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WE ARE A VIBRANT, inter-generational faith community, inspired by thought and spirit and grounded in love. Our mission is to honor differences and to foster peace, justice, and sustainability in ourselves and in our world.

Life of the Church

Marty Daniels, President

I feel as though the world is waking up.

The election of Donald Trump as the next President of the United States has galvanized people in a way that Hilary Clinton's election never would have. Newspaper subscriptions are up, as are donations to environmental organizations like the Sierra Club. Protestors are massing in many major cities on a daily basis. Women from all over are discussing joining the Women's March in Washington on Jan. 21st, the day after President Trump's inauguration. I haven't seen or felt this level of energy since the first presidential campaign of Barack Obama.

Today, Rev. Deane Perkins gave a sermon entitled "I Don't Want to Add to the Hate." It took the form of an open letter to Donald Trump. Victims of hate crimes against the transgender community were read aloud in recognition of Transgender Remembrance Day. Danielle read a story to the children about the power of one to combat bullying.

Attendance was higher than it has been since services began at East Belfast School.

Following the service, the Program Council met for the first time since last March. Linda Buckmaster led us in an icebreaker activity, the results of which I have included at the end of this article. We shared

what our committees have been up to over the last several months. Ian Howard gave a short presentation about Helping Hands Preschool, which will be renting the new RE rooms during the week once we get back into our building. People had many questions, and it led to a great discussion.

We then talked about what we can do, as a faith community, to make sure we remain open and welcoming to newcomers as we reenter our building. In the course of this discussion, we all recognized that there is a bigger place for the Unitarian Universalist faith now, a greater need, than perhaps ever before.

During the service, one newcomer stood up and said, "I have only come once before, but I felt I had to come today." Another woman, a member of the Methodist church, also stood and stated that she felt she needed to reach out. That's why she had come.

We have all become jaded and complacent. The dysfunctional state of our politics over the last several years has led us all to roll our eyes and disengage. The election results have jolted us all out of that complacency. We have work to do.

"The Moon" (a collective poem by the Program Council. Each line was written by a different person, without seeing more than the one line that came before. Thanks to Linda Buckmaster for introducing this activity to us.)

Do you have skills to benefit the church?
If you understand Craig's List, eBay, and Amazon, and you have a bit of time to list and follow up on occasional items for sale to benefit the church, you may well be the special someone that the Fundraising Committee is looking for.
Please contact Muzz (kmuzzy@bluestreakme.com) if this sounds like you.

*The moon walked the land,
shining her brilliance over the sea.
Then she extended her wings and
took flight.
She forgot that she was a believer.
But then the moon came out,
a shining sight to remind me of the
beating of the Universe's heart.*

*The moon walked the land,
a starry bright vision of light and
love.
A time of challenges and opportunities,
an open heart and welcoming spirit.*

*The moon walked the land.
The sun rose on demand
despite the moon's objection.
At times the darkness comforts me.
It allows my soul to recuperate.*

Upcoming events in December for Religious Exploration

- December 2, from 6:00-9:00 PM at the Belfast Center, the COA group and their mentors will be having a movie night. COA and their Mentors are asked to bring a snack to share for this event.

- December 10th is the Winter Solstice at the Blue Goose! Come one, come all!

- December 18th is our holiday pageant, a new is in the works this year! If your child is interested in a part, have them raise their hands during the service on the 18th when we ask for volunteers. These pageants require NO rehearsals or memorizing of lines. We just need them to follow verbal cues we give as we speak. We're hoping our children's choir will be ready to perform a song!

- December 25th While there will be church that morning for adults, there will be NO children's programming or child care this morning.

Danielle Bannister

Director of Religious Exploration,
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"Defying The Nazis" screening & discussion December 1st

The UU Collaborative Ministry Team of Belfast, Ellsworth and Castine invites you to join us December 1 for screening and discussion of "Defying The Nazis" at the Alamo Theater in Bucksport.

This documentary film, by Ken Burns and Artemis Joukowsky, features the story of two Americans, Unitarian minister Reverend Waitstill Sharp and his wife Martha, who risked their lives to smuggle hun-

December Sunday Services

Services start at 10:00 AM at the East Belfast School. Please call 338-4482 for more information. Children, infants and new faces are always welcome. Please join us!

DEC 4	Rev. Deane Perkins
DEC 11	General Assembly
Chris Goosman will reflect on her experience attending the General Assembly this summer in Columbus, OH.	
DEC 18	Pageant Sunday (more details to come!)
• DEC 24 7:00 PM <i>Christmas Eve Service</i> led by Rev. Deane Perkins •	
DEC 25	Christmas Day (more details to come!)
JAN 1	Rev. Deane Perkins

Congregational Life

December 3, 9:00 AM: Wreath and pomander making. Cheryl Richardson's home. Wreath bases (greens) will be provided—they are about \$5 each. We have some of decorations and glue guns. Bring your own decorations, if you wish.

FMI Cheryl Richardson a_cini-taly@yahoo.com 342-4649

December 16, 6:00 PM: Caroling - Steve Weston and Sarah Nicholson will be hosting a night of caroling on

December 16. We will gather at Marty Daniels and Ezra Kreamer's home at 41 Bayview Street in Belfast. We'll carol around downtown Belfast and then gather again at Marty and Ezra's for hot chocolate and goodies. Stay tuned for further information. Merry, Merry!!

Your Congregational Life
Committee

Cheryl Richardson

Connection COUNTS!

How do we stay connected at church? On Sunday, we go to church and build connections in person. On the other days...we use the church directory! This is the time for UU Belfast members to update their contact information with Maret in the office, and to catch Cary Bradford after church for a new photo.

Friends of UU Belfast need to let me know that **IF** you want to be in the directory, and then what to list for contacts. A photo of your smiling face would also be appreciated. Please send all this to Maret at office@uubelfast.org, or leave a message at 338-4482. Thank you.

dreds of Jews, dissidents, and refugee children out of Nazi-occupied Europe.

All are welcome, come early to socialize and enjoy refreshments in the lobby starting at 5:30 PM. Film begins at 6:30 and a moderated discussion will follow.

The film is free, donations are appreciated.

For more information, please contact Karen Wigglesworth at kwi88les@gmail.com.

We hope you will join us for this inspiring film!

On the Longest Night...

The Castine Congregation will host a Winter Solstice Open House on Wednesday, December 21, 3:00-8:00 PM, at the Bucksport home of Leslie and Peter Fairbank, 390 State Route 46, across from the golf course.

Leslie and Peter encourage members of the Ellsworth and Belfast congregations to join the fun, bring their solstice-loving friends, share a cup of cheer around a fire, join in a carol or two, and celebrate the turning of the year.

Carpooling is encouraged. The Fairbanks have a big driveway but also are exploring the possibility of additional parking. Watch the Wednesday e-News in Ellsworth or UUBB in Belfast for details. A Growing Year: The Collaborative Ministry Internship

A Growing Year: The Collaborative Ministry Internship

by Lane Fisher

For me, the past month was parted like wet hair by the election.

Minister's Report

Excerpts from Sermon: "I Don't Want to Add to the Hate: A Letter to President-Elect Donald Trump"

What I have come to understand in my study of religion is that there are two basic concepts that are germane to all the major world religions.

First, "all faiths insist that compassion is the test of true spirituality and that it brings us into relation with the transcendent we call God, Yahweh, Allah, Brahman, Nirvana, or Tao. Each has formulated its own version of what is sometimes called the Golden Rule, "Do not treat others as you would not like them to treat you." (see Karen Armstrong, Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life)

Second, all religions insist that you cannot confine your compassion and benevolence to your own small group of people. There

must be concern for everyone and everything, including our neighbor, our stranger, our enemy, our earth. Our purpose on earth has nothing to do with ambition, greed, or power, but is all about service.

We are to serve others, we are to be stewards of the earth. And those of us who are leaders are to help bring shalom to all—a deep and abiding peace to peoples' hearts and souls, a deep and abiding love for our earth. There is no greater work that we can do.

So during this holiday and your entire presidency, Mr. Trump, I call upon you to exemplify compassion in all you do. To serve all the people, and not just the few. To be a steward of the earth. To help assure that our children—all our children world-wide—can sleep in peace.

Rev. Deane Perkins

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

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Before the election was Ferry Beach, a robust gathering of our three congregations that balanced lightness with reverence, fun and games with serious discussion, and structured time with open choices that included “none of the above” or a solitary walk on the beach. I loved watching the children play in the safety of their enlarged church community, and I loved seeing adults begin to form relationships across church lines. I loved having all three of “my” congregations in one lively place.

We are early in a process of figuring out the specifics of how we might collaborate productively, but cross-fertilization has begun. Elsewhere in this newsletter are cross-congregational invitations to festive gatherings—solstice!—and two educational events: a showing of *Defying the Nazis in Bucksport* on December 1 and a discussion of *The Third Reconstruction: Moral Mondays, Fusion Politics, and the Rise of a New Justice Movement* on January 5. The latter will take place in your own congregation but will connect on-line with the other two. (Look for details in separate articles.) Following an energetic justice discussion at Ferry Beach, Castine’s Social Justice Committee—a sturdy

group of five in the smallest of our congregations—has asked that we all share news of our justice efforts in one another’s newsletters, if the editors are willing.

If things felt headed outward and upward before November 8, our collective focus made a hard shift. Members of all three congregations gathered right after the election to share their thoughts and feelings or simply sit in a safe circle. Remembering that in each congregation there surely are individuals who voted for President-elect Trump for reasons of their own consciences, as our fifth UU principle honors, we also hold gently the fears and sorrows that many have expressed. The divisions in our nation and communities and the harassment and bullying expressed right after the election are grave concerns for us all.

These events have called up a familiar verse from the Hebrew Bible, Deuteronomy 30:19 (quoted by Margaret Beckman, as a matter of fact, in her first service as Castine’s minister): “I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live....”

This may well be the only time I

quote the Old Testament in my nine months as your intern! Truth be told, I was first captured by an adaptation of this verse in surgeon Bernie Siegel’s first book back in the 1990s. Siegel didn’t acknowledge his debt, and I certainly didn’t recognize his words as derived from a Biblical quote, but they gripped me: “Let us choose love and life.” The original verse comforts me now with its reminder that the struggle between abundant life and the forces of destruction is as old as time, but the healthy and right choice remains the same.

A dear UU friend married a kind and intelligent man from India, and they have two beautiful babies—brown babies. The older is in early elementary school and would be offended to be called a baby’ he is, in fact, aware enough of the world to feel less safe following the election. His mother wants to promise to protect him but knows that her ability to do so is heartbreakingly imperfect. What could I offer a friend holding such turbulence and sorrow?

Just that we are together, not alone, and we will keep choosing life—for ourselves, for those who need protection, and for all who need a way forward. May it be so.

In faith, *Lane*