



The NUUS

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Ellsworth
121 Bucksport Rd., Ellsworth, ME 04605

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www.uuellsworth.org

Volume 40

No. 8 August 2008

A Month of Sundays (All services at 10:30 a.m.)

Aug 3. *The Spiraling Nature of Our Faith.*
Tom Grogan, a Bangor Theological Student

Aug 10. Rev Danielle diBona, UU community minister, Thomaston, is active in Native American and other anti-racism issues

Aug 17. *Standing on Hallowed Ground: Reflections from a Pilgrimage Trip (to the birthplace of Unitarianism)*

Marcia Stanard, Student, Meadville Lombard Seminary

Aug 24. Rev Bobbie Nelson, retired UU minister and sister of Don Martin of UUCE

Aug 31. Rev Sara Hayman

Adult Ed Activities

August 3rd, Sunday afternoon – All-Church Picnic at Ellsworth Harbor Park Gazebo, rain or shine. Harbor Park is on the Union River at the foot of Washington Street. Bring your own food, drinks, plates and cutlery.

August 10th, Sunday after services – Film, “A Dream In Hanoi,” in the RE wing. Two theatre companies, one American, one Vietnamese, collaborate to produce *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Hanoi. See article elsewhere in this newsletter for a full description.

August 13th, Wednesday evening, 7 pm, at the church – Poetry Discussion, Stephen Dunn’s book, *Fallen Angels*. We will also discuss his poem, “To a Terrorist.” See article in this newsletter for a full description.

Caring Committee

August Birthdays:

August 2 George Marcus

August 7 Carolyn Parkhurst

August 15 Betty Jane MacMichael

Please save any cards that you receive that are "freebeeies" that you do not wish to use and consider donating them to the Caring Committee in September. Have a relaxing and rejuvenating summer.

Thank you!



Unexpected Grace

It's all downhill from here:
lists made,
applications sent,
vacations planned;
what's done is done
we've made our beds
now we sleep
now we reap
now we turn the compost over,
rich black gold waiting at the end of the rainbow.
We have been swinging way out here
at the other end of the year,
where life is so full
that we need no reminders
and what a glory it is,
how lush and how beautiful
stuffed full of corn and raspberries
tomatoes and zucchini,
and squash coming
with the first turn of fall.
This is the time of letting go,
wagon rolling down the hillside and can't stop
steer around the bumps the best you can
and hang on,
hang on,
laugh and giggle and grin
this is the ride
just this,
and no other.
garden planted
garden watered
and now the harvest comes.

Blessings,

Leela

A Book Review by Sally Bell

I have just finished reading, and then re-reading, My Stroke of Insight: a Brain Scientist's Personal Journey by Jill Bolte Taylor, PhD, and I unreservedly recommend this to everyone. Dr. Taylor is a brain scientist who, at the age of 37, suffered a terrible stroke in her left brain hemisphere. The stroke was due to an arterio-venous malformation, a congenital defect in which the artery in the brain connects directly to the veins without going through capillaries. Dr. Taylor became increasingly isolated in her right hemisphere, which does not have language facilities, and yet still managed to call for help.

It's a wonderfully readable book. She describes the workings of and connections between the two hemispheres clearly and understandably and is able to describe vividly her experiences during and after the stroke. I found it fascinating, moving, and informative. (Did you know that any emotional/physiological event takes 90 seconds to go through your body? I didn't. Of course, you can choose to keep it going, or not to put a stop to it, but the cycle is 90 seconds.) Dr. Taylor recovered nearly all her brain function over a period of 10 years -- and I won't say any more so I don't spoil it for you.



Adult Education

The July All-Church Picnic was a great success and much fun. Almost forty folks attended, including a passel of kids. Fran Stehman brought games, play equipment, and ice cream for everyone. Dartha Reid brought chocolate cake to share. We enjoyed the beautiful weather and watching the children romp on the lawns at Woodlawn.

Our August picnic will be held on Sunday, August 3rd, at Ellsworth Harbor Park, on the Union River, at the foot of Washington Street. We have reserved the gazebo for our use. It is large enough to hold 5-6 picnic tables, so we will meet, come rain or shine. There is lawn space for the kids to play. As usual, bring your own picnic food, drinks, plates and cutlery. You may bring food to share if you wish, but that is not necessary. Play equipment is, of course, fine.

If you have questions contact a member of the Adult Ed Committee, Fran Stehman, Tom Stipe, Bob Dickens, or Diana Cate.

Sunday Afternoon Film –“A Dream In Hanoi”

The Adult Ed Committee and Bill Conway will show an engaging film on Sunday afternoon, August 10th, 12:30 pm, in the RE Wing. You are invited to check out our new 5’x5’ screen and DVD/VCR projector.

“A Dream In Hanoi” is about two theater companies, one American, one Vietnamese, who collaborate to produce *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in Hanoi. This spirited tale follows the actors, directors, producers, and technicians from both countries as they struggle to surmount the huge obstacles of language, culture, ideology, and a history of war on their journey to opening night at Hanoi’s famous Opera House.

The film features Vietnam’s renowned theater, the Central Dramatic Company of Vietnam, and actors and staff from the Artists Repertory Theater in Portland, Oregon. Music is performed by artists of Vietnam’s National Theater of Music and Dance and the Cheo Theater of Hanoi.

“A Dream In Hanoi” is the first American documentary about American/Vietnamese relations that does not focus on the Vietnam war or its legacy of human suffering.

In English and Vietnamese with English subtitles. After previewing the film, Anne Ossanna wrote, “Incredible, how often can teenagers put down their Ipod’s and watch/listen/read a film with subtitles? Yet, they did...and also said ‘This needs to be seen’.”

Poetry Discussion – Stephen Dunn

The next Poetry Discussion night will be Wednesday, August 13th, 7 pm, at church. Stephen Dunn’s book, *Between Angels*, is the topic, plus one of his poems in another collection, “To a Terrorist.” Bob Dickens will lead the discussion.

Stephen Dunn, as described by Publishers Weekly, “dwells on the curious ambivalence harbored in abstractions; discursive poems like ‘Tenderness,’ ‘Kindness,’ ‘Forgiveness,’ and ‘Happiness’ render timeworn concepts dramatically convincing, manifesting Dunn’s belief that ‘abstractions are just abstract/until they have an ache in them.’ True to the title, angels descend into the best poems ‘like invisible friends / you could count on;’ they mediate the uneasy gap between our desires and reality, guarding human frailty ‘among the bittersweet / efforts of people to connect, / make sense, endure.’”

A variety of Dunn’s books can be found at Blue Hill Books (but not, unfortunately, this one), and of course on Amazon .com.

[“Adult Education” continued on p. 4]

“Walking the Marshland”
by Stephen Dunn

It was no place for the faithless,
so I felt a little odd
walking the marshland with my daughters,
Canada geese all around and the blue
herons just standing there;
safe, and the abundance of swans.

The girls liked saying the words,
gosling,
egret, whooping crane, and they liked
when I agreed.

The casinos were a few miles
to the east.
I liked saying craps and croupier
and sometimes I wanted to be lost
in those bright
windowless ruins.

It was April,
the gnats and black flies
weren't out yet.
The mosquitoes hadn't risen
from their stagnant pools to trouble
paradise and to give us
the great right to complain.

I loved these girls. The world
beyond Brigantine
awaited their beauty and beauty
is what others want to own.
I'd keep that
to myself. The obvious
was so sufficient just then.
Sandpiper. Red-wing
Blackbird. "Yes," I said.

But already we were near the end.
Praise refuge,
I thought. Praise whatever you can.

“At The Smithville Methodist Church”
by Stephen Dunn

It was supposed to be Arts & Crafts for a week,
but when she came home
with the "Jesus Saves" button, we knew what art was up, what
ancient craft.

She liked her little friends. She liked the songs
they sang when they weren't

twisting and folding paper into dolls.

What could be so bad?

Jesus had been a good man, and putting faith
in good men was what
we had to do to stay this side of cynicism,
that other sadness.

OK, we said, One week. But when she came home singing
"Jesus loves me,
the Bible tells me so," it was time to talk.
Could we say Jesus
doesn't love you? Could I tell her the Bible
is a great book certain people use
to make you feel bad? We sent her back
without a word.

It had been so long since we believed, so long
since we needed Jesus
as our nemesis and friend, that we thought he was sufficiently
dead,
that our children would think of him like Lincoln
or Thomas Jefferson.
Soon it became clear to us: you can't teach disbelief to a child,
only wonderful stories, and we hadn't a story
nearly as good.

On parents' night there were the Arts & Crafts
all spread out
like appetizers. Then we took our seats
in the church
and the children sang a song about the Ark,
and Hallelujah
and one in which they had to jump up and down
for Jesus.
I can't remember ever feeling so uncertain
about what's comic, what's serious.

Evolution is magical but devoid of heroes.
You can't say to your child
"Evolution loves you." The story stinks
of extinction and nothing
exciting happens for centuries. I didn't have
a wonderful story for my child
and she was beaming. All the way home in the car

she sang the songs,
occasionally standing up for Jesus.
There was nothing to do
but drive, ride it out, sing along
in silence.

Membership Committee

Kathy Combs

As a newer member of UUCE (June '07), I'd like to introduce myself. I'm Kathy Combs, born and raised as a Roman Catholic in New York. In my early 20's, I moved to Westport, Ct. to raise my family and to finish my degree in Marketing. As a young mother I worked as a realtor, and met my second husband, Ted Combs, a Professor of Microbiology at Fairfield University. We spent many summers visiting MDI, and bought a summer home in Bar Harbor in 1985. We especially loved Acadia National Park (ANP) and the night sky up here. After Ted retired from the University in 1988, we moved to MDI permanently with our two youngest children and bought a seasonal lodging property. Fifteen years ago, Ted became a seasonal Interpretive Ranger for ANP, and I continued to run our lodging property. During the first dozen years we were here, I became very involved in the tourism industry, working on committees and boards on the local, regional and state level.

As busy as I was, and as a lapsed Catholic, I became aware of my desire to reconnect with a spiritual community. Ted was very supportive of all the research I did over the next few years toward that end through reading, internet and attending services at various religious facilities. I developed an interest in the universe, multiverses, and the histories and philosophies of some ancient religions...early Christianity, Buddhism and Earth Based religions. While I continued these interests, I strove to simplify my life, and left behind most of the boards and committees. After the kids finished college, they moved to Boston, married and blessed us with two beautiful grandchildren. That gave Ted and me the opportunity during our annual "off season" hiatus from our business, Bar Harbor Cottages and Suites and ANP to pursue our passion of travel. In early May of this year, Ted and I celebrated our 25th Anniversary in the Languedoc

region of Southern France visiting the sites and mountaintop fortresses the medieval Cathars occupied during the tragic Albigensian Crusades.

Finally, about two years ago while researching my interests in the universe and religion online, I came across the UUA.org site which linked me to the UUCE website. The first service I attended was the Solstice service in December '06. The Seven Principles appealed to me, especially "the free and responsible search for truth and meaning", and drawing its wisdom from a vast spectrum, including science. I enjoy the spiritual community and working on the Care Committee, and look forward to getting to know each of you better in the years to come.

Margery Forbes

Pam and Phil Person report that Margery Forbes broke her leg while getting into a boat - she got tripped by a rope. She is in no pain and is in good spirits.

She is now back at the family's home on Naushon Island off Woods Hole and is doing very well recuperating with loads of family helping her.

She does not expect to be back in Blue Hill until September as it is hard for her to manage.

She would love cards (flowers are really hard to deliver to the island and she will not have a phone handy until next week):

Margery Forbes
Ridge House
P.O. Box 87
Woods Hole, MA 02543

IT'S A PARTY!

UUCE GOODS AND SERVICES AUCTION

Saturday, October 4, 2008

Dear UU Friends,

Did you attend the October Fest at Fran Stehman's home last year? Do you recall the wonderful hand-knitted vest made by Ruth Eveland that was passed around in the congregation? Both were offered at last year's Goods and Services Auction. We hope you plan to donate to this year's Auction and that you plan to attend.

Be sure to look for the "Wish List" of items that folks would be interested in bidding on – if someone else would supply them. It will be in the Community Room during Coffee Hour.

This year's pre-auction dinner will be an Italian Buffet, complete with antipasto, vegetarian and vegan dishes. There will be a cash wine bar.

The Auction Organizers plan to donate part of the proceeds from the Auction to a local Fuel Bank. We all are aware that many of our friends and neighbors may need assistance this year to help with ever rising heating costs.

Please be in touch if you can help with advance work, and/or are available to help that evening – Saturday, Oct. 4.

--Peggie Geiger: 288-2335
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--Evelyn Foster: 667-5998
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--Colleen Prentiss: 288-4882 harmonia-gardens@hotmail.com

--Peggy Strong: 667-7020

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--Susanne Forest 422-8251

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Mark your calendar and plan to attend the 2008 UUCE Goods and Services Auction on October 4, 2008. It is not too soon to be thinking about contributing to this fund-raising event for our UU congregation. This year we can consider splitting the proceeds to help those who will be struggling with home heating costs – your thoughts are welcome about this idea.

We are also looking for another planner or two. Contact Peggie Geiger, Diana Cate, or Evelyn Foster, The UUCE Goods and Services Auction Organizers.

Food Pantry News

LOAVES AND FISHES FOOD PANTRY COMMITMENT

Staffing the Loaves and Fishes food pantry during the month of August is one of our major Social Justice activities. We need at least four (4) people three days a week during the month, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. It requires about 3 hours each day of the 13 days the pantry is open in August—that is a total of 52 volunteer commitments. Many people volunteer several days during the month. This is truly "feel good" work. There is a large sign-up poster board in the community room. If you have any questions please talk with Judy Rothrock (244-3520). Judy will be asking for your assistance during coffee hour or by phone.

Message from the President

What is ministry? Who is responsible for the ministry in our church community? What is worship? Who does it and why do we sometimes have such different ideas about what makes for a good worship service?

These are tough, critical questions that we need to consider, share our ideas about, and figure out what we are committing to each other by our participation in this church. This is just an abbreviated view of my perspective on these questions.

“But we have a minister. Isn’t all that her job?” Actually, it is a shared job. When we called Leela Sinha to be our paid Minister, many of us were drawn to her style of preaching and her views on what ministry is. She clearly says that ministry has many faces: compassion, pastoral care, challenge, growth, social witness, education. “By our words and our deeds, gentle and powerful, we keep hope alive for ourselves and those whose lives we touch; by public witness, we increase the number of people who see and hear us.” Through her leadership she can help us do a better job of our part of the ministry.

During the fall I hope that many of you will take advantage of the opportunity to go through the *Defining Your Personal Ministry* exercise that the Growth Team will be facilitating. I think that it will help expand your understanding of the concept of ministry and of what role you can take. This doesn’t mean we’ll be asking everyone to lead a Sunday morning service - we all have different callings to serve.

So, other than the Sunday services that Leela leads and the compassion/pastoral care/social witness/education that she shares with us, what more do we mean when we talk about “worship?” Some in our congregation are really uncomfortable using that word - it may have connotations of past experiences that bring back bad feelings, or it may

just not be a part of some people’s religious perspective: “I don’t believe in the kind of god that needs to be ‘worshipped’!”

It is my understanding (and remember, I’m primarily a humanist) that the point of our community worship is to gather together and to share a meaningful experience that includes love. For some this comes simply from our being together, for others it is evoked by the ritual elements of our services. Some focus on the sermon, some on the music, others on their relationship with something they consider holy. When it is a good service, everyone has something sustaining to take away.

And then there are those occasional times in which no one feels properly “fed,” much less nourished. I hope that we can acknowledge that those are not worship services and that they belong elsewhere on our church community calendar. Of course we need to discuss things and to work through our different opinions, but not at the expense of our opportunity to build community and fill our spiritual wells.

I believe that we can make time to be with each other to tackle those decisions which divide us, but it needs to be set aside for when that is the focus. Let’s keep our Sunday morning time together centered around our hearts rather than our heads. That is one way we can minister to each other.

Ruth Eveland,
President of the Board of Trustees



From The Board

Please let us know your thoughts on any of these items! Thanks.

Treasurer's report.

Treasurer George Marcus reported that we ended the year with a net of \$407.30. He noted that pledge income is about \$3600 below expected (in addition to the doubtful pledge allowance), fund raising is about 18% above budget (\$640), rental income is 86% above expectations (\$4700), the total utility bill was about \$1000 less than anticipated (probably due to some prepaid oil expenses), cleaning and snow plowing exceeded budget by about \$2000. The balance sheet does not include the latest Maine Community Fund (MCF) figures which George expected will show some downward numbers because of current market conditions.

The church recently received a bequest from the estate of Henry and Priscilla Smith in the amount of \$13,137.61 which has been forwarded to MCF. Ruth noted that while the Smiths were not members of our church they were in sympathy, and Henry was a part of the small ministry group on MDI.

LRE position. The board voted unanimously to hire Sonia Turanski as Lifespan Religious Educator. She will begin in August.

Comprehensive Financial Strategic Plan

At our Board meeting in June we briefly discussed the need to address our financial situation from a long-range strategic situation, and Ruth presented for discussion a three-pronged approach. (Please see the separate article for a complete explanation and the "Meditation.")

1. The 20-K Task Force Anne Ossanna offered to take charge of the proposed a group of 4-5 people who will take Leela's "20-K Meditation" and raise money for the church. Anne reported a quick search yielded about 7 granting agencies that will give to churches. Ruth pointed out that by looking at our budget from a "project perspective" when we apply for funds we may be able to find ways to improve

religious education, or to expand worship. Anne had also looked into a website where the church could set up a UUCE "store" selling t-shirts, mugs, posters, etc. with our logo. Anne will meet with Kay Wilkins and find a few others and move forward. Martha Dickinson's request for a projector/DVD hookup, for use by the Peace and Social Justice Committee and a helpful tool for other committees, was referred to the 20-K group. The estimated cost of that would be about \$500 to \$1000.

2. The Planned Giving Task Force

Kay Wilkins, George Marcus and Flo Reed would build a formal planned giving program, whose goal is to grow the endowment.

3. The Annual Canvass, which will be discussed more at a future meeting.

Individual fund raising efforts. The Board would like to be aware of individual fund-raising efforts within the congregation (e.g. cookie or plant sales) so that there can be some coordination in order to reduce confusion and not step on people's toes. We will discuss this further at the next meeting, and it may involve a short application/information form.

Nursery school program rental The church has been approached by Amy Bramblett to rent space for her nursery school program. She described it as Waldorf-based similar to the program previously run by Margot Entwistle for the last three years.

Music in Church

David Towle answered some questions about music during the worship service and described a development from the music committee, where he, Marta Rieman, Janine Galeski, Robert Phipps, and Jenn Ryan have formed a singing group they call UUQ. They have sung for us on a few Sundays, with Wayne Smith's accompaniment.

Respectfully submitted by Board Secretary Mary Ann Solet and President Ruth Eveland.

["From the Board" is continued on page 9]

New Strategic Financial Planning Concept Discussed at Board Meeting

At our meeting in June the Board briefly discussed the need to address our financial situation from a long range strategic situation. In July we fleshed out our initial concept, which is built upon a three-legged approach.

This approach provides a base through Leg 3, long term stability through Leg 2, and growth opportunities through Leg 1.

Leg 1: The 20-K Task Force.

This will be a small group (4 -5 people) that is charged with taking Leela's "20 K Meditation" (see below) and running with it to stave off the use of the "checking account float" (a.k.a. shortfall) for this year. It is our hope that this effort will also serve to change our approach to fund raising in the future, particularly by focusing on targeted funding for specific projects/goals. *Since this group will be looking for money outside the congregation we also hope that it will take the opportunity to consider how some of its activities can be worked into community outreach, as well as its primary mission to raise funds.* Any other short-term project oriented fund raising (e.g. a projector) should be coordinated with this team. It will also seek grants for specific activities or projects. It will be a task force with lots of work to do, but not a lot of meetings. At the moment its leaders are Anne Ossanna and Kay Wilkins.

Leg 2: The Planned Giving Task Force

This group will consist of Kay Wilkins, George Marcus and Flo Reed and will build a formal planned

giving program. It will sponsor education on the topic for the members of our congregation (and anyone else who might be interested) and also work with the Maine Community Foundation to increase our endowment funds.

Leg 3: The Annual Canvass

This is the dedicated group who is annually tasked with a very difficult, but also rewarding, job.

Leela's \$20,000 Meditation - An Exercise in Creative Thinking

For some people, thinking about money can be intimidating. Thinking about a lot of money can be paralyzing. Thinking about raising a lot of money can be a good way to ruin your dinner. But it doesn't have to be. The \$20,000 meditation is an opportunity to shift perspectives.

The premise is simple: no idea is too outlandish, nothing is impossible. Begin with the phrase, "Twenty thousand dollars is..." and then name something that would add up to \$20,000.

For example: \$20,000 is one really good rummage sale; forty weddings at \$500; twenty \$1000 paintings...whenever you run out of steam begin again with, "Twenty thousand dollars is...." and name everything that comes to mind. This exercise works well in pairs with partner 1 prompting: "Twenty thousand dollars is..." and partner 2 listing, with partner 1 re-prompting whenever partner 2 falls silent. They switch roles after 2 minutes.

A possible list:

\$20,000 is:

1 really good rummage sale

1 year interest on \$667,000 at 3%

["Leela's Meditation" is continued on page 10]

[Leela's Meditation, continued]

2 years interest on \$334,000 at 3%
1 year interest on \$334,000 at 6%
2 late model cars
4 houses painted (exterior) at \$5000
7 mid-to-high end computers at \$2900
8 retreats hosted at \$2500
10 yards landscaped at \$2000 (I don't have any idea if that's an accurate figure)
20 paintings at \$1000
40 wedding rentals at \$500 (although we don't charge that)
67 wedding rentals at \$300 (which we do charge)
100 cords of wood at \$200
250 costumed singing telegrams at \$80
2500 phone singing telegrams at \$8
500 class registrations at \$40
500 photographs at \$40
1000 local theater tickets at \$20
2000 24" balsam fir trees at \$10
2000 movie tickets at \$10
200 hours (5 weeks) of computer consulting at \$100/hr
2500 hours (62 weeks—over a year) of work at \$8/hr



Personnel

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president@uuellsworth.org

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Wayne Smith: 667-9482

Choir Director

Wayne Smith: 667-9482

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Lance Funderburk: 276-3301
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Greetings from the Religious Exploration Committee,

After enjoying the summer off, the committee will begin preparations for fall classes during the 1st Wednesday Committee Night on August 6th. Teacher assignments for the fall are: Anne Ossanna (ages 4-8), Nicole Leahy (Jr. Youth) and Carol Rosinski (Sr. Youth). We still need volunteers to work with our youngest members in the nursery. If you are interested please see any member of the RE Committee.

Regards,

Anne N. Ossanna - Chair
Members: Carol Rosinski, Helen Kazura, Becka Gagne
and Flo Reed