

Welcome the Children! Welcome the Song!

The 2012-2013 stewardship campaign for the support of our beloved church community officially begins on Sunday, March 4. You have no doubt heard a few of the moving testimonials given by church members on Sunday morn-

- Our R.E. program serves an astounding total of 60 children and the number seems to grow weekly!
- We desperately need additional classroom space.
- Our new YRUU youth group is busy raising funds for a spring break service trip to New Orleans with Deane and his wife Sue.



ings since January 22. You have probably read some of the Stewardship e-notes posted weekly on the UUNews and have received our stewardship mailing as well. What more can we say?

As we enter the month of March and begin contacting church members and friends, we want everyone who loves this church to understand both where we are today and where we hope to be in the next year.

What tremendous and wonderful changes we have seen since Deane Perkins became our first full-time minister just last August!

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

- An equally vibrant Coming of Age class has more participants than ever and will be going to Boston this spring to visit UUA headquarters.
- The choir barely fits in the corner of the sanctuary, having grown recently to include 30 members, and many consider it to be the best church choir around.
- Meeting space is at a premium.
- Classes and social events for members and friends of the church fill our calendar.

As we continue to grow over the next few years, there are critical program areas that need our attention. We truly need to pay our R.E.

director for the wonderful work she does all year and to begin to compensate her according to the pay scales recommended by the UUA. Similarly, we are all moved by the joyful music created and led by our exceptionally talented music director. She also should be paid at a UUA-recommended rate and her hours officially increased to one-quarter time. Lastly, the Church Council has asked for \$5,000 to address the critical shortage of space for our RE program.

The church council's proposed budget for 2012-2013 represents an increase of about 15% over the budget adopted last year – for all of the reasons we have outlined above. We urge all of you to seriously think about what our church means to you and how you can contribute to supporting the exciting growth we are experiencing. Whether you decide to make a percentage increase or you study the UUA Fair Giving Guide



March 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!

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.

MARCH 11

Islam and Spirituality

with Jenan Jody from the Islamic Center in Bangor

Our guest speaker will help us understand Islam, Muslim worship, and the spirituality of Islam from her perspective as a practicing Muslim woman.

MARCH 18

Immigration and Standing On the Side of Love

with Rev. Deane Perkins

The movement, Standing on the Side of Love, encompasses both marriage equality and immigration. Both are prominent issues for our Association, and will be the emphasis, once again, at General Assembly in Phoenix this June.

MARCH 25

The Plight of the Homeless Teenager

with The Social Action Committee

An invisible but very real problem in our community.

APRIL 1

Pilgrimage

with Rev. Deane Perkins

Two weeks from today nine youth and three adult advisors from Belfast, Bangor, and Ellsworth will be sitting in the pews of First Unitarian Universalist Church of New Orleans attending the service. The group will be in New Orleans for a week working on various projects to help with the city's reconstruction. While this is part of a program promoting social justice work, it is also a spiritual pilgrimage.

and decide to be a supporter, sustainer, or visionary —let's join hands and hearts and work together for a great future for the UU Church of Belfast!

Sincerely, your Stewardship Committee — *Corliss C. Davis*

Life of the Church

From the Co-Chair

Seven new members. Seven individuals who have stepped forward to say they want to be a part of our religious

community. Isn't that just fabulous?

At the risk of sounding smug, though, isn't ours a great community to be a part of? We affirm the worth and dignity of every person. We accept one another as we are, yet we encourage ourselves and each other to grow spiritually. We support each person's own individual search for truth and meaning. We promote justice, democracy, peace, and caring for our planet.

Those values, familiar as they are

to most of us, tell some of the story of who we are, but they don't begin to tell the whole story. We express our sense of community by surrounding the grieving among us with love, concern, care, and compassion, as we had done the week before the new member recognition. We also celebrate the joys and triumphs of those among us.

New members, all this and more now belongs to you. We warmly welcome you among us. We truly hope that your time with us will be filled with wonder and joy, but when life seems difficult and harsh, we will be there for you.

This religion we share relies on us and us alone. It is what we, the members, make it. Sure, we have a minister and other paid staff, but it was we who chose them, either directly by congregational action or indirectly through our elected Church Council. It is we who make church happen. It is we who organize and coordinate Sunday services. It is we who take responsibility for the spiritual development of our children and youth, and of ourselves. It is we who raise money and pay bills and maintain the building and make coffee and sing in the choir and plan events and connect us all to the larger community and all the other things it takes to be who we are. Opportunities abound for each of us to play a small part in the drama of Unitarian Universalism in Belfast by serving on the committees who accomplish all the tasks mentioned above and so many more.

But one opportunity is open to all of us, regardless of our talents or our circumstances. When a volunteer member of our congregation calls you to arrange a discussion about our church please accept that invitation. Then please make a financial pledge that reflects your level of

MARCH greeters

March 4 Judith Simpson & Jacqui Lee
 March 11 Ezra Kreamer & Anna Wood-Cox
 March 18 Judith Grace & Jane Moffitt
 March 25 Marion Brown & Francine Brown

MARCH hospitality

March 4 Margie Shannon & Lynn Biebel
 March 11 Janie Morrison & Alex Chaplin
 March 18 Linda & Michael Bove & Ivy Lobato
 March 25 Jessie Gower & Michael Shepard

you can write your Milestone either before or after church. It would remind people to make contact with those celebrating, as milestones are often forgotten by the end of the service. It would also serve to chip away at the lengthening worship time. We will try this for the next few weeks and see how you like it. Feel free to give feedback to anyone on the serv-

ices committee (Kathy Muzzy, Jessie Gower, Susan Coe, Jeffrey Mabee, Dan Kirchoff).

commitment to who we are and who we can become. Your pledge must of course be based on your own financial circumstances, but I hope you will also think about how much the church means to you before deciding on an amount. Together we have done amazing things, and with your support we will do even more amazing things in the future.

Rick Davis

Milestones

Thank you to everyone who donated to our Special Collection Plate for the Restorative Justice Project. We were able to send them \$500.

We have issued a new Accessibility Project list. Unfortunately we had to add two new businesses that are not accessible. Pick up a new list at the Social Action Bulletin Board.

On March 25, The Social Action Committee will be doing the service. As per the survey results, the congregation indicated that they especially wanted to work on Economic Inequality issues. With that in mind, the service will be about an invisible but very real problem in our community, "The Plight of the Homeless Teenager." The speakers will be Patricia Estabrook, owner and operator of the Game Loft; Jessica Falconer, Coordinator of the Waldo County SAFE Homes Project. We will also be doing a Special Collection Plate for the Game Loft the next Sunday, April 1.

We are going to be starting a new project called "Power of Change." Watch for further details!

As our congregation grows and the sanctuary fills to capacity there are more demands made on our worship time. In larger churches than ours, such activities as Joys & Concerns are eventually transformed into ceremonies of shorter duration. We are not ready to change Joys & Concerns. We would, however, like to try something new for Milestones. We would like to put a sandwich board somewhere in the building upon which

DON'T FORGET THE INCREDIBLE MULTI-CHOIR FESTIVAL AT THE BANGOR UU CHURCH, SUNDAY, MARCH 25, 5:30PM!!!

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 Bailly 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
- Green Sanctuary
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
- Sound Coordinator
Cary Bradford 338-8448
- Hospitality
Chris LeGore 589-4421
- Greeters
Marty Daniels 338-0129
- Newsletter
Douglas M. Coffin 567-3707

To change address, tel. no., email, newsletter status, or to subscribe to the UUBB or UUCC, email office@uubelfast.org

What's "The Big Idea?"

The Adult LifeSpan Committee is happy to announce the launch of "The Big Idea UU Discussions." These will be facilitated, open discussions among ourselves about various big ideas -- social, political, spiritual, ethical, and what-have-you. They are similar in format to the old UU Forums you may have heard about or participated in.

The Discussions will be held once a month, the fourth Sunday of the month in the sanctuary, starting this spring and then picking up again in the fall. Each month will have a particular focus and facilitator. Our first two are:

Sunday, March 25, 6:00-7:30 PM: "Values Voters' --UU Values, That Is," facilitated by Linda Buckmaster. Conservative Christians have assumed the mantle of "values voters," as if the rest of us don't also vote our values. So, what are UU values and how can we put them forward this election season? How can we explain them in ways that the general public can understand and relate to?

Sunday, April 22, 6:00-7:30 PM: "Climate Change: The World's Greatest Challenge?" facilitated by members of the Green Sanctuary. What with pansies blooming in December and record high temps, this has not been a typical Maine winter! Climate change is here now. What can we expect of this new reality and where should we put our efforts in response to these changes? Where can we get reliable information to guide us? Learn and talk together about the future of our community and our planet.

On-line auction planned for May

The fundraising committee has set a goal of \$10,000 to be raised in the first-ever UU Belfast on-line auction. Items for the auction will be solicited from members, friends and area businesses. These items will be available for on-line bidding during the month of May.

The auction planners are excited about the potential of having many more bidders than only those who are able to attend a live auction and also about reaching out to a much larger geographical area. They are also

pleased to be able to offer more benefits to our donors including a whole month of on-line presence in their listings and the convenience of auction browsers having immediate access to the website of the donor.

The on-line auction will be accessed at Biddingforgood.com, where there are the auction listings of many non-profit organizations. At this site someone from Texas could purchase a certificate for a weekend at a Belfast B&B. Or someone from Portland might purchase a piece of art and pick it up in Belfast when convenient.

How can U help our Youth?

Watch for news on fundraisers to help our youth go to Boston and New Orleans for their spiritual and humanitarian pilgrimages



Babysitting for Date Nights



Fair Trade Coffee

\$\$ Donations



Community Bake Sale



COA Services
Silent Auction



Thanks so much for your support!

In order to make this auction successful, lots of help will be needed from church members and friends. There will be many jobs -- some of them quite brief -- that will be important to this project ---- data entry, helping with mailings, posters, solicitations, photography, to name a few, and, of course, donating and bidding.

It is hoped that an on-line auction might provide a major part of the \$17,000 which our annual church budget currently requires from fundraising.

Please contact any of the organizing committee to volunteer or to donate --- *Jenny Kirchoff, Meredith Burgess, Andrea Butler or Judith Grace.*

Volunteer of the Month

Finding the Right Niche

Marjorie Ford is a quiet soul who prefers to avoid the limelight. "I like to work in the back room," says Marjorie, who, with Kathy Kreamer, coordinates our church's sales of Hannaford "gift" cards.



Seeking a "job" that suited her personality and skills, Marjorie Ford found a way to make a big contribution to the church.

FROM REV. DEANE PERKINS

DEAR FRIENDS,
From the first time I met the Search Committee, I sensed the incredible energy and enthusiasm of this faith community. But I also sensed the love and support that people in this community had for one another. This has been especially obvious when there has been a death in the community. With Sylvan Walton's passing, our faith community has come together to express their love and to support, in so many ways, Sylvan's blended family. We mourn deeply the tragic loss of such a beautiful young man, and we embrace his family with our own sorrow and our caring.

This religious community is remarkably generous in other ways

as well. The call to help people who are in financial need by donating to the Minister's Discretionary Fund was overwhelming. The donations to help the Sr. High Youth Group go to New Orleans for their service project have been wonderful.

Soon we will be involved in our Stewardship Campaign. I believe that generosity is actually a spiritual practice. So may we continue to engage in our own spiritual deepening as we practice generosity—in all its forms.

I feel truly honored to be an integral part of such a generous, giving, loving community. Thank you!

Fondly,
Deane

By knowing what kind of job suited her and wanting a functional way to get to know the congregation,

Marjorie stepped into a role last October that makes a big difference for the church. Marjorie's participation means that Hannaford cards now are available every week instead of twice a month, and so, by the end of January, the program had already earned the church \$760 more than at the same point a year earlier. (See the sidebar.)

A member of the First Unitarian Society in Newton, Massachusetts, for more than 20 years, Marjorie checked out our church soon after she moved to the area in 2009. She signed our membership book in June 2010 but gave herself more time to become acquainted with this church before choosing how she would participate.

"I knew that to get into the church and get to know people, I would have to take a role in it," she says. "I had to find a job."

Last year, the soprano joined the choir. For a trained pianist and a longtime member of Newton's choir, that was a natural fit.

Then, after returning from a trip to her native Australia, Marjorie volunteered to sell Hannaford cards after church one Sunday. When she learned that Hannaford maestro

Kathy Kreamer was looking for a partner to help her expand the program, Marjorie tried on the idea.

It felt like a good match. Computer work is her specialty, and spreadsheets are familiar ground. "I'm a numbers person," she says. "It's something I can do that's comfortable."

"Kathy does the publicity, and we split the nitty gritty," says Marjorie. The "nitty gritty" includes ordering and processing cards, recruiting volunteers to staff the sales table each week, maintaining records, preparing deposits, and reporting to the treasurer.

While Marjorie is happy to do the bookkeeping from home, the social aspect of her job has been its main benefit. "I'm getting to put faces to names," she says, and that makes her feel more strongly a part of the congregation.

She is, without question, more strongly a part of the congregation. "Having Marjorie on board is nothing short of a fund-raising dream-come-true for our church," says Kathy Kreamer.

Lane Fisher

Effortless Contributions

For anyone who shops at Hannaford, buying a \$50 or \$100 "gift" card through the church is a nearly effortless way to add to the church's general fund. The card holder receives its full value toward grocery or pharmacy purchases, but Hannaford gives the church \$5 for every \$100 worth of cards we buy.

Those five-dollar bills add up. At present, almost half the congregation buys Hannaford cards, giving the church an extra \$3400 last year and nearly \$2400 in the first seven months of this fiscal year.

What an easy way to support our church!