

December 2012

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*Our Mission is
To be a spiritual community
To welcome all
To nurture one another
To work for justice*

**The Unitarian Universalist
Church of Brunswick**

Rev. Sylvia Stocker, Minister

Rev. J. Bradbury Mitchell,
Minister Emeritus

Nicole Shanks,
Director of Religious Education

Stephanie Bernier,
Music Coordinator

Heidi Neufeld, Choir Director

Shirley Bernier, Office Administrator

Tony Sulkoski, Sexton

Parish Messenger

**Unitarian Universalist Church
of Brunswick**



ALL SERVICES AT 10:00 AT THE MINNIE BROWN CENTER

December 2 - "Stairway to Heaven"

Rev. Stocker preaching. Music provided by Jud Caswell and Carter Ruff.

December 9 - "When Our Own Strength Failed Us: The Story of Hanukkah"

Rev. Stocker preaching. Music provided by Grace Lewis-McLaren.

December 16 - "The Pink Candle"

Rev. Stocker preaching. This service is our annual Mitten Service, at which all are asked to bring new mittens, hats, or scarves to donate to needy families in the area. The service will include a special Parade to the Mitten Tree. Music provided by the choir directed by Heidi Neufeld. Janet Davis on piano.

December 23 - Solstice Celebration

Solstice Celebration, with our Intergenerational Holiday Orchestra directed by Louise Gephart. Brad Mitchell on piano. Bring a percussion instrument with you. Come, help us bring the sun back!

December 24 at 7 p.m. - Christmas Eve Service

The Christmas Eve service will be led by Rev. Stocker and Nicole Shanks. Come hear the stories, sing the songs, light the candles, and make a special wish for the coming year. Music provided by the choir directed by Heidi Neufeld. Ann Hartzler on piano. Louise Gephart on harp before the service.

December 30 - "Holy Humility"

Rev. Brad Mitchell preaching. a service of music observing Epiphany or Twelfth Night sung by the Merrymeeting Singers directed by Larry Lemmel. The sermon is a reflection on the hope and promise that can be revealed in the seemingly unimportant things and events of life. Larry Lemmel on piano.

HOW TO REACH US

**The Unitarian Universalist Church
of Brunswick**
PO Box 129, Brunswick ME 04011

The temporary church office, (at Fort Andross, 14 Maine Street, Brunswick, Suite 210 F & G) is open Tuesday through Friday from 10-4 The office administrator is Shirley Bernier.

The Director of Religious Education, Nicole Shanks, will be in her new office at Fort Andross. She is available by appointment and can be contacted at the church office: 729-8515.

The Minister, Rev. Sylvia Stocker will have office hours at home and at Fort Andross. She is available for and by appointment. In an emergency, do not hesitate to call her anywhere or any time. (Consult the church directory for her home number.) For routine church business, please call her at the church.

Monday is the Sabbath for the Minister, the DRE, and the office.

Telephone/Fax: 207 729-8515

E-mail: uubrunswick@gwi

Website: <http://www.uubrunswick.org>

Important RE Announcements and Dates

December 2

- * Multi-age Holiday Crafts
- * OWL

December 9

- * RE Classes
- * RE Holiday Craft Sale
- * Youth Group

December 16

- * RE Classes
- * OWL

December 23

- * Intergenerational Service

December 30

- * No RE



FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Some of you may have heard that I had a lost dog. Bella, my timid 12 lb Chihuahua mix became frightened and ran off on October 19th. For the next 5 weeks with the help of friends and family I posted flyers, camped out, hiked for miles, drove roads, and knocked on doors in an effort to find my dog. Little Bella really traveled. There were confirmed sightings of her in North Yarmouth, Cumberland, and Gray. She was so fearful that she wouldn't come near anyone, not even me. She was seen almost every day for the first two and a half

weeks and then suddenly no sighting calls for two and a half weeks. We thought she might be dead, after all, she had weathered Hurricane Sandy, our first snowfall, and nighttime temps that sometimes dipped into the teens. I would stand outside at night and hear the yips of coyotes and wonder how she was going to make it. Yet there was also the hope that she was somehow surviving and that we needed to continue to work to get her back. Finally, the day before Thanksgiving we got a call that someone had seen her. We set humane traps baited with food and on Thanksgiving night she finally trusted the trap, needed the food, and we got her back. What a gift for the holiday season!

I've been contemplating this gift as I think about this holiday season. For many years I honored Christmas as the celebration of the birth of Jesus. It was a meaningful and important holiday for me. As my theology changed and I was no longer a practicing Christian I grew to have a sense of disdain for the holiday season and Christmas in particular. All I could see was the materialism. I felt I could no longer celebrate the birth of Jesus and without that, the holidays made me feel like just another cog in the big consumer machine. It's taken a while, but I've been learning how I can take the Bible stories I was raised on and use them like I use wisdom stories from other religions and cultures. It doesn't have to be all or nothing. To many, the Christmas story represents hope, whether one believes in the divinity of Jesus or not. My adventures with my dog are causing me to reflect a lot on hope in the face of situations that seem hopeless. You just never know when the thing you are hoping for will be realized. Think of what you hope for this holiday season and then plan how you will work toward making that hope a reality.

Blessings, *nicole*

... MINISTER'S MUSINGS...

The holidays came early for our congregation this year. Once again, the Northern New England District (NNED) of the UUA has chosen our congregation to be the recipient of a Chalice Lighter grant. Monies from this grant will be earmarked specifically to build an accessibility ramp for our new building.

We won't know the final total of the grant until all the contributors respond. (Typically such grants generate around \$5,000 in contributions.) Because the grant is a little unusual in that way, some explanation is helpful.

Two or three times a year, the district solicits applications from congregations. After choosing the congregation they feel would be the best grant recipient, they send an appeal to individuals within the district who have signed up to be Chalice Lighters – people who have identified themselves as wanting to contribute to the special projects of other congregations in the district.

I am a Chalice Lighter, for instance. Two or three times a year, the district sends me a letter asking me to contribute to a chosen congregation's project. The amount I donate is entirely up to me. So, I send in my check, it

gets added to everyone else's check, and the benefiting congregation receives the total. This time my contribution will go to UUCB, but most times it goes to other UU congregations in Northern New England.

Ever since the fire, many, many people have generously offered us significant emotional, spiritual, physical, and monetary help. When I look back on our journey so far, I am awed by the good will of so many who have reached out to us. Congregations all over the country have taken up special collections, individuals have sent in contributions, people have volunteered their time and talent in fundraisers, and the Northern New England District has now twice chosen us as recipients of a Chalice Lighter grant.

Chalice Lighter grants are successful because many people contribute to the whole. I do not know how many in our congregation are Chalice Lighters. My guess is that some of us would like to be so that we can have the opportunity to give back after witnessing and receiving the generosity of so many others.

Here's how to sign up. Simply fill in the form on the next page and send it to the district. Next time

they send out an appeal, they will include you. Then, you, too, can help to increase the strength and vitality of nearby congregations.

Speaking as the person who has now twice had the thrill of opening the letter that has awarded us a Chalice Lighter grant, I can safely say the contributions, large and small, add up to much more than the total sum of money. They add up to caring, concern, and support at a much deeper level. As a Chalice Lighter, writing my little check, it feels really good to be a part of that!

Love,
Sylvia



CHURCH CANCELLATIONS

Though we are reluctant to cancel church ever, sometimes, for everyone's safety, that's the most prudent decision to make. When we do cancel, we phone in announcements to television channels 6 and 8. In addition, we provide cancellation information on the church answering machine's outgoing message.

Rule of thumb: If there is a parking ban in Bath, you can be reasonably sure we will cancel services. We may cancel in other circumstances, too. So, in the event of a storm, be sure to check before heading out.

Holiday Contributions to the Minister's Discretionary Fund Welcomed

The holidays are hard for many, and our church relies on the Minister's Discretionary Fund to help our friends and neighbors in need. The fund provides modest help for people who need food cards, heating fuel, electricity, and gas cards. If you would like to make a holiday gift to the Minister's Discretionary Fund, please make a check out to UUCB. On the memo line, write "Minister's Discretionary Fund." UUCB and the wider community thank you! –

Sylvia Stocker



Chalice Lighter Enrollment/Donation Form

Helping more light to shine in Northern New England!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Congregation _____

I/We wish to support and foster the growth of Unitarian Universalism. I/We pledge to contribute \$15 or more, three times a year.

I am already a Chalice Lighter.

My donation is enclosed.

Signature(s): _____

Please make checks payable to NNED-UUA. Write "Chalice Lighter" in the memo line. Mail to: Chalice Lighter Program, Northern New England District, 10 Ferry St., #318, Concord, NH 03301

FLOWERS AND FOCAL POINTS

Thank you to the following people who donated flowers for our services during the months of September, October, and November: Stephanie Bernier, Kate Chamberlain, Julie Dahmer, Sienna Dode, Adair DeSamater, Louise Gephart, Pat Harris, Barclay Palmer, and Anita Ruff.

The sign-up sheet for December, January and February is at the rear of the sanctuary. If the flowers are in memory or celebration of a loved one, please let Shirley know she can include it in the order of Service. To reserve a special Sunday later in the year, please notify Sienna Dode of the Worship Committee.

Thank you again. Live flower arrangements add such a lovely touch to our space.

COLLECTION FOR CHARITY

LAST CHANCE!

For the past 2 Sundays, the Congregation has collected some items for the Midcoast Hunger Prevention, Coastal Humane Society, and Tedford Housing, but if you forgot, there is still time.

You will have the opportunity to donate to these organizations during hospitality hour on December 12th. Watch for our youth who will be doing the collecting.

UUCB FIANCIAL REPORT

Your Finance Committee meets monthly to track our financial results relative to budget, and each year works with the minister, the board and church committees to prepare the annual budget for your approval. So far in FY 2013 we are doing pretty well.

Here is a summary of our latest financial report for July – October 2012:

Operating Income/Expense	Actuals July – October 2012	Budgeted for 2012
Income		
Pledges	\$ 65,455	\$206,706
Other	\$ 7,014	\$ 39,262
Total Income	\$ 72,469	\$ 245,968
Expenses	\$71,912	\$ 245,968
Net Income	\$ 557	\$ 0

At our November 13th meeting we noted that year-to-date we are a bit behind on our budgeted annual operating fund pledges. You may have recently received a reminder from Laura Jackson, Treasurer, regarding the status of your pledge commitment for the year. We hope you will consider making a payment to keep your pledges up to date. This helps the church with its cash flow management through the year.

Thanks for your support of UUCB.

Tom Rumpf, Laura Jackson, David Damour, and Bill Kunitz – The Finance Committee

Do you want to play with
the Holiday Orchestra on
Sunday, Dec 23rd?



See Louise Gephart
to get music.

20TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS



December 2 at 3:00 pm
St. John the Baptist
Pleasant Street, Brunswick

PRACTICES

Thursday, Nov. 29 from 7:00 to 8:30 at Elijah Kellogg Church
in Harpswell (Sectionals - *optional*)

Directions: We are easy to find on Rt. 123. (Past Bowdoin College and Maine Pines) Go straight for just under 8 miles. When you get to the blinking light, you will know you have gone 6 miles and there are just under 2 miles left. The steeple is tall and is on the left just after you get to the center.

Saturday, Dec. 1st from 9-12 at First Parish Church
(Mandatory practice – It's the only time we get together as a group.)

Sunday, Dec 2nd at 1:15 at St John's.

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP: A GIFT TO YOURSELF, THE CONGREGATION, AND THE LARGER WORLD

You've established a wonderful relationship between yourself and our church in your membership. As in any relationship, its health depends on fulfilling responsibilities. Here's how to give and get the most from your membership. This is not to exclude our church "friends" who are valued equally with members and willingly give gifts of time, talent, and treasure. We welcome all, nurture one another, work for justice, and care for the earth.

Be informed about church activities. Attendance at Sunday worship services may not be possible for some, however, everyone can be in the know through reading Sylvia's sermons, the Parish Messenger, joining a church organization (Chalice Circle, Women's Alliance, or a committee for example) and connecting with other members. Those of us who are lucky enough to participate in Sunday services feel enriched by Sylvia's words, the messages of our lay leaders, the music, the children's activities and simply being present in the congregation.

Participate in decisions affecting the life of our church. Members drive decisions on congregational issues through their right to vote. Anyone may attend congregational meetings, but members are the ones who discuss the issues at hand and make decisions by voting. Plan to participate in special congregational meetings and the Annual Meeting. Think about all the decisions we made during the past year which have brought us within reach of our new church building.

Schedule a financial contribution to the church. Ours is a Fair Share congregation, which means that each UUCB member is also a UUA member for which our congregation pays an annual per-member fee. Last spring we took a new approach to our Annual Pledge Drive in a one-day operational budget drive. We managed to reach our goal on that day! Shortly following the Annual Budget Drive, we launched a Capital Campaign, "Building Together," to raise funds to rebuild our church following the devastating fire of June 2011. We exceeded our stretch goal by more than \$200,000! Our Building Team has the relentless task of making our financial numbers work with the architects' plans and contractors' bids. For more information or to contribute to the Capital Campaign, please contact Sally Horne sally.xwindfarm@gmail.com or Cindy Parker cindyparker48@gmail.com, Co-Chairs.

Give the gift of your time and talent, i.e. become involved. What feels most rewarding and "right" for you as you plan to serve our church? Become active with a church group or committee. Offer to help at events. There are many ways to become involved at UUCB. We'll discuss them further in next month's Parish Messenger.

Experience personal spiritual growth as you fulfill responsibilities of membership. Have fun, make connections with folks, get support when needed. You'll make a difference in the life of our church community and the larger world.

THE SANTA PROJECT

It is that time again of tinsel and lights and joy and cheer. It is also a time to remember others that are not as fortunate and who may not be having a season of joy and cheer. Members of our congregation will again have the opportunity to provide Christmas gifts to some struggling local families.

Look for the **SANTA PROJECT** display at coffee hour on November 25th and December 2nd and 9th with information about what gifts would be particularly appreciated. There will be the option of buying gifts, as well as donation cash for the purchase of gifts or gift cards.



Irene Chance, Sharon Brown and Linda Mallard are coordinating the effort. They are happy to answer questions and can be reached by phone or email. Also look for them at coffee hour at the **SANTA PROJECT** display.

Irene Chance 725-2225 ichance@bowdoin.edu

Sharon Brown 729-5761 seacat44@gwi.net



UUCB Holiday Happenings 2012



Ecumenical Festival of Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 2 at 3:00 p.m. at St. John's Catholic Church in Brunswick. Enjoy our choir singing with area church choirs, directed by Ray Cornils. This 20th annual festival of Advent and Christmas music is preceded by a 15-minute prelude by the Parish Ringers beginning at 2:45. Admission at the door, \$8.00 donation suggested. Doors open at 2:15.

The Santa Project

After the services on **December 2 & 9**, you can sign up to buy a gift or donate money towards a Christmas gift for a struggling local family.

Fiddler on the Roof

Intergenerational production by the Midcoast Youth Theater with our own **Shirley Bernier** as the Matchmaker.

Dec 6, 7, 8, 14 at 7 pm., Dec 9 at 2 pm, Dec 15 at 1 pm
Orion Performing Arts Center, Topsham, Tickets \$10/8.

A Christmas Carol, the Musical

New England Regional Theater Company's production starring our own youth **Claire and Aymeric Dauge-Roth**.

Dec 8th at 2 and 7 pm., Dec 9th at 2 pm.

Crooker Theater, Brunswick HS. Tickets \$12/10/8.

Children's Holiday Craft Sale

After the service on **December 9**, you can purchase gifts and crafts made by our Sunday School.

Mitten Service

On **Sunday, December 16**, we will have our annual collection of mittens, hats, gloves, and scarves for local charities to distribute to needy families. Please remember to bring those items to the service (new items, please, not used).

Women's Alliance Christmas Outing

December 16th... Meeting begins at Sue Ellen Damour's home (8 Brookmere Way, Brunswick) at 11:45 a.m. for lunch and short business meeting. We will then attend the concert of the Greater Freeport Community Chorus at 2:30 p.m. at the United Methodist Church in Cumberland. Our own Janet Alexander sings in the chorus. Tickets \$10. To purchase, call Gretchen Kamilewicz at 833-5125. (Gretchen will also have tickets at church.) Note: You do not have to be a Women's Alliance member to attend either the lunch or concert. Please RSVP no later than December 12th so that carpooling can be arranged.

Solstice Service and Holiday Intergenerational Orchestra

On **December 23**, everyone is invited to bring a percussion instrument to the service... tambourines, shakers, car keys, bottles of aspirin, whatever you have. We will need them to make a joyful noise to help bring the sun back! PLUS: Musicians, if you play an instrument, conventional or

unconventional, and would like to be part of the Intergenerational Holiday Orchestra, please see Louise Gephart or Stephanie Bernier. Orchestra members need to be seated and ready to rehearse at the Minnie Brown Sanctuary at 8:30 a.m. sharp on December 23. Please bring a music stand. There will be no other rehearsal. What we may lack in perfection, we'll make up in setting a joyful and enthusiastic holiday mood.

Castlebay at Side Door Coffee House

Annual "*Ghosts of Christmas Past*" concert, **Friday, Dec 21**. Curtis Memorial Library.

Poinsettias

Our Christmas Eve service is an opportunity to donate poinsettias in memory of loved ones, new births, or special events. (Dedications will appear in the Christmas Eve order of worship.) The Worship Committee will buy the poinsettias and bring them to Minnie Brown early on Christmas Eve to decorate the sanctuary. **We cannot store poinsettias at the Minnie Brown Center, so we are counting on you to pick your plant up after the Christmas Eve service.** Plants are \$14.40 each. To order, please call the office at 729-8515. **Orders and payment due by December 15.** Checks can be made out to UUCB.

Candles for Babies

On Christmas Eve we light candles in honor of babies born or adopted into families in the congregation during the previous year. Following the Christmas Eve service, families may take their candles and votive holders home. Parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents, please call the office at 7129-8515 with names by **December 18** at the latest.

Christmas Eve Service

December 24 at 7 p.m. Our service will welcome all ages and feature favorite carols, readings, beautiful music by our choir and others, and candle lighting.

Festive Food

Please bring a plate of your finest holiday confections (e.g. cookies, bars, candy) to share after the Christmas Eve service. **We cannot hold this gathering unless we find someone to host it.** Hosting involves making punch, setting up, and cleaning up. Please contact either Esther Palmer or call the church office at 729-8515 to volunteer to host.

Twelfth Night Concert

Saturday January 5 at 7 p.m. Minnie Brown Center. A festival of music and readings presented by the Merry Meeting Singers. \$10 advance reservations; \$12 at the door. Children under 12 FREE. 729-8515 for tickets.

BUILDING TEAM NOTES - NOVEMBER

A New Road

The building that was thoroughly detailed and put out to bid in September will not be built as planned. The bid prices were over \$600,000 more than we or the architect had budgeted. We asked the low bidder to do some "value engineering" to reduce the price without significantly altering the plan and still came up \$400,000 too high.

It is now back to the proverbial drawing board. We have determined that we need an experienced commercial contractor willing to work with us and the architect to provide step-by-step, accurate cost estimates as we re-develop the plan. Our goal is to get as much of our original floor plan and interior space as possible for the 1.85 million dollar budget and then see if we are satisfied or need to raise more money.

Many of the Building Team members met with our architect and reps from four different construction companies last week. It was good to hear that each of these contractors are looking for work and have their "best" people available for this spring. After some research and discussion we have selected Langford & Low of Westbrook to be our construction managers. They will assist in the design and then be the general contractor for the construction.

Are We the Only Ones?

It is quite common for projects to come in way over the budget price. One could also say that, in general, architects are not good at estimating costs. All of the contractors we interviewed have had the experience of refining buildings after they have been put out for competitive bids. An example is the new Brunswick Police station just up Pleasant St. from our site which was going to cost 20% more than had been budgeted. The town went through "value engineering", then hired a construction manager, and now has a building which fits their budget and most of their needs. We are following in their, and many others', footsteps.

As Sylvia keeps reminding us, we have not had to build a church for 127 years and none of us participated in that process, so we are learning as we go. So far, all parties have been honest and well intentioned and we will get there.

Building Team

We are slowly remaking ourselves as there have been

many meetings since we started over a year ago. Jud Caswell, our remarkably skilled and diligent note taker, is stepping down to tend to being a spouse, father, and performer. His wise and calm counsel will be missed.

Skip Brimlow, our former church treasurer, has stepped in to keep track of the finances for the project and he is likely to stick with that task until the building is complete. Others on the team may take on new roles, and new tasks will arise as we move into the construction phase.

The Building of Our Dreams

It's been a long road from the fire to now, and we look ahead to many more months before we are in our own building. The Building Team is committed to "getting it right" on behalf of the congregation, to be good stewards of the generous Capital Campaign funds as well as the insurance payout by staying within budget, and to honor the hopes and dreams that we all shared earlier in the recovery process.

As Sylvia has said many times, "None of us will get the building of our individual dreams, but ALL of us will get the building of our collective dreams." The look of the building of our dreams is likely to be different from the drawings and models we have seen before. But because we need to build in the real world, with a real budget, the Building Team will parse out the design alternatives while maintaining the functionality that will be critical to achieving the goals of our vibrant church community.

When there is enough information to share we will hold open discussions with the congregation to keep everyone up to date on the developments. We appreciate the difficulty in waiting so long to see our new building. Please be assured the Building Team is doing its best to move the process along. Before we enter into a contract for the actual building, we will have a Congregation Meeting

Stay tuned, give us your thoughts, and wish us luck.

Your Building Team:

Steve Eagles & Jessica Tracy, co-chairs
Debbie Zorach, Erik Hansen, Skip Brimlow,
Bill Clark, convener, ex-officio, *Mike Heath*, Board Chair, ex-officio, *Rev. Sylvia Stocker*, ex-officio

Email: uucbuildingteam@gmail.com

NEW MEMBER - ASHLEY RICHARDS

Ashley Richards joined our church last June. He claims an eclectic religious background; baptized in the Episcopal church, he spent his youth as a Baptist and was first exposed to Unitarian Universalism through a friend in Milford, NH. He attended the UU fellowship in Fredericksburg, MD and is a past member of the Yarmouth congregation, where he raised his three children. For Ashley, church is about community. He likes the no creed, UU message. He says he is at heart a Buddhist and tries to live in the present.

Self-employed for 35 years, Ashley has a degree in Outdoor Recreation and has managed campgrounds in ME, NH, VT, and RI. His main career has been in residential building and remodeling. He is a certified energy auditor and owned an insulation and weatherization business.

Ashley's passion is ice hockey- he has coached and officiated at games and all of his kids played hockey. Now, he plays five days a week, from 5:30 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. in Falmouth. He also skis, hunts, fly fishes, bikes and is an all-around outdoor person.

Ashley believes in giving back to the community and demonstrates that commitment through his trade association, where



he spends about six weeks a year in travel. He is also director of the Common Ground Fair's energy and shelter area as well as a member of the fair's Steering Committee. Please welcome Ashley at coffee hour!

GREEN SANCTUARY

REGENERATION MEANS LIVING AGAIN: A GREEN SANCTUARY FOOTPRINT



Yes, I have to admit to having a certain amount of pride, especially when it comes to the compost pile that I have been nurturing for over a decade. It now covers six by ten feet and is six feet at its height and contains the rich, dark brown organic matter that we gardeners love to put on our gardens to revitalize the soil. I keep my compost pile regenerating itself by adding grass cuttings, leaves, kitchen scraps, plant cuttings and occasionally some good, old horse manure.

I use the word “regeneration” because I’ve noticed that that is nature’s way. Nature doesn’t waste a thing. It uses everything to regenerate itself. It is in many ways a closed system of regeneration, and compost making is a case in point. In the woods behind our home, topsoil is constantly being made by compost from the dead matter of trees and plants. While it takes many years for nature to build an inch of topsoil, I can speed up the process, by physically

turning the compost over and over, and every year when growing plants in the garden have depleted some of the energy in the soil, I can help regenerate it by adding compost. It’s a wonder when you think about it.

Not only that, but by hand-turning my compost pile with just a shovel, I am exercising my own body and regenerating the energy with which I live. It is, as we say today, a win-win situation.

As a goal for our environmental efforts, we use the word “sustainability.” I suggest that we need to go further than that, and taking a page out of nature’s great book, practice “regeneration” instead.

Rev. Brad Mitchell

To order a poinsettia for the Christmas Eve service to take home afterwards, please call the office at 729-8515. Payment of \$14.40 is due by Dec 15.



Save the date for our fourth annual
TWELFTH NIGHT REVELS
 A FUN- FILLED FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT
 with the
Merry Meeting Singers

Larry Lemmel, Director
 Grace Lewis-McLaren, Accompanist
Saturday, January 5 at 7:00 p.m.
 Minnie Brown Center



Invite friends and family to attend this fundraiser
 for UUCB's Building Fund.
 Hear a retelling of the original Twelfth Night Story
 and a rousing celebration of Twelfth Night
 in Elizabethan England.

Tickets are \$12 at the door, \$10 in advance

Host NEEDED for Christmas Eve Service

Hosting involves making punch, setting up, and cleaning up. Please contact either **Esther Palmer** or call the church office at 729-8515 to volunteer to host.

SAVE THE DATE

soUUp's On!

Please plan ahead for "soUUp's On!" hosted by Membership Committee on February 10, 2013 for new members and newcomers (although anyone is welcome with an RSVP, please). We'll sample homemade soups and healthy chocolate desserts. Stay tuned for details of this lively, friendly event.

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

to a Unitarian Universalist

BY LENNY SCOVEL

Why Christmas? Especially to one who doubts? Are you not being hypocritical? Unitarian Universalists, with their penchant for secular humanism are fond of arguing the validity of Christmas: Is it a Christian holiday? A pagan holiday? A secular holiday? Even outside my UU circles there is much apathy about Christmas—"It's just another day" I've heard quoted by many. I know all this...and I don't care! I love Christmas, always have and always will. It fills me with nostalgia and generosity and goodwill. And as far as the "meaning of Christmas" is concerned, as a Unitarian Universalist, I believe it is part of our spiritual maturation to search for and assign meaning to all the days of our lives. In this, Christmas is the high-water mark of the year—a time when the world slows, and considers our relationships with each other. Isn't that in itself enough to celebrate? Worthy of decorations, lights and music? The gifts we give each other at this time of year are more than just demonstrations of our generosity—they are symbols of the gifts we are capable of giving on all the other days of our lives. Gifts of love, compassion, industry, advocacy...the gifts of our common humanity. These were the values of Jesus—the true Christian values. And if we, as a Unitarian Universalist, need to reconcile the language of Jesus as the Savior in celebrating Christmas, can we not acknowledge that through his ministry of compassion, he was in fact our savior, by showing us the way to save ourselves?



W😊men's ALLIANCE NEWS

We have a winner! The doll house now belongs to Albert Moore, and we have donated \$400 to our Building Fund. We also voted to augment the Minister's Discretionary Fund by \$200.

ALL women of the church are welcome and encouraged to participate in all Alliance activities.

On December 16th, the Women's Alliance will meet at the home of Sue Ellen Damour (8 Brookmere Way, Brunswick) at **11:45 am** for lunch and short business meeting*. We will then attend the concert of the Greater Freeport Community Chorus at **2:30 pm** at the Tuttle Road United Methodist Church in Cumberland. Our own Janet Alexander sings in the chorus. Tickets are \$10 for the concert and may be purchased by calling Gretchen at 833-5125. (Gretchen will also have tickets at church.)

*The business meeting discussion will revolve around what women's and/or children's causes we wish to support this year. Please email sedadamour@msn.com, subject UUCB Alliance, with your suggestions for this discussion.

Note: Because there is limited parking at Sue's house and we plan on carpooling to the concert, women should contact Gretchen no later than **December 12th** so that she can make carpooling arrangements.

January 9, 12:30-3 - Curtis Library, Dessert only with Robin Robinson speaking on gardens, birds, and butterflies.

February 12, 10:30 - Weld Henshaw's home with talk on poet EA Robinson and the art of collecting, followed by a brown bag lunch.

March 12, 10:30 - Dipper Cove, Drumming with Betty Wurtz and brown bag lunch.

April 9, 6 pm - Curtis Library for a potluck dinner at We will honor those in our congregation who have gathered at least 80 years, enjoy poems of your choice, and elect next year's leaders.

May 14, 10:30 - Morning tour at Coast Botanical Garden and annual Meeting.

We will need hostesses to supply desserts and coffee/tea for January, February, and March.

DECEMBER CHARITY WITH SOUL



December's charity is the Coastal Humane Society, a long standing community resource for our animal friends. Their mission reads:

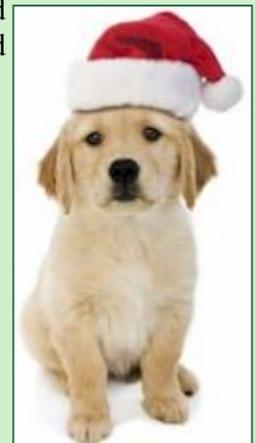
Mission

- To assist by all means the prevention of cruelty to animals
- To alleviate and relieve the suffering of animals occasioned by any cause or causes whatsoever
- To establish, operate, and maintain shelter facilities for stray, homeless, or unwanted abandoned small animals
- To educate the population in the area served by the corporation and disseminate information and materials pertaining to humane principles in the treatment of animals
- To ensure that all dogs, cats, and all other domesticated animals are adopted into lifelong and responsible homes

This writer's own experience with CHS is one of gratitude. This past July I found myself with an unsure future financially as I had been unemployed for six months. I had two cats and had to make that heart wrenching decision to surrender one. I called Lisa Smith at CHS, whom I had worked with doing some pet grief work in previous years. She assisted me in that difficult decision and offered tenderness that day of surrendering the cat. Within two days I learned that my sweet pet had been adopted into a loving home.

To donate to Coastal Humane Society call 725-5051 or email info@coastalhumanesociety.org
www.coastalhumanesociety.org/

Lynn Ellis



FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

With the Tofurkey® leftovers all cleaned up and the pie all gone it seems like we will be in the thick of winter in the blink of an eye. This is the season of rapid transitions...all leading up to the Christmas holiday and another New Year. Yet even as time passes so quickly we have precious little visible movement towards moving into a new church building.

I can tell you that there has indeed been movement, we just can't see much on the ground. Pennell House will soon be closed down for the winter in an effort to keep any pipes from freezing, and to save on other bills. There is tough work just ahead for the Building Team, and they, along with the architects and the Construction Manager, are determined to make inroads on design and features that we can better afford. As I reflect on fits and starts over the past several months, I return time and again to the patience, enthusiasm and good will of the congregation. And that notice extends beyond our congregation.

According to Marty Teitel, one of our newest members who is connected at the organization level of the UUA, the Executive Vice President of the UUA, Kay Montgomery, has noticed the work of UUCB since the fire.

Kay is impressed with the success of the Capital Campaign and she told Marty that it is almost unheard of for a church our size to make such great strides and do such an excellent job so quickly. She appreciates the inclusiveness of our process and the openness of the Building Team.

Other encouraging news came from the Chalice Lighter grant program of the Northern New England District. We have again been selected as a recipient of the program where contributors from throughout the region are encouraged to donate to our building project, and in particular for features that enhance handicapped access.

In other Board news, we are sorry to announce Laura Jackson's resignation from the Board and as Treasurer. Laura has done a tremendous job over the past two years, but realized that her commitments to family take priority so she needed to redirect her energy away from the Board. We will miss her and we thank her for her conscientious service. The only bright note in this development is that Board appointed Dave Damour to fill Laura's position. Dave

has had experience as Treasurer in two other UU churches and we look forward to his energy and financial leadership.

The Board voted to update the Website Policy and include an opt-out process so individuals who wish that their names or photographs not be included on the UUCB website can have that information removed. Details about this process are being finalized and will be released soon with a complete explanation. The Board also voted to consider Karen Foley as a candidate to become an Affiliate Minister of UUCB. We are in the nascent stage of an involved process for this unpaid position, which will include congregation discussions and a covenant between the Affiliate Minister and Sylvia as our Called Minister.

The Board has been busy. Committees, the Council and all arms of the Congregation are keeping up a strong pace, and I can see no letup in the cold months ahead. Thanks to all in our congregation for your commitment and investment in the great work of this church. Our work is a journey, and our journey is a goal in itself.

Peace,
Mike Heath

YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS...

Intergenerational show with live orchestra, actors and dancers.

A Christmas Carol - The Musical

Starring the Dauge-Roth children:
Claire as the Ghost of Christmas Past,
and Aymeric debuts as Tiny Tim

Crooker Theater at Brunswick HS

**Sat December 8 @ 2pm & 7pm
Sun December 9 @ 2pm**

Reserve tickets at nerttickets@gmail.com
Adults \$12 / Seniors \$10 / Kids \$8

Side Door Coffee House

**Curtis Memorial Library
Friday, December 21, 7-10 pm**

**Annual
"Ghosts of Christmas Past"**

**Concert
featuring**

Castlebay



Admission is \$8 - \$6 for
Teens and Seniors

Intergenerational production by
Midcoast Youth Theater

Fiddler on the Roof

**Starring
Shirley Bernier
UUCB Church Administrator
as The Matchmaker**

**Dec 6, 7, 8, 14 at 7 pm
Dec 9 at 2 pm
Dec 15 at 1 pm**

**Orion Performing Arts Center
Topsham
Tickets \$10/8.**

FUNDRAISING

UUCB FALL AUCTIONS... A GREAT SUCCESS

THANK ALL OF YOU VERY MUCH for helping to raise \$12,500 through our auctions. We hope all the dinner parties and other activities are heartwarming and memorable. Take a break... weed through your books for a sale next year.... then in two years we'll do another auction.

Fundraising Committee
Maryli Tiemann, Gretchen Kamilewicz, Linda Litchfield, Sue Michaud and Sue Ellen Damour

HANNAFORD GIFT CARDS - How THIS FUNDRAISER TYPICALLY WORKS

I get a check for \$1,000 from Shirley. I buy \$1,000 worth of Hannaford cards. Hannaford gives me a BONUS card of \$50 FREE. So to make a profit, we first need to sell \$1,000 worth of cards to pay off the loan from the church. Then when we sell the bonus card, we make a profit of \$50.

This should happen EVERY week so that by the end of the fiscal year we will have earned \$2,500 for the church. However, sales have been going down. Currently we are only making a profit every 2 weeks, cutting our goal in half.

Aren't there some of you out there who shop at Hannaford? Buying a card costs you nothing. You buy the card; you use the card to buy groceries or pharmaceuticals; the church makes money.

You will find me or a substitute in the back of the church *before and after* each service. Feel free to ask questions.

NANCY'S GLASS ACT AT STARZ

Don't forget that you can get Nancy Whiteside's colorful, glass jewelry for Christmas gifts or for those festive holiday parties. December is the last month you will be able to buy these items at Starz and help out the church financially as well..

BICENTENNIAL QUILT BACK HOME



Did you know that our church friend Kay Mann donated a beautiful, hand-sewn Bicentennial Quilt to the online auction? In addition to the quilt being worth a lot of money (as ascertained from several expert quilters), it had sentimental value because it was a gift from Kay's grandmother. Her grandmother had won the quilt in a raffle in her hometown UU Church in Montclair, New Jersey several years ago. So with mixed feelings, Kay gave up her quilt for our good cause and hoped that someone would get it who could love it as much as she does.

Well, I (Sue Michaud) contacted the minister of the Montclair UU Church where the quilt had been made by the Women's Alliance. Rev. Charles B. Ortman immediately responded that he would LOVE to buy it as a gift to his congregation. So we sold it to him for the minimum bid of \$350.

Here is a note I received after Rev. Ortman presented the quilt to his congregation:

Hi Susan,

Just a note of thanks to you. The quilt could not have arrived at a better time!

I did a surprise presentation of it on Sunday. The three women in the picture were 3 of the 4 who are still with us of the 19 Alliance members who signed it..

They were thrilled and very pleased, as was the entire congregation.

Again, thank you for making it possible. I'll send you another picture when it is permanently installed.

And all the best to your congregation in your rebuilding project.

Charlie

FREEDOM TO MARRY VIGILS



Marsha Pontius, Cathey Cyrus, and Sylvia Stocker were three of the many people from our congregation who participated in the vigil.

On October 28, our congregation planned and hosted an interfaith vigil to support the *Yes on One* marriage equality campaign. As the advance winds from Hurricane Sandy blew into town, more than fifty people gathered on the Brunswick Mall with signs and candles. Drivers passing by waved and honked their horns in support. Present at the vigil were representative from UUCB, First Parish in Brunswick, Church of the Good Samaritan, Days Ferry United Church of Christ, Catholics for Marriage Equality, and others.



Skip Brimlow holds a "Standing on the Side of Love" sign; Steve Wellcome holds Sylvia Stocker's clergy sign while Sylvia walks up and down the line greeting vigil participants.

PITTSFIELD

On November 2, our congregation received word that our sister congregation in Pittsfield had been harassed and vandalized because of their support of marriage equality. Pittsfield requested other UU congregations to be present, if possible, for a vigil on Sunday, November 4, directly following their worship service. Four members of our congregation responded to the last-minute email requesting help: Cathey Cyrus, Rick Dieffenbach, Dexter Kamilewicz, and Steve Wellcome. They donated our "Standing on the Side of Love" signs to the cause and attended both the Sunday service and the vigil. Afterwards, Pittsfield's minister Rev. Margaret Beckman told Sylvia "Your people rock!"



UUCB parishioner Rick Dieffenbach holds one end of the "Freedom to Marry" sign

WORKING FOR JUSTICE - REPRISÉ

As part of our congregation's ministry to work on the prevention of hate and prejudice, the Working for Justice Steering Group joined with others in the community to offer several fall programs.

In anticipation and support of the marriage equality November ballot referendum, we worked with Mainers United for Marriage to offer a community film screening of "Love Free or Die", a Sundance award-winning film about Gene Robinson, the first openly gay Episcopal bishop and his resolve to live alive of faith and integrity. More than 50 people gathered at Curtis Library to view this moving film and participate in a follow up discussion. A representative from Mainers United for Marriage signed up volunteers for what we now know was the successful (!) referendum campaign. (In October our congregation voted unanimously to add UUCB to the list of more than 50 Maine congregations signed on as supporters of the marriage equality referendum.)

On October 21, Rosemarie De Angelis and 3 students from *Color of Community* provided the heart of our Sunday morning worship service. Members of this Portland based non-profit group of refugees, immigrants and international students, Chansatha (Cambodia), Ahmed (Iraq) and Ekhlis (Sudan) told their stories of leaving their homelands to begin life as new Mainers. Written responses from the congregation included these comments: People felt "privileged" to hear the stories of "bravery, humility, forgiveness and strength"; some shared the students' hopes for a better world of "peace and loving kindness." One acknowledged our country's "complicity" in the students' injuries and emphasized how necessary it is for Americans to hear this "truth". One person wrote, "Your work is so powerfully important to our world." And another - "I will try to teach my daughters what you have taught me."



On November 2, UUCB sponsored the return of *Color of Community* to Brunswick where eight students told their "sacred stories" at Curtis Library. At least 60 people from UUCB and the wider community gathered to learn of the sometimes violent and tragic events that surrounded these young people as they journeyed to Maine where they are now living lives of resilience, compassion and hope. Those present were made richer by the evening, and UUCB hopes to evolve an ongoing relationship of support to *Color of Community* students.

Working for Justice Steering Group looks to the spring to plan further opportunities to engage UUCB and the wider community in events that speak to the prevention of prejudice and hate.

Working for Justice Steering Group:
 Cathey Cyrus, Jane Danielson,
 Sue Kennedy, Ed McCartan,
 Faith Woodman



(with special support from
 Nancy Zugehoer on showing
Love Free or Die)

DECEMBER 2012

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Happy Holidays

MH - Member's Home
 MO - Minister's Office
 SP - Saint Paul's

FA - Fort Andross Church Office
 MBC - Minnie Brown Center
 MR - Morell Room, Library

1
 9-12 Ecumenical Choir
 Rehearsal First Parish:



<p>2</p> <p>10:00 Service: MBC Green Sanctuary Mtg Membership Committee RE Collection for Charity Santa Project 3:00 Lesson & Carols: St. Johns</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>6:30-8:30 Worship Committee: FA 111</p>	<p>5</p> <p>5:30 Building Team: McLellan Bldg, Bowdoin</p>	<p>6</p> <p>12:30-2:30 Strategic Plan: People Plus 7-8:30 Choir 7 pm Fiddler on the Roof: Orion PAC, Topsham</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Tedford Meal 7 pm Fiddler on the Roof: Orion PAC, Topsham</p>	<p>8</p> <p>2 & 7 pm <i>A Christmas Carol</i> Crooker Theater 7 pm Fiddler on the Roof: Orion PAC, Topsham</p> <p>Hanukkah</p>
<p>9</p> <p>10:00 Service: MBC Conversation Corner RE Craft Sale/Santa Project 2 pm Fiddler on the Roof: Orion PAC, Topsham 2 pm A Christmas Carol: Crooker Theater BHS</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7-9 Pagan Group</p>	<p>11</p> <p>6:30 Stories with Soul 5:30 Finance Committee: Bowdoin</p>	<p>12</p> <p>5:30 Building Team: McLellan Bldg, Bowdoin</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7-8:30 Choir</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7 pm Fiddler on the Roof: Orion PAC, Topsham</p>	<p>15</p> <p>1 pm Fiddler on the Roof: Orion PAC, Topsham</p>
Hanukkah						
<p>16</p> <p>10:00 Service: MBC <i>Mitten Tree Service</i> Green Sanctuary Mtg Women's Alliance: 11:45 Lunch at Sue Ellen's 2 pm Concert</p> <p>Hanukkah</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <p>6:30-9 Board Meeting: FA</p>	<p>19</p> <p>5:30 Building Team: McLellan Bldg, Bowdoin</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7-8:30 Choir 6:15 RE Committee</p>	<p>21</p> <p>7-10 Side Door Coffeehouse (Casltebayl): MR</p> <p>Winter!</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23</p> <p>10:00 Service: MBC Solstice Sunday <i>Intergenerational</i> Holiday Orchestra Conversation Corner</p>	<p>24</p> <p>7-9 Pagan Group 7 pm Christmas Eve Service: MBC Candles for Babies</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Merry Christmas!</p>	<p>26</p> <p>5:30 Building Team: McLellan Bldg, Bowdoin</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>
Church Office Closed for Winter Break						
<p>30</p> <p>10:00 Service: MBC Brad Mitchell</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>1</p>	<div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 10px;"> <p>Newsletter editor: Susan Michaud michaud_susan@comcast.net NEXT DEADLINE for January issue is Fri, December 28, 2012, 5 pm</p> </div>			
Church Office Closed for Winter Break						