jessie decided that she needed to make a larger commitment. Just about then, Kathy Muzzy popped the question: "Jessie, would you consider joining the Services Committee?"

"Eew!" was Jessie's first reaction, because she thought "Services" meant only standing in front of the congregation. Then Kathy explained how much more there is to the committee's work. In February 2011, Jessie joined the Services Committee—a decision that has radically



Jessie Gower says that she gets more energy from our church community now that she's giving more time and energy to it. As with her hybrid car, "One part charges another, and it just keeps going!"

changed her church experience.

"I feel so much more involved. You know the game you play where you toss a ball of yarn around and a web is created?" asked Jessie. "I feel like I'm in that web—not that I'm the center of it, but I'm *in* it. I'm not standing at the edge hoping that the yarn doesn't get to me. I feel way more connected."

Jessie contributed immediately to the committee's work by asking great questions. By Jessie's choice, she also coordinated her first service, with Muzzy as mentor sitting right next to her, in record time--just over a month after joining the committee.

Jessie has relished learning about the church and how it works as an organization and about the parts of a service and how they come together. "Having been in the congregation and knowing how much I get out of a worship service, it feels like I've come full circle to be learning about how much goes into it," she said.

Her committee work has also been rich ground for personal growth, said Jessie. "As small as the Services Committee is right now—five mem-

bers—there's quite a bit of diversity in terms of personalities, and it's a wonderful place to practice putting principles above personalities."

"The odd thing is that in the limited amount of work that I've done in coordinating services and the little parts that I've taken—when I get to read something or even make a mistake—I'm putting in, but I'm also getting a lot out," Jessie continued. "It's mind boggling to me, how it works. I almost think of it like my Prius—one part charges another, and then it just keeps going!"

A year into work on Services and now co-chairing it, Jessie still feels new. "I feel that I learn all the time from the people who work on that committee. Whenever I feel like I'm learning on a steep trajectory, I feel like things are still new for me. It may get old and stale sometime, but I don't see that happening with this group."

"For me," Jessie said, "part of the wonder of doing service with this church is that it feels like a privilege to do it. It really does."

Lane Fisher