

THE FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF MIDDLEBOROUGH



25 South Main Street, Middleborough, MA 02346

www.uumiddleboro.org

March, 2017

The yearlong theme is *The Stories That Matter*.

Sunday, March 5, at 10:30 a.m.

Rev. Sarah K. Person preaching

Our Place

Please join us for a service dedicated to the spirituality, passion and practicality of sustaining the communities in which we live. After worship, we'll meet the Web of Life adult education class for an inspiring look at what we, individually and together, can do to make a difference for our towns and surrounding areas. The Chalice Choir will be singing.

Sunday, March 12, at 10:30 a.m.

Rev. Sarah K. Person preaching

The Minister's Sabbath

Ever wonder when ministers get a break? We're pretty much on call 24/7 except for what we call "sabbatical time." Learn about the tradition of clergy sabbatical, a time for renewal and reflection, so I can return to you with fresh insights and energy. Meet your Sabbatical Team. We'll answer questions and talk about how sabbaticals benefit congregations. (Although, the first question ministers usually get asked is: "How come I don't get a sabbatical?!" All you have to do is become a minister!) Special music will be provided by a women's vocal ensemble, accompanied by Patty Simon on flute.

Sunday, March 19, at 10:30 a.m.

Rev. Sarah K. Person preaching

Raising Our Sights

It's time for our fabulous fun-filled, story-filled, music-filled Miracle Sunday service. This Sunday will be dedicated to making our beloved community possible with our annual pledge of support. Instead of a canvass, we'll raise enough funds in one morning to fill our commitments to our mission for an entire year. Bring your energy, your laughter, bring your voices and dancing shoes, and bring your checkbooks! The Chalice Choir will be singing.

Sunday, March 26, at 10:30 a.m.

Youth-Led Service

Foster Care Heroes

Join us for this youth-led service on foster care and the families who take in and care for the most vulnerable people in our society. Members of our congregation will share their experiences of being foster parents. After the service there will be an opportunity to meet with people involved in Foster Care if you wish to learn more. Special music will include a set of piano compositions by UU composer Elizabeth Alexander.

Minister's Meditation

Congratulations, friends! Last Sunday's Service Auction was a heck of a lot of fun and put us on course to meet our fundraising goals – a testament to your generosity and Norm Grenier's spirited auctioneering! It was just one demonstration that we are a pretty healthy and lively organization with a host of assets going for it, including willing spirits and skilled volunteerism.

This past year we've enjoyed the fruits of all your hard labor on our building. You stepped up to invest in making our space, and the infrastructure that supports it, work beautifully. Your donations of time, talents and funds made the difference. Now it is time for us to invest in making our purpose come alive in this space and outside these walls. In the words of our society's mission:

"We seek to provide a sanctuary where people can come together as a community to foster spiritual and personal growth through education and open discussion, to offer the opportunity for meditation and worship, and to serve as a liberal religious voice. ... As individuals and in the larger community, we will speak against injustice and cruelty. We seek to model tolerance and diversity; confront the fear of difference; and thoughtfully address the many difficult problems of our world."

It is a worthwhile mission for a people of worth; a people who know how to work hard and care deeply. Thank you for being who you are and doing what you do and dreaming what you dream.

Rev. Sarah

LOCK CHANGES

As has been indicated in previous electronic Updates and in the Newsletter, it is once again time to change the locks to the church. As most of us are aware, this is something that is done periodically for security reasons and was last done in 2008. The Parish Committee feels that it is prudent to change the locks at this time for many reasons - one being that our insurance company is encouraging us to do so due to the length of time since it has been done, together with the number of keys that have been distributed over the years, many to individuals who are no longer active in the Church. The number of keys is of greater concern since our staff has returned to the building at a time when security is an increasing concern in today's society. We love and care for our staff and members and continue to have safety as our priority.

The locks to the church will be changed on March 6, 2017. The Parish Committee has decided to continue with the key distribution guidelines that have been in place since 2008. Under these guidelines, PC members, chairs of committees, and staff will receive a key. Others who have regular business - volunteer or otherwise - at the church and demonstrate a need for a key, either temporary or long-term, may request one by completing the form below; and the Parish Committee will consider the request. As always, the members of the Parish Committee welcome questions and discussion. We will have the new keys here at the church on March 5.

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF MIDDLEBORO – KEY REQUEST

Name: _____ Old Key # _____

I am a:

- ☐ Member of the PC
- ☐ Committee/Team Chair
- ☐ Other (please explain): _____

_____ Long-term _____ Temporary

Please submit this completed form to Bob Waterman, President.

Authorized: _____ New Key # _____



PEOPLE TO PEOPLE SERVICE AUCTION EARLY RESULTS!

Many thanks to all those who participated in the auction. It was a great success. We made over \$10,000 and are still collecting and selling!

Thanks to all who purchased, and thanks to all who provided auction items, white elephant articles for sale, or reverse auction items. It would not have been possible without a concerted team effort. Congratulations to all. Well done!



Notes from the PC

This month our focus is on Stewardship. For all of us who love our Church so dearly, we need to do our part to make sure we can sustain it financially, in the present and for the future. Our collective support ensures that we can continue to offer the quality experiences that we so enjoy and maintain our wonderful building, which at times needs quite a bit of TLC. Please participate in any and all ways you can to make our campaign a success. You'll find information elsewhere in the newsletter and in other communications about how you can be a part of this very important process. As always, if you have questions, thoughts, or suggestions, please speak to any member of the Parish Committee.

Bob Waterman, President



JOIN THE CONVERSATION ON Sunday, March 5, at 11:45 a.m.: THE NEXT STEP ON CLIMATE JUSTICE



Can you feel a new undercurrent of energy pulsing in our congregation? From November through February, almost 30 percent of our church membership actively studied our responsibility for environment justice and climate change in a class called “Exploring Our Place in the Web of Life,” led by Dan Hotchkiss and Kimberly French. The sheer number of people who committed to the five two-hour sessions as well as research homework is evidence of a movement happening here.

The class members did fantastic work. We went out into our community and interviewed town department heads and business owners to learn: How do we get energy, water, food, and waste removal in our towns? Where and who is harmed by our own resource use? There were plenty of things many of us had not realized. Two speakers—Chuck Collins of Institute of Policy Studies and Evan Seitz of UU Mass Action—inspired us with model stories of resilience and climate justice work, for example, at the Bedford and Jamaica Plain UU churches.

Now we'd like to invite the rest of the congregation to be part of this energy. How do we move from what we learned to local action and, at the same time, keep listening and learning about what is happening in our community? We have ideas and want to hear yours. **Join us for a one-hour conversation at 11:45 a.m. on Sunday, March 5, in the Parish Hall.** (The biweekly UU Faith in Action and On Topic groups will be joining us.) Bring a brown bag lunch.

Kimberly French

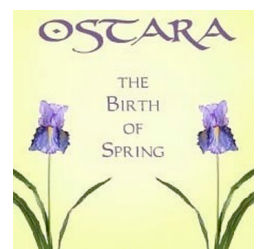


CUUPS

CUUPs will be meeting on **Monday, March 6, and Monday, March 20, at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall.**

There will be a discussion on March 6, and on March 20 we will be celebrating Ostara. Ostara is the Spring Equinox, and it is a ritual celebrating equality and balance in the seasons as well as our lives. As we move further into the light and the Earth begins to warm, we plant the seeds for not just the harvest of food later in the year but also the harvest of the seeds we have planted in our hearts and minds.

All are invited to attend.





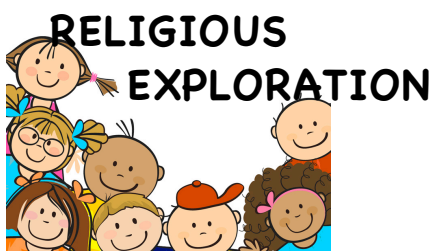
MUSIC MUSINGS



Music Sunday is right around the corner, on April 2. The Chalice Choir will be performing a challenging 5-movement choral suite by Paul McCartney. This is the first time since I've been director (8-1/2 years now!) that we're working on an extended work for a Music Sunday worship service. I was looking for something new and different and was surprised to learn that the balladeer of Beatles fame had turned his energy into writing choral music. I do hope that you will come, and bring your friends.

March, miraculously, marks the end (sort of) of winter. On March 12, a women's ensemble from the choir will be singing "Water Under Snow" by a Finish composer. It's a hauntingly beautiful piece about the weariness of water under snow, with the resting grasses, waiting, holding tight. It's what we all do as we anticipate the first hints of early spring. We simply hum along, looking for harmonies.

Susan Land Hotchkiss, Director of Music



Through March and April, we'll be looking at the life of Mohandas K. Gandhi.

In April 1921, John Haynes Holmes, Unitarian Minister and one of the founders of both the NAACP and the ACLU, preached a sermon called *Who Is the Greatest Man in the World?* The answer was Gandhi; and even in 1921, Holmes was able to recognize his greatness.

Our theme this year is Superheroes; and when I look at Gandhi's life, I can think of no other person who embodies our 7 superheroes and our principles quite so fully as Gandhi.

- He was a **Superman**, because he respected all people, even India's untouchables.
- He was a **Justice Fighter**, because he worked tirelessly against injustice wherever he found it.
- He was a **Heroic Hugger**, because he accepted all people and understood the importance of spiritual practices to grow our own self worth and strength.
- He was a **Truth Seeker**, drawing inspiration from many sources, including Christianity, Islam, Jainism and Hinduism. Indeed his first autobiography was entitled *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*.
- He was a **Listener**, because he struggled tirelessly for Indian independence. Each Monday was his "day of silence" so that he could train himself to better listen to others.
- He was a **Peacekeeper**, because he developed a system of non-violent resistance that inspired millions and proved that non-violence when applied correctly is more effective than violence in creating change.
- Finally, he was **Web Man**, because he lived a simple, frugal life in harmony with nature.

So as Unitarian Universalists, we have a lot we can learn from Gandhi and the example he set us.

I have a DVD copy of the Richard Attenborough film *Gandhi*, which would make good family viewing. If you wish to borrow it for a week, let me know.

(continued on the next page)

Last Sunday we all shared our own views of God. Here are our thoughts:

OUR VIEWS OF GOD

‘God is scientific discovery’

‘God is inside all of us’

‘Kindness to all’

‘I believe in an interconnected web of energy /consciousness we either resonate with or are in disharmony with. It connects us all and instructs us all but does not control or look over us’

‘God is the magnificence of nature’

‘God is Love, Nature, Web of Life, Kindness’

‘There is no language to support / describe my sense of God’

‘God is: Love, Infinite, Beyond Immense, Beyond Form or Our Imagination. How many dimensions is God?’

‘Do we need a concept of God? Perhaps the recognition that there is an energy force thrumming in the universe is enough’

‘The spark of creativity is the closest I have been able to come to for a sense of God or ultimate spirit’

‘God is Love: Loving, Accepting, a forgiving parent with unconditional love for us. God lives within us and works through us. God is nature’

‘Jesus shows us how God is’

‘God is love – acceptance’

‘God is each other’

‘Respect each other, value diversity and differences’

‘God is the natural order of the world – the rules of nature (physics, biology etc.) The rest is up to us – to seek love, justice, wisdom and ‘rightness’

‘God is love and goodwill, acceptance, wisdom, strength and courage’

‘God is everywhere. God is in the struggle, the climb, and the sweet feeling of accomplishment. God is smiles, laughter, tears, and the raised hands fighting for justice and equality. God can be found in each person. God is love’

‘God is who I can thank for many, many things and the people around me’

‘I don’t believe in a God, but I think there is something out there that can’t be seen nor touched, which helps us in extreme situations’

‘God is a spark carried by each person. God is love’

‘God is the connection. God is part of everyone’

‘God is that which cherishes us. We reach for her, she is our foundation’

‘Universe, Mystery, Force of Life’

‘Love and Justice’

‘Love is all there is’

‘I feel God in nature’s peace’

‘I do not believe in a God as such. But perhaps I do in that I believe in the vitality and strength of the human spirit and in the vastness and glory of the universe, the importance and crucial role of every living thing’

‘God is around us constantly to guide and protect us. God will enter if we ask Him in, transforming us’

Juliet Donaldson, Director of Religious Education

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING

January 18, 2017

(Approved February 15, 2017)

Present: Bob Waterman, JR Pucillo-Dunphy, Bill Howe, Rev. Sarah Person, Pam Davis, Barbara Bancroft, Christine Hoyle, Nancy Backus, Eileen Smith, Holly Begley
Absent: Amanda Huggon-Mauretti
Attending: Norm Grenier

The meeting was called to order. Norm Grenier spoke to the PC about the financial and social importance of the 2/26 Service Auction, asking us all to encourage members to attend and donate. Those pre-registering via email to Norm G. or Valarie O. will be eligible to win door prizes.

The minutes of the December 21 PC meeting were accepted.

Cash in the Plate donations now agreed upon are: February - Heartwood Foundation, March - RE's Coming of Age kids to purchase backpacks for foster children, April - Youth Scholarships, May - Choir Music Scholarships.

The Treasurer's Report was presented. The Music Committee has changed its accounting process. All of its funds, expenses, and receipts are now submitted to the Treasurer to be deposited and/or paid and are part of the church's accounting. The Religious Exploration Committee continues to handle its funds, expenses, and receipts separately, using its own checkbook. Any concerns about this process will be addressed by the relevant committees.

The Religious Exploration Committee reported that attendance continues to be strong. A new structure is strengthening program flow, and space is being well utilized. RE Director Juliet will complete her RE credentialing this spring.

MAAC and Music Committee Reports were received.

Social Action Items: Social Action Network sent a request for space use. Barbara Bancroft will contact them for more information. Church members will participate in the 1/21 Boston Women's March for America. The Sanctuary Movement is seeking volunteers, space or donations to support their efforts. Note that the Plymouth County Sheriff's office has stated that they will be in full cooperation with I.C.E. The Social Witness Program sent a request for volunteers. The last two items will be sent to the Social Action Committee for consideration.

The Building and Grounds Committee reported that recent roof and ceiling repairs look good and are functioning well. Blinking light fixtures are being repaired and/or replaced. Bulbs are gradually being replaced with LEDs. A motion sensor light has been installed in the Ladies' Room. Rev. Sarah urgently requested that repairs and maintenance to the exterior of the building become top priority for the Committee.

The Sabbatical Task Group is comprised of four members. Gene Phillips, Sue St. Germain, Bob Waterman and Cheryl MacQueen are working on coverage for Rev. Sarah's sabbatical. A number of people have offered to cover the pulpit. The retired Rev. Gary Smith will be offering classes on preaching. Other ministers have agreed to cover rites of passage and similar requests.

A meeting of the Hospitality Committee is needed. Rev. Sarah will coordinate.

Church locks and keys will soon be changed. Members will be reminded via Newsletter, UU Updates and Order of Service. Chris Hoyle will provide explanatory notes for members' understanding of this difficult but critical change.

Finance/ Fundraising: Pam Davis and Bill Howe will draft a budget for FY 2018. On March 19 we will conduct a "Miracle Sunday" one-day pledge drive/stewardship event to support church operations. Rev. Sarah will work on program content. Holly will invite a group of members to participate in brainstorming for a piece to promote the event. The PC will handle follow-up on pledges.

The PC agreed to move forward with legal incorporation and pursuit of 501c3 status. Dan Hotchkiss and/or Atty. Linea Michael will facilitate these processes. The congregation will be asked to approve these items at the Annual Meeting. An extra Saturday PC meeting may be scheduled to address volunteer recruitment and other deferred items.

The next meeting of the PC will take place on Wednesday, February 15, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned.

MARCH 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline	3:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary 7:00 p.m. Spirituality Group, Parlor 7:00 p.m. Music Committee, Parish Hall	9:30 a.m. Kidd's Musik, Parish Hall 6:00 p.m. Sangha Meditation Group, Parish Hall	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10:30 a.m. Worship Service & Religious Exploration 11:30 a.m. On Topic, Parlor 11:45 a.m. 10 Actions, 100 Days, Minister's Office 11:45 a.m. The Next Step on Climate Justice Brown Bag Lunch, Parish Hall	Church Locks Changed 7:00 p.m. CUUPs, Parish Hall	10:00-3:00 Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall 6:30 p.m. Expansion Committee, Minister's Office 7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir Rehearsal, Parish Hall	12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline 6:00 p.m. RE Committee, Parish Hall	3:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary 5:45 p.m. Leadership Development Team, Minister's Office 7:00 p.m. Spirituality Group, Parlor 7:00 p.m. Satsang, Minister's Office	9:30 a.m. Kidd's Musik, Parish Hall 12:00 noon DRE Cluster Meeting, Parish Hall 7:00 p.m. Knitting Group, J. Gould's Home (Recycle Week)	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
10:30 a.m. Worship Service & Religious Exploration 11:30 a.m. On Topic, Parlor 11:45 a.m. 10 Actions, 100 Days, Minister's Office 6:00 p.m. RE Coming of Age, All Downstairs		10:00-3:00 Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall 6:00 p.m. PR Committee, Minister's Office 7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir Rehearsal, Parish Hall	12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline 6:00 p.m. Parish Committee, Parish Hall		 9:30 a.m. Kidd's Musik, Parish Hall 6:00 p.m. Sangha Meditation Group, Parish Hall	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
10:30 a.m. Worship Service & Religious Exploration 11:30 a.m. Minister's Q & A, Parlor 11:45 a.m. 10 Actions, 100 Days, Minister's Office April Newsletter Deadline	7:00 p.m. CUUPs, Parish Hall	10:00-3:00 Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall 7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir Rehearsal, Parish Hall	12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline	3:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary 7:00 p.m. Spirituality Group, Parlor 7:00 p.m. Satsang, Minister's Office	9:30 a.m. Kidd's Musik, Parish Hall 7:00 p.m. Music Topics, Parish Hall (Recycle Week)	Kitchen Use
26	27	28	29	30	31	
10:30 a.m. Worship Service & Religious Exploration 11:30 a.m. On Topic, Parlor 11:45 a.m. 10 Actions, 100 Days, Minister's Office 3:00 p.m. RE Coming of Age, All Downstairs		10:00-3:00 Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall 7:00 p.m. Chalice Choir Rehearsal, Parish Hall	12:00 noon Order of Service Deadline	3:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary 7:00 p.m. Spirituality Group, Parlor	9:30 a.m. Kidd's Musik, Parish Hall	

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS!

Before you go to bed Saturday night, March 11, turn your clocks ahead one hour!





New England Region

WORKSHOPS & WEBINARS

<https://www.uua.org/new-england/workshops-webinars>

- **3/11/2017 Effective Staff Supervision in Religious Organizations** with Rev. Susan Beaumont in Framingham, MA
- **3/18/2017 Cracking the Leadership Crisis, Deeper Dive** with Karen Bellavance-Grace in Ellsworth, ME
- **3/25/2017 Leading - and Feeling - Change in Congregations** with Hilary Allen in Northborough, MA
- **4/5/2017 Leading - and Feeling - Change in Congregations** with Hilary Allen, Online/Webinar

NEW ENGLAND REGION REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

- **4/21/2017 Regional Assembly** at the Hilton Hotel, Woburn, MA
 - Evening reception and UUA Presidential Candidates Forum with Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, Rev. Allison Miller, Rev. Jeanne Pupke, and UUA Moderator Jim Key
- **4/22/2017 Regional Assembly** at the Hilton Hotel, Woburn, MA
 - Worship with Rev. Robin Bartlett and Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout
 - Creating & Leading Dynamic Lay-Led Worship with Rev. Sue Phillips
 - Justice Ministry Matters with Meck Groot
 - Congregational Relevance with Hilary Allen
 - Community Sing with Dr. Ysaye Barnwell
 - Northern New England District Annual Meeting

