

## Where do we grow from here?

IN NOVEMBER 2010, the Ministerial Search Committee provided this description of the mission, the “burning coal,” of our congregation:

*“This congregation sprang from the love and inspiration of a small group of people committed to a liberal religious vision. Since then, it has been nurtured and fed by the small but ever-growing group of people who had found a home in this community. Because we have built it ourselves, we know that it needs care and feeding to survive.*

*So our mission has been the church itself, ensuring its survival and growth.*

*Although we have a building, there is no confusion that the church is us, the congregation, and that it is this community that we are feeding. It has given back to each of us, and is, clearly, greater than the sum of its parts.*

*Our intention is to spread the light and warmth of our church community. We have a strong desire to put our principles into action, and to do the spiritual and heart work this requires.”*

All the work and dreaming and building together have brought us to where we are today, and new horizons spread out before us. We are a thriving spiritual community, recognized by the other congregations in Belfast and UU congregations across northern New England as a congregation to watch! People are hearing about us, coming to check us out, and choosing to join us because there is

great stuff happening.

We’re growing. And we’re growing up.

So who do we want to be when we grow (up)? What do we see for ourselves, and for our place in the broader community? Who will join

us as we grow? The Church Council is putting together two task forces to support the congregation as we wrestle with these questions over the next several years.

The Mission Process Team will work with the congregation on identifying and developing our mission, our purpose for being. (Isn’t it great we no longer need to focus on mere survival as we did in our early years?) This will be an exciting journey that will continue for a year or so and will engage everyone in the congregation. If you want more information about this, or if you might be interested in helping, please speak to our co-chairs, Debbie Bailly and Rick Davis.

The Space Needs Team has already begun its work looking for solutions to our present and future space needs. The members of this group are Sarah Nicholson, Michael Bowe, Gemma Scott, Jan Anderson, Roger Lee, and Rev. Deane. This group is address-



ing the urgent need in the near term to resolve the crowding in our RE program, but it also has the mission of leading the congregation in addressing longer-term space issues resulting from our growth.

The team realizes that our congregation needs to begin talking about growth and the issues it raises. So, it has scheduled a series of cottage meetings similar to those held as part of the ministerial search process. Please come join us to talk about where we grow from here. We want to hear from you!

These cottage meetings will be held at the church as follows:

- Sunday, April 1, 11:30-1:00
- Friday, April 6, 7:00-8:30
- Tuesday, April 10, 7:00-8:30
- Monday April 16, 2:00-3:30
- Sunday April 22, 11:30-1:00

Please look for sign-up sheets on Sundays or contact Gemma (gemmapscott@gmail.com) or Sarah (snicholson@woodardcurran.com).

### April 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!

#### 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.

#### APRIL 8

#### Never Too Dead for Resurrection

*with Rev. Richard Snyder*

The stories of the resurrection of Jesus have provided some with the assurance of personal immortality and others with the conviction that Jesus will return for the Rapture. But what if it's about something else?

#### APRIL 15

#### Radical Simplicity—Radical Spirituality

*with Global Living Project founder and Radical Simplicity author Jim Merkel and the Green Sanctuary Committee*

Living sustainably is technically easy. It means doing less, working less, consuming less and possibly even thinking less, while feeling an inner lightness. We happen to be alive during a period in Earth history where a headline might read "Seven Billion People Eat Planet." We've altered the climate, initiated a mass extinction and are engaged in brutal warfare over Earth's gifts. The sentiments in the Shaker song, "Tis a gift to be Simple" and the indigenous wisdom of considering our life's implications seven generations forward, take on new meanings in 2012 as individuals yearn to help establish balance. Jim will share thoughts and ideas from his 23-year experiment in global living.

#### APRIL 22

#### The Universe Story

*an intergenerational service with our church's youth*

We celebrate Earth Day by tracing our ancestry back to the larger story of the Universe. An improv fun rollicking enactment of the Universe story's 13.4 billion years all in one Sunday service. Join us for this multi-generational service of celebration.

#### APRIL 29

#### What Is Ministry?

*with Rev. Deane Perkins*

Ministry is one of those words, like worship, spirituality, religion, church and so on, that can mean many different things to people. What is ministry in a UU context? How do we "attain fulfillment of our mission through ministry?"

#### MAY 6

#### Divine Playfulness

*with Rev. Deane Perkins*

Buddhism suggests that, because of the ego, people take themselves much too seriously. Perhaps it is time for the Trickster to take over.

### Life of the Church

*The times, they are a changin'*

And so is everything else, it seems, as nothing is permanent. Our congregation has been undergoing some spectacular changes – most recently that of having our first full time, called minister.

Along the way we've contended with many changes, large and small: in our formative years, going from alternating forums and regular Sunday services to having regular weekly worship services; going from having services only during the school year to having them every week; going from a nomadic existence of relocating nearly every year to having our own home. Earlier this year the Program Council requested a trial of having sales and other activities occur out of the hospitality room after services. Most recently the Services Committee asked us to bear with them in an experiment of changing how milestones are shared. All these changes were related to needs resulting from our growth and the changing dynamics as a church – a community.

Change is a process, not an event, a process fraught with emotional reactions. We may feel worried, angry, confused, or disappointed with some changes, and relieved, pleased, energized, or optimistic about others.

Each of us responds differently and at our own pace. Leaving behind the old and familiar, and moving into new territory can be exciting or threatening. Even when a change is eagerly anticipated, we're moving out of our comfort zone, which can be stressful.

One of the main reasons for an initial negative reaction to change is that we're losing something, no matter that we may also be gaining a benefit. Yet having a negative focus

**APRIL hospitality**

- April 1** Jane Moffit, Sandy Keller & Jody Johnstone
- April 8** Eileen Wolper & Dagmar Moravec
- April 15** Marjorie Walsh & Marty Daniels
- April 22** Chip Curry & Chris Goosman
- April 29** Jane Dopheide & Joanne Moesswilde

**APRIL Hannaford sales volunteers**

- April 1** Anna Wood-Cox, Janie Morrison
- April 8** Chris LeGore, Cheryl Richardson
- April 15** Anna Wood-Cox, Cheryl Richardson
- April 22** Patty Barnhard, Dagmar Moravec
- April 29** Ivy Lobato, Mayme Trumble

mission statement be reviewed or revised every five years; ours is over ten!

And finally, at Deane’s recommendation we will be forming a Committee on Ministry to “help us attain the highest possible fulfillment of our mission through ministry (UUA),”

can blind us to the positive aspects.

At a leadership conference that Deane and six others attended this fall, one tool we learned is to like a new idea for at least five minutes. This has helped us to suspend that automatic defensive reaction of saying, “Hold on, that’s not the way things are done!” Instead, we take time to reflect on our initial reactions, then more objectively examine the pros and cons.

Following the two-year search process, the Church Council has been engaged in special visioning meetings to further examine who we are and where we are going. We aren’t the same little family group that we were 10 or 15 years ago. As we face even more changes with a burgeoning membership, the Council is creating several new groups to help us. The Space Needs Team will help us determine how to accommodate growing numbers in worship services and classrooms, as well as address the need for accessibility and more meeting and activity space.

We are developing a Mission Process Team to help us revise our mission statement so as to better reflect who we have evolved to be and what we value. The UUA suggests the

ministry being everything the congregation does to fulfill its mission.

Each of these three groups will help us, the congregation, deliberate, identify options, and make decisions – the congregation will be at the center of any changes that are made. We will assure that there are ample opportunities for you to voice your concerns and ideas, to develop options, and to have input into the implementation of changes.

Change is a natural part of life. While any change can be stressful, we can affect the degree of stress by our attitude. I invite you to join in liking a new idea for five minutes. Or try ten!

*Debbie Bailly, Council Co-chair*

**Membership Committee notes**

We are delighted to announce a number of spring events designed to assist visitors in learning more about our church and, if desired, move towards formal membership:

- Rev. Deane Perkins will launch a mostly-monthly series of informal Q & A sessions for newcomers on Sunday April 1. These will be very informal get-togethers in Deane’s office from 11:30 to 12:15 or so. They are

**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

# INSTALLATION CELEBRATION for Rev. Deane Perkins

**3:30 PM SUNDAY  
MAY 27, 2012**

At the  
Unitarian Universalist  
Church of Belfast

Reception to follow at “The Boathouse”

All members and friends  
are encouraged to join in this exciting celebration!

**MORE  
SPECIFIC  
INFORMATION  
TO  
COME!**

designed for people who are new to UU and just want to know what it's all about. The next Q & A will be on June 3 and we hope to hold them monthly beginning in August.

- More formal “New to UU” classes will be offered on Sunday April 22 and Sunday April 29 from 11:30 to 1:30 at the church. These classes, also led by Deane Perkins, are designed for newcomers who are interested in more detailed information about our faith and our church and who might be interested in formal membership in the future.

A light lunch and free child care

will be provided. Please contact Corliss Davis at [cdavis5468@roadrunner.com](mailto:cdavis5468@roadrunner.com) to register and to request child care.

- New member Sunday May 20. We will welcome new members with gifts, food, song, and celebration this Sunday.

*Your Membership Committee*

### **On-line Auction set-up**

The church's first on-line auction will open on May 1 on the “Bidding For Good” auction site, where it will run for the whole month. Between now

and May 1st, many more items, service offerings and gift certificates are needed to make this a successful fundraiser.

What can you do to help?

If everyone in the congregation asked just one business for a donation, we would have an ample auction. Many businesses plan to promote themselves by donating to non-profit fundraisers, and an on-line auction is of extra benefit to them. Think about your favorite restaurant, your hairdresser, your health providers --- many of them think well of the UU Church and are happy to donate.

Also, please think about a personal donation – a piece of your art, a special meal, a sail on the bay, an antique that's been collecting dust at your house. Deadline for donations is Sunday, April 15.

Your hands-on help with preparations will be appreciated – sprucing up items to sell, taking photos, doing lay-out.

Especially needed is someone to write publicity to attract both local and distant people to check out our auction on line. For example, we have a piece of art by a Blue Hill artist, so we could send a photo of that with an article to the Blue Hill paper. Tickets to a Sea Dogs game might headline an article for the Portland paper. A weekend in a Belfast B&B might be of interest to Boston readers.

After pledges, the church's annual budget has included \$17,000 in expenses that need to be covered by fundraising. The auction committee hopes that the congregation will join them enthusiastically in making this first on-line auction a big success. For more information, to donate or to volunteer your help, see Jenny Kirchoff, Andrea Butler, Meredith Burgess or Judith Grace.

### Social Action committee

On March 25th, we did a service called "The Plight of the Homeless Teenager." One of our speakers was Patricia Estabrook, owner and operator, of The Game Loft.

The Game Loft is vital to the community. It teaches young adults through games how to respect each other, and it helps them to gain self confidence. It also serves them a meal, and for some of them this might be the only meal they have for the day. Recently The Game Loft lost a large part of its funding. With this in mind, the Committee is asking for a Special Collection Plate for The Game Loft on April 1st. For those who want to give to this very important community institution, please make your check out to the church, and then put The Game Loft on the memo line.

- Also, on April 28 at 6:00 PM, we are co-sponsoring with MOFGA's (Maine Organic Farmers & Growers Association) El Salvador Sistering Committee their 11th annual Empty Bowl Supper.

Each year MOFGA serves this supper to raise funds for the El Salvador Committee's work. Those funds have helped bring Salvadorans to Maine to tour farms, meet with community organizers and agricultural officials, and participate in the Common Ground Country Fair. Proceeds also have helped fund events relating to the Central American Free Trade Agreement for MOFGA's sistering organization in El Salvador, and have supported work to prevent mining companies from destroying Salvadoran mountains and agricultural lands.

- If you would like to buy a handsome, Maine-made bowl, have a delicious meal, and support the MOFGA-El Salvador Sistering

## FROM REV. DEANE PERKINS

DEAR FRIENDS,

After the Lenten luncheon sponsored by the Ministerium that I attended earlier this month at the Baptist church, I asked the minister if I could see the sanctuary.

He showed me around, and though I had some fond memories (I was an American Baptist in my childhood and youth), it no longer felt like a home to me. As we came across the Baptismal pool, I remembered my twin brother and I being baptized in a similar pool at the age of thirteen.

It reminded me, too, that baptism, or some form of this, is a principle symbol in many religions. It is a

symbol of death and rebirth, which is particularly meaningful during the Easter season in traditional Christianity.

We Unitarian Universalists do not have such clear symbols. And while death (e.g. to the ego) and rebirth are helpful symbols as we grow personally, I like to think that what we do as UUs is actually transformational. This is one of the reasons why it is hard work being a UU—we ask ourselves and the world to be transformed. I think this is why my chosen faith feels like home. May it be so.

Fondly,  
Deane

Committee's work--all for just \$15 (\$35 maximum for families)--come to this celebration.

### Congregational Life

March Congregational Life activities were enthusiastically received with lots of energy at all of them.

Unfortunately the lack of winter weather kept us from skiing and sledging at the full moon but we hope for better snow in 2013!

Spring monthly activities have been planned and this is what is ahead:

**April 4:** Egg decorating for all ages with Lynn and Rowan Walauski (more information will be on the UUNews)

**April 11:** "Family Ukulele night" with Frets Halligan- bring your own or "borrow" one of Frets' 8 ukes. Learn a few chords, strum some songs you know.

**April 25:** Book group

**April 27/28:** hoUse sUppers (formerly known as carousel dinners)

### Book Group News

It looks like we have a thriving book group! Our discussions are well attended and interesting, and many people read the books even if they don't come to the discussion.

Our next book seems very timely for the Youth Group's trip to New Orleans. We'd like to encourage the Youth Group, their parents, and their mentors to also read the book and join the discussion and/or have their own.

*Salvage the Bones* by Jesmyn Ward, Winner of the 2011 National Book Award, is a fascinating book by a wonderful writer, but there will be some emotionally difficult passages.

We will meet next for discussion at the church at 6:30 on Wednesday April 25th.

A few words about the book: A hurricane is building over the Gulf of Mexico, threatening the coastal town of Bois Sauvage, Mississippi, and Esch's father is growing concerned. A hard drinker, largely absent, he

doesn't show concern for much else. Esch and her three brothers are stocking food, but there isn't much to save. Lately, Esch can't keep down what food she gets; she's fourteen and pregnant. Her brother Skeetah is

sneaking scraps for his prized pit-bull's new litter, dying one by one in the dirt. Meanwhile, brothers Randall and Junior try to stake their claim in a family long on child's play and short on parenting.

As the twelve days that make up the novel's framework yield to their dramatic conclusion, this unforgettable family-motherless children sacrificing for one another as they can, protecting and nurturing where love is scarce-pulls itself up to face another day. A big-hearted novel about familial love and community against all odds, and a wrenching look at the lonesome, brutal, and restrictive realities of rural poverty, *Salvage the Bones* is muscled with poetry, revelatory, and real.

### **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!

