

NUU NEWSLETTER

NUU BELFAST

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THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF BELFAST
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VOL. 24, No. 1
JANUARY • 2018

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.



The Solstice Celebration that took place on December 16th to welcome back the sun, was a magical time. (Photo J. Mabee)

Life of the Church

by Karen Wigglesworth

The solstice sun rises on Miller St.!

On the evening of December 16, amid a forest of greenery and the twinkling of thousands of tiny icicle lights, our mistress of ceremonies Gemma Scott welcomed one and all to our 21st annual Winter Solstice celebration, held for the first time in our own sanctuary. With music and dance, poetry and play, we drove away the darkness and invited back the light. All the while, with our old tin ceiling looking down upon a cele-

bration the likes of which it has not seen in many a year (if ever!)

Having the luxury of several days to decorate, preparations began with hooks and hardware, cleverly installed by Arthur Richardson, to allow the hanging of lights and decorations without damage to our new walls. Then Jeffrey Mabee and his lighting team encircled the room with lights and banners, followed by the greenery crew: Jim Rhodes, Tara Butler, Eileen Wolper and myself, returned from the forest with arm-loads of boughs, and joined by

Marty Daniels, Wendy Krueger and Meredith Burgess and others to turn the greenery into swags, garlands and the big solstice wreath.

With the stage set, the Solstice Country Orchestra kicked off the festivities with several merry fiddle tunes, followed by the evening's program of performers, some new to us and others perennial favorites. The UUCB choir, led by Music Director Steve Weston and accompanist Ellie Daniels, performed several numbers, both traditional and contemporary. The choir's medley of The Holly and

the Ivy, melting beautifully into the melody of our beloved UU hymn, Blue Boat Home, was a highlight of the evening.

The whimsical and witty Mummer's play, penned by Sumner Roberts, reminded us of the perils of technology in this modern age, and with the spirited drumming of Dan Kirchoff and a hearty shout of Welcome Yule!, we summoned back the light.

The celebration concluded with the singing of a carol heralding the entry of the boar's head, which led the march around the sanctuary to bring the entertainment to a close and begin the feasting. Organized by Arthur Richardson and with contributions from members and friends of the congregation, refreshments of cider and cakes were enjoyed by all.

The solstice team this year was led by the multi-talented Joanne Moesswilde, who not only co-ordinated the whole affair but also turned in a stirring performance as a Luddite carpenter in the Mummies play and even created the fabulous Boar's Head cake! Bravo, Joanne!

Joanne reminds us to keep in mind everyone who made this special evening so memorable, all who

helped with preparations and performances and especially those who rounded out this year's Solstice team: Linda and Michael Bowe, Linda Buckmaster, Liz and Rick Fitzsimmons. Thanks also to many others not mentioned here who contributed their talents and time for performances, decorating, refreshments and clean-up.

A special joy this year was being able, for the first time, to welcome friends, neighbors and visitors to join us in celebrating this beloved tradition in our own sanctuary.

December 31 will afford us another opportunity to open our doors to the community as we host New Year's By The Bay, with musical performances in our sanctuary upstairs and a delicious meal, prepared by Sue Cobb and a team of volunteers, offered downstairs.

In this, our first year back in our newly renovated church home, we continue to find ways to draw together as a congregation through the long winter days and nights and to open our doors and our hearts to our community.

I wish you light, warmth and fellowship through the turning of the seasons.

Building Leadership Connections at UUCB

by Sarah Nicholson

Our second Program Council (PC) meeting took place on November 20, and with soup and love we dove into several wonderful discussions. Our check-in reflected on places we had seen and experienced "Welcome" in our congregation since our last PC meeting where that was the focus. After two inspiring short videos,

including one of Maya Angelou talking about how Love Liberates us, we discussed the characteristics of spiritual leadership and the ways that changes the "How" of what we do. We then explored the ways we can help each other and ourselves make our work as leaders more spiritually enriching.

This is new territory for us at UUBelfast, and these discussions can be challenging, but they are also

New Year's By The Bay at UUCB!

Start the new year off with food and fun! The 21st New Year's By The Bay is coming New Year's Eve.

Wonderful chef Sue Cobb and crew will offer soups, handmade savory pies, and desserts at our church 5:00-9:00 PM, \$8 per person. Meanwhile great musical acts will perform in our lovely sanctuary from 5:00-10:45 p.m., with buttons for sale there or at any other of the venues.

For a full schedule of New Years By The Bay visit: www.nybb.org
A night not to be missed!

exciting! Shifting our culture around leadership and "doing" is a process, but the connecting that is happening feels real and enlivening. Won't you join us on January 29th for our next exploration? Please feel welcome, whether you currently have a leadership/committee role, have done it for a million years or haven't yet put a toe in, we'd love to hear from you.

There is another upcoming opportunity for exploring leadership this spring that is available to all. The UUA is offering on-line courses through the UU Leadership Institute. The courses are low-cost and you go at your own pace. This spring they are offering four interrelated, progressive core courses:

- Faithful Leadership
- Centered Leadership
- Strategic Leadership
- Adaptive Leadership

With blessing from my co-presidents and the executive team, I am

encouraging participation in these courses. They are interrelated in that they provide opportunities for us to set up discussions that everyone at UUCB (or with our sister churches!) that is taking any one of the courses can participate in.

This is another great way to develop our leadership connections and depth. I am going to be taking the Strategic Leadership class and several others have expressed interest in one or another class.

If you have any interest, please contact me or check out the UULI website. Registration is now open for the semester running January 26 through May, 2018 and courses cost \$30. Please speak to me or Deane if the fee is a barrier to your participation.

Sarah Nicholson, P.E.
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January Sunday Services

All services start at 10:00 AM at our church! Please call 338-4482 for more information. Children, infants and new faces are always welcome. Please join us!

Our church-wide theme for January is "Intention." A packet for reflection will be emailed to all members and friends. It will also be available in the Member section of our website, uubelfast.org

JAN 7 Max Howard, one of our own UUCB children (grown to adulthood) will be leading this service.

JAN 14 Jan Anderson will be presenting a service based on the question "Is it Time to Plan(t) the Garden?" This service will look at producing an abundant harvest in our heart. How do we prepare the ground of our heart? How do we nurture the qualities we want to produce?

JAN 21 Piano Dedication. Steve Weston and Ellie Daniels will be co-leading a service to dedicate the family Steinway Grand that was donated to us many years ago by Marty and Ellie Daniels. There will be music!!!!

JAN 28 Charles Stevens, a retired UU Minister from The Ellsworth area, will be joining us again!

WHO'S WHO AND WHO TO CALL

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

Website contributions:
 content@uubelfast.org



New Member Sunday

Rev. Deane Perkins (left) officially welcomed new members Allan Harriman and Sarah Lozanova in joining the UU Church of Belfast.

Report on the Collaborative Ministry Team

As we enter into our third year, the CMT continues to seek ways of coming together and deepening connections with our sister congregations. Going forward, we plan to continue our schedule of sponsoring two films and two book discussions per year.

The CMT (Collaborative Ministry Team, with representatives from Ellsworth, Castine, and Belfast) has chosen *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson as our next Common Read.

Bryan Stevenson was the Ware Lecturer at General Assembly in New Orleans this year. He is a brilliant, gifted, compassionate lawyer

who works in the South defending those who are poor, wrongly convicted, and trapped in our criminal justice system. The book is poignant, heart-breaking, and hopeful.

We will gather to discuss the book on Thursday, January 4, from 5:30-7:00 PM. Each of the three churches will have an hour of discussion among themselves, and then we will Zoom in for half-an-hour to have a larger discussion with the other churches.

The library has copies of the book or can help you access it. The book can also be purchased at local bookstores or online. The paperback edition is \$16. It is a remarkable book, and we hope to see you on January 4 at church.

We have also received permission to screen the Thich Nhat Hanh film “Walk With Me,” tentatively scheduled for February 22 at the Alamo theater in Bucksport.

Other events in the works for the upcoming year are a concert by Virginia-based singer/songwriter Andrew McNight in Ellsworth for the 2nd weekend in August, and sponsorship of a community potluck in support of residents of Puerto Rico who have relocated to this area after having been displaced by hurricanes (date & location of this potluck TBA).

In addition to these events, we are exploring ways that our collaborative can foster and support our congregants in exploring and deepening our spiritual roots. A course we are considering, which comes highly recommended by Amy, is “Creating Theology Together” by Rev. John Morehouse.

We have also reiterated our strong desire this year to increase the pro-

file of the CMT in all our congregations, to share news of what we are doing, seeking input, feedback and suggestions, and bringing everyone into involvement with the collaboration.

It was agreed at the CMT recently that one of the original responsibilities of the group—the Ministerial Internship Program—would be separated from the CMT itself. Sara, Margaret, and Deane, as the three ministers involved, will now oversee the process by which a seminary student is chosen to be the Intern for all three congregations. We will know who our Intern for the 2018-2019 church year will be by the end of March. The Intern for next year will have their home base at UU Castine, and Rev. Margaret will be the supervisor.

Having made the decision to separate the Internship from the CMT, the CMT hopes to have more time to envision more ways for our three congregations to do things together. For example, PASA (Peace and Social Action) in the Ellsworth church is fairly active. Perhaps we create a PASA team that incorporates all three churches. The CMT will be asking the three congregations for ideas that can help enrich the collaboration.

Indeed, what possibilities might exist for the collaboration among the three congregations? How far can we go in “deepening the spirit, and healing the world?” What could our ministry look like?

Church will look different as the 21st century progresses. The kind of collaboration we have among the UU churches of Belfast, Castine, and Ellsworth will strengthen all of us, as well as our ministry in the world.

Karen Wigglesworth and Deane Perkins

When a conference doesn't go quite as planned.

by Danielle Bannister

In early November, myself and four other DRE's from Midcoast UU Churches went to the LREDA conference (Liberal Religious Educators Association) in Denver, CO. We were prepared to be immersed in Non-Violent Communication, which was on the agenda. We left with an entirely different education.

We were witness to, in real time, the subtle and unseen force of white privilege, even within our beloved liberal UU community.

It started earlier in the year when people of color (POC) indicated they had an issue with the conference dealing with Non-Violent Communication, a curricula they have long said is directed to those who are white and privileged and does not address POC issues. It came to a head when the two male presen-

ters for the three-day conference were sent home after the first day for displaying, what I now see, were examples of white privilege in action.

It was painful to bear witness to my own blindness and to see POC hurt by the insensitivity of it all. We were encouraged to LEAN INTO the discomfort and not to run from it. We were asked that if we got defensive, to become curious instead. There were lots of tears, frustration, anger, and (through the work of the LREDA board who had to scramble to provide new programming to deal with the crisis) a time of healing.

We learned that weekend there is MUCH for us to learn. I am eagerly awaiting the list of resources the LREDA board is assembling for us and would be happy to share those when they become available.

Director of Religious Exploration,
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mother, Hope Dorman Hewitt, was born in Belfast in 1904 and was a member of the UU Church as a child. Only one generation in Sarah's family has not lived in Maine - her father, Richard Merrill Hewitt. Sarah is related to the Billings, Dorman and Emery families of Maine.

- Something you will most likely notice about Sarah...she loves color and pattern and wears them with abandon when in the mood.
- Sarah's goals in this position? To sustain and support the UU Church of Belfast as it grows into its new building and future.
- Sarah is not a member of the congregation but has a strong private spiritual practice.

Clothing sale report

We are happy to report that after adjusting to our new space in various ways, the 2017 Clothing Sale was a success-bringing in around \$2,500!

First of all, we are grateful for all the quality donations which help make our sale so appealing. We thank Jeffrey Mabee, Jim Rhodes and Dean Anderson for moving things from storage. Gratitude also to Debbie Bailly, Joanne Boynton, Francine Brown, Chris LeGore, Tera and Eric Kennedy and Cheryl Richardson for many hours of help sorting, arranging, cashiering and clean up. Thanks, also, to those who pitched in for an hour or two and/or came to shop when time allowed in busy schedules.

We were happy to send many of the leftovers to a project that is collecting for Syria.

Last but certainly not least, we are very grateful to our dear husbands Bill and Jeffrey for their love and support.

Jane and Judith

CongoLife

is planning the following:

January 20 - Luau - at church from 6:00-8:00 PM. Wear your most fun Hawaiian garb. Hula anyone? It could happen!

January 28 - January's monthly congregational potluck falls right in the heart of winter. Come and bring something warming to share! The kitchen has multiple options for heating dishes up. Of course, you can bring whatever you want, or just bring yourself. Remember that the work of the potluck is shared among those attending, so help with setup and cleanup--many hands make light work! Thank you, again, Cheryl Richardson

207.342.4649 Home
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Our new Administrative Assistant, Sarah Hewitt:

- Sarah lives in Morrill, Maine but grew up in Fort Worth, Texas; lived in northern New Mexico for 19 years; moved to Belfast a little over five years ago; lived in New York while completing an MFA in Visual Arts, and returned to Maine in May of 2016.
- Sarah has no children but she has a wonderful canine companion, Arrow, who loves the woods, treats and his girlfriend Habibi.
- When not at the Church, Sarah is in her studio making large woven installations for upcoming shows and designing projects for her clients. If you are curious about her artwork, take a moment and visit Chase's Daily before the end of the year.
- A little known fact - her grand-

Intern report*by Amy Fiorilli*

I am filled with gratitude this morning. I am looking out onto a gray and snowy landscape, buffered by the twinkling Christmas lights and warm greenery decorating my space. I am aware of what a privilege it is to pursue this calling I love and engage my life with ever deepening connections to you and to all that is truly holy and sacred. We create miracles, by loving each other well, by being kind in ways both subtle and clear. With our honesty and our openness. With bravery and generous hearts.

As is true for most of us at this time of year, my calendar has been full, some days have been very long and there is still a list waiting. And so, I appreciate this time to reflect. I am almost half way through my collaborative ministry internship. I am writing my mid-year self-evaluation this week. In many ways, I feel like I just

got started. I am still getting to know you all and I feel like I meet new people every week. It is a blessing.

This month I had the joy of seeing the Castine church give away a substantial sum of money to worthy organizations serving Hancock County. In a service both meaningful and fun, I heard lessons of generosity and commitment to service. We create miracles. Brian, Lilliana and I attended the Winter Solstice celebration at the Belfast Church and were moved through a story of light and darkness, of inward waiting and jubilant welcome. Through music and story, humor and pageantry we participated in the worship of the earth and her cycles. We create miracles. In Ellsworth I heard of a child dedication, of magic and synergy. I know of vespers happening each week that nourish souls and bodies, and though I am not there as much as I might wish, I feel more whole and content

knowing such things exist. We create miracles.

In this time of waiting and preparing, of moving within and of resting life and light, May you all know the gift you are to the world. May you see your existence as a necessary part of the whole. May you hear the voice of wonder and peace speak within you and may you be brave enough to listen. Choose quiet and reflection when it calls you, let yourself know who you are and what you long for. My hope for all this season is an unabashed look at what is true. You are the gift. Whether your journey be big and bold, loud and public...or soft and quiet, gentle and steady. Know you are needed. Trust in yourself...and allow for giving and receiving in equal measure. May it be so.

Collaborative Ministry Intern
UU Belfast, Castine and Ellsworth
207-930-0007

“Soul Matters Packets: What are they and what can they do for you?”

There is a saying often shared among UU's that when you've been to one UU church...you've been to one UU church. We are all different. And in so many ways that is a gift and strength in our movement. I think it is also true that when you've met one UU member...you've met one UU member. But sometimes, wouldn't it be nice to know that we are all exploring the same topic?

This is the opportunity that Soul Matters provides. The team at Soul Matters UU puts together monthly themes and resource packets for congregations to explore and work with throughout the church year. There are close to 200 UU churches across the country who subscribe to this

program. It grows every year and now the UU Church of Belfast is one of them. Each month the Soul Matters packet will come to you through email. In it you will find an essay on the theme. For the month of December is was Hope. For January, it is Intention. There are quotes and poems, chalice lightings, stories, questions to reflect on, exercises to do and music to enjoy. Soul Matters materials offer a chance for individuals to be spiritually nourished in their own homes, it offers substance for family conversations around the dinner table about elements of our lives and our growing. In the church proper these themes and their supporting materials can be used as jumping off points for service creations and sermons, for RE study and for small group discussions. How wonderful

would it be to know that in every committee meeting from Finance to the Council, Lifespan and Worship Arts to Building Maintenance and the Space Team were all lighting a chalice with the same theme. Perhaps even doing a check in using the theme as a focus?

There are inspiring opportunities here to connect ourselves more deeply to each other and to the greater UU world. I HOPE you will give it a try, ask questions, take risks and experiment with what this program has to offer. I know for me, I have the INTENTION...to use this resource as a connecting tool in my own work here at your beloved church. I look forward to being with you as you explore the gifts of this new endeavor.

—Amy Fiorilli, Ministerial Intern