



# FUSN News

First Unitarian Society in Newton

Unitarian Universalist

January 8 - January 22

## SUNDAY SERVICES - 10:15 A.M

### The theme for January is Faith

1/8 - "What Faith Really Means" Rev. John Nichols

Community Breakfast and Special Collection

1/15 - Dani Lindstrom, Youth Programs Coordinator

1/22 - "And Now What?" - Rev. Carol Rosine

On this first Sunday following the inauguration, our guest preacher will be the Reverend Carol Rosine.

Carol is the Minister Emerita of the First Universalist Society of Franklin, MA, a congregation that she served for 29 years. Carol did her internship at FUSN and was ordained by our congregation in 1987.

1/29 - Matt Meyer

## LUNCH WITH THE LAY MINISTERS

Any and all are invited to join John Nichols and some of the lay ministers for soup and conversation at noon on Wednesday, January 11 in the Alliance Room. A special invitation is extended to retired or long-term members of our community. Let Fran (617.527.3203) or Cindy (617.901.6848) know if you plan to attend.

As in years past, Lunch with the Ministers will be a monthly event, so if you cannot come on this date, don't fret. We've scheduled them for the first Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday of the month, except for December and January, to avoid conflicts with the Holiday Fair and New Year's holiday.

Thursday, February 2

Friday, March 3

Wednesday, April 5

Thursday, May 4

Friday, June 2

## MINISTERIAL MUSINGS

There is an old saying that "The perfect is the enemy of the good" or "of the good enough." It applies particularly to groups of high achievers who expect a great deal of themselves and of others. Such people – and a lot of UUs fall into this category – are relentlessly critical of themselves, of each other and of those who work for them. Everyone and everything could be better and therefore should be.

Such people make great employees because they are constantly trying to improve their game. As co-workers they can be troublesome because they are also constantly trying to improve your game. No matter what you've done on a project, no matter how long you've sweated it out and produced something that represents your best effort, your deepest caring for the work you've accomplished, there will be those in your group who will be happy to tell you and anybody who will listen about the ways in which it could have been better. Next to grief work, helping parishioners deal with over achievers without succumbing to their siren calls to seek perfection has been a large part of my pastoral counseling over the years.

As an interim minister I coached the search committee in nearly every congregation I served. Many search committee members start with the assumption that they are expected to find and can find a better minister than the one who has just left. They create a ministerial profile that is so perfectionist that any mature candidate would reject it. And following each interview the members of the committee would get together and discuss the many ways in which the candidate was disappointing. One search committee chair told me that they had become so awash in negativity they could not make a positive decision and had to go to another year of search.

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**Staff:** Erin Spline, *Minister*; Fran Clancy, *Administrator*; Rowan Van Ness, *Director of Lifespan Religious Education*; Beth Walton, *Assistant Director of Religious Education*; Dani Lindstrom, *Youth Programs Coordinator*; Anne Watson Born, *Director of Music*; Carson Corman, *Organist*; Roberta Humez, *Minister of Music Emerita*; Rushland Crosby, *Beadle*.

**Board of Trustees:** Gregg Dibatis, Brian Burba, Josie Greene, Eric Haas, Cathy Morocco, *Chair*; Lesley Sneddon, Sarah Fazeli and Julianna Lakomski, *Youth Reps*.

**Operations Council:** Susan Bartlett, *Chair*; John Brennan, Judy Curby, *Treasurer*; Laurel Farnsworth, *Vice Chair*; Andrea Kelley, Kate Mason.

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## MINISTERIAL MUSINGS (continued)

Search committees and congregations that succeed find ways to cherish a candidate's strengths while working around those areas where the candidate will need some help. It could also be said of such congregations that they treat one another with kindness while still seeking the best work that they can hope for in this imperfect world.

## FROM THE BOARD

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### Facing a Brave New Year

I've often wondered why it is easy for me to bring my Unitarian Universalist beliefs into casual conversation with others. As a former (recovering) Catholic, the idea of proselytization was, by choice, to be avoided at all costs, whether it was on the giving or receiving end of the equation. So what is it that has brought about this change in me?

The recent movements to affirm equality among people of different racial, ethnic, and religious beliefs have become part of our daily discourse. "Black Lives Matter," Syrian refugees, issues involving immigration and social justice have found a voice in today's world. While attending social gatherings discussions often bring up any number of these trending topics. When these conversations get difficult I try to remember who we are and what we stand for. While exercising my capacity to listen with compassion, I give voice to the Unitarian Universalist commitment to social justice and equality guided by the seven principles.

With the arrival of this New Year we find ourselves teetering on the precipice of an unknown future. I've decided it's time to teach my nine year old daughters what my father fought for in WW2. Keeping in mind the words of George Santayana "Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it." Now more than ever it is important to live out our principles and to continue our own free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

*Gregg DiBiaso*

## RE CONNECTIONS

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When our country is in as divisive of a place as it is, it feels like religious community is more important than ever. For some, beliefs about the nature of the world and the universe may be shaken. For others, having a community of people with shared values feels especially important, both for raising children and for adults.

This winter, your religious education staff are planning a series of parent meetings to get more information about what is and isn't working about our religious education program, multigenerational opportunities, and support for parents and families. We look forward to hearing what has brought people to FUSN and what keeps them here, so we can more effectively partner with families in bringing the love and grace of Unitarian Universalism to their lives.

There are unique programs available for different grade levels we are thinking about introducing in the future--expanding our offerings for sexuality education (OWL), integrating more conversations about death and grief--as well as learning from you all about how parents might appreciate connecting with each other, learning more ways to integrate UUism into the home, and how people are talking about the tough questions.

All meetings will be from 11:45-12:45 p.m., in the new classroom downstairs. Childcare will be provided for any meeting in which it is requested. Please save these dates:

January 8: Parents of 8th-11th graders (12th grade parents welcome to attend)

January 29: Parents of 4th-7th graders

February 12: Parents of 1st-3rd graders

March 5: Parents of PreK/K (Nursery parents welcome to attend)

Lastly, if you haven't yet checked it out, I strongly encourage you to sign up for the "Traveling Chalice." This kit includes a chalice, candles, books and brochures about family prayers and blessings and the story of the chalice. Many families have found this to be a centering ritual to add to the dinner table or to bedtime. It's a great way to explore bringing a little ritual into your home and adapt it to your family. The sign up sheet is on the bulletin board outside Fran's office.

Many blessings, *Rowan*

## **FUSN GUIDELINES FOR PLAYING IN THE HEAD START ROOM**

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Families have been asking for a dedicated play space during coffee hour for when it's not nice enough to go outside on the playground. The FUSN Operations Council is making the Head Start Room upstairs available for play. Here are some guidelines on how we can make that space--and coffee hour--safe and welcoming for families and people less steady on their feet alike.

### **For Adults:**

1. Children must be supervised by a parent/guardian or another adult designated by the parent/guardian.
2. Adults are encouraged to bring in chairs, coffee, etc., as long as you clean up after yourself.

### **For Kids:**

1. Indoor play should stay in the Head Start Room during Coffee Hour--no playing in the tower room beyond the folding doors.
2. Stay Safe! Don't throw toys. Keep off counters, ledges, and windows
3. Clean up when you're done.
4. Walk in the hallways and in the Parish Hall.

## **OVER 60 CLUB NEWS**

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Twenty-five courageous FUSNites, unafraid to identify themselves as "aging," participated in three six-session meetings this past summer and fall under the facilitation of Wendy Haskell, Nancy Wrenn, Kate Mason and Connie Adkins. Topics were chosen by each group and covered life style changes, medical challenges, losses, downsizing and other tasks life gives to people in their sixties and seventies. The goal was to encourage people to explore new opportunities and to recognize the "safety net" which FUSN offers.

"We began focusing on these concerns at lunch at Ferry Beach over a year ago," Wendy noted, "And the idea of a special cohort at FUSN quickly gained interest." Erin Splaine advised the leaders to work under the Lay Ministers. Together they developed a special registration form for people over 60 with contact information about their family members, medical support, funeral wishes if desired, to be kept confidential for use of the ministers.

Some of the groups are continuing to meet with their own volunteer leaders. Outside speakers on topics

## **OVER 60 CLUB NEWS (continued)**

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covered, to which all FUSN members and friends will be invited, will be scheduled for coming months. If anyone is interested in joining a new Over 60 Club, Wendy and Connie will be starting a new group in the spring. Let them know now: [Haskellwendy@gmail.com](mailto:Haskellwendy@gmail.com) and [conadkins1@gmail.com](mailto:conadkins1@gmail.com). *Nancy Wrenn, initiator*

## **THANK YOU**

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Dear fellow FUSNites,

I want to publicly thank Bruce Henderson for all the work that he has done over the past many months to vastly improve the electronic communications and website for the FUSN community.

Bruce has worked tirelessly to reorganize the collection and distribution of FUSN news -- he has transitioned over to mailchimp from an outdated mailing list system, and he has painstakingly collected and checked the list of subscribers from myriad inconsistent other lists. Bruce put an enormous amount of time into integrating the new newsletter distribution with the new wordpress-based [fusn.org](http://fusn.org) website, working closely with Fran to work out systems for adding news items to the website and then automatically collecting those news items into bi-weekly mailings.

In addition to completely revamping FUSN news collection and distribution, Bruce also re-created the "FUSN yellow pages" on the [fusn.org](http://fusn.org) website. For many years, Dan Brody had set up and maintained a "yellow pages" database using a now-defunct online database system. We had difficulty recreating that functionality on the old [fusn.org](http://fusn.org) website, and when we transitioned to a new website this past summer, Bruce took it upon himself to create a similar system on the new site and to transfer the old yellow pages data into the new format. As with the FUSN news distribution and content management, it took an enormous amount of time and effort, behind the scenes, to make all of this functionality available to the FUSN community.

We are so lucky as a community to benefit from the creativity, enthusiasm, and dedication of Bruce's efforts!

Thank you, Bruce!!!!!!!

*Greg Sullivan*

## COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

**Join us** for our next Community Breakfast, the best way to start your Sunday, on **January 8** at 9:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall. The extensive menu includes scrambled eggs, scrambled eggs with vegetables, pancakes, French toast, bacon, sausage, gluten-free corn bread, home fried potatoes, white and whole wheat biscuits, vegetarian sausage gravy, fruit, yogurt, jams and jellies, juices, coffee and tea, and the occasional special treat. It's only \$4 for adults and \$3 for kids. Newcomers eat free. We have high chairs, too. Upcoming breakfasts: Feb. 12, March 12, April 9, May 7

## EVENING SONG

**Join Vermilion** for the Evening Song service on Sunday, **February 5** at 7:00 p.m. Evening Song at FUSN is a half-hour candlelight service of music, poetry, and meditation planned around FUSN's monthly themes. Let the sanctuary welcome you into meditative music, poetry, and silence - even at the end of a full weekend at FUSN - for a bit of quiet music, reflection, and silence to ease into the week ahead, and into our always too busy lives.

## SERVICES AUCTION

Plan now to be at the Annual Fabulous FUSN Services Auction on Saturday evening, **January, 28**. Where else can you get dinner, drinks, fun AND a babysitter for Five Bucks? And a chance to win cool stuff like vacation weekends and gourmet dinner. So plan to be there and start thinking about any services you can donate. Lots more details to follow after the holiday.

## WORKSHOP ON THE INTERSECTIONALITY OF OPPRESSIONS

Please join us on Sunday February 5, 12:00-3:00 pm for an interactive examination of the intersectionality of oppressions with Rev. Michelle Walsh in the Alliance Room. Michelle, a UU Minister who was ordained at FUSN, teaches on issues of anti-racism and cultural oppression at Boston University's School of Social Work and is the author of the forthcoming book *Violent Trauma, Culture and Power: An Interdisciplinary Exploration of Lived Religion*. Please contact Josie Greene to reserve a spot [josieg49@gmail.com](mailto:josieg49@gmail.com), 617 513-2814. Sponsored by FUSN's Multicultural Ministry Initiative.

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