



FUSN News

First Unitarian Society in Newton

Unitarian Universalist

April 2 - April 16, 2017

SUNDAY SERVICES - 10:15 A.M

The theme for April is Trust

4/2 - Rev. Erin Splaine - Special Collection

This is a time of anxiety -- where is our political climate headed? What will happen to our Muslim and undocumented neighbors, climate change, economic inequality, and much more? UU Mass Action is our Unitarian Universalist state network to stand up and safeguard our rights and our laws. You can help in two ways: contribute generously to the Special Collection for UU Mass Action at the service on April 2, and join the FUSN team to attend UU Advocacy Day at the State House on Tuesday, April 11, register at www.uumassaction.org.

4/9 - Lifespan R.E. Sunday

4/16 - Intergenerational Easter Service

4/23 - Rev. Erin Splaine

4/30 - Youth Service

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

The next New Member Welcome will take place on May 7 during Sunday services. We are very excited to be welcoming several new members to the FUSN congregation.

Please stop by the Member Services table on Sunday mornings or contact Membership Coordinator Sam Foster, sam@fusn.org or Member Services Committee Chair Pat Rohan, jprohan@verizon.net if you are interested in becoming a member and being honored at New Member Sunday's celebration. If you haven't filled out a membership application in the past, now is the time to take that extra step and enjoy the benefits of being a member at FUSN.

A NOTE FROM ERIN

I hope that you all have seen the save the date email that Chris Krebs sent out, on behalf of the Welcoming Congregation Implementation Team (WCIT), for the Preemptive Radical Inclusion workshop after the service on Sunday, May 7. Cindy Beal, a long-time UU Religious Educator and founder of Justice and Peace Consulting, will facilitate the 3-hour workshop in the Parish Hall.

Preemptive Radical Inclusion is a way of cultivating a deeper, more profound, more fulfilling experience of being and doing together. At its core, preemptive radical inclusion is about developing our capacity for relating to each other and ourselves with greater love, acceptance, appreciation, and justice. This hands-on workshop will support us in raising our awareness about privilege, acknowledging our natural human desires for both comfort and familiarity, and expanding our willingness to engage with each other and with potential newcomers in open-hearted, fully welcoming ways. Cindy will help us explore our personal and congregational commitments, our openness to explore what it means to intentionally create a community of welcome, and our willingness to set aside assumptions and beliefs in order to risk being relevant.

The WCIT have been doing good and thoughtful work as they help us figure out the next steps we will take as a community to understand ourselves better and become more truly welcoming. Preemptive Radical Inclusion starts with us – with congregation members, staff, and leaders. It is not about “the other,” but about “all of us together.” I am looking forward to the workshop and hope to see you there.

Staff: Erin Splaine, *Minister*; Fran Clancy, *Administrator*; Rowan Van Ness, *Director of Lifespan Religious Education*; Beth Walton, *Assistant Director of Religious Education*; Dani Lindstrom, *Youth Programs Coordinator*; Sam Foster, *Congregational Engagement Coordinator*; Anne Watson Born, *Director of Music*; Carson Cooman, *Organist*; Roberta Humez, *Minister of Music Emerita*; Ruslan Crosby, *Beadle*.
Board of Trustees: Gregg DiBiasco, Brian Burba, *Vice Chair*; Josie Greene, Eric Haas, Cathy Morocco, *Chair*; Lesley Sneddon, Sarah Fazli 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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BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Elected Leadership and the 2017 Nominating Committee

Since January, the Nominating Committee, comprised of Sheila Ardery (Chair), George Batchelor, Jim Emerson, Andrew Morse, and Ann Woodbury, has met regularly and worked diligently, conducting outreach via the FUSN business list and Newsletter and providing information during Coffee Hour to recruit qualified candidates for elected leadership at FUSN. We appreciate the committee's willingness to take on this role. We are also grateful to Dwight Golann, FUSN's Moderator, who convened this group and will preside over the Annual Meeting on Sunday June 4. At the Annual Meeting, the Society's budget is presented and voted on and the Nominating Committee presents a "slate" of recommended officers for the Board, Operations Council and other elected positions. The Moderator accepts nominations, if any, from the floor and the election is held.

Serving as an elected leader at FUSN is a meaningful way to invest in and contribute to our congregation. In the weeks ahead, the Nominating Committee will contact those who expressed an interest in volunteering or submitted a name of someone they'd like to see in a particular leadership role. A host of factors go into determining whose names will appear on the slate to be voted on in June, including a person's interest and ability to serve, any key skills or qualifications they might bring to the job, and the particular needs of the congregation at the time. In the case that there are more candidates than there are jobs to fill, the Nominating Committee hopes to create a "pool" of prospective leaders who can be considered as positions become available and for the following year.

One of the Board's tasks this year was to support the nominating committee by updating the Job Description for the Board position at FUSN. Included among the skills we identified as important for this role are: being a good listener and communicator (e.g. expresses own ideas and handles disagreement constructively); being able to set aside personal interests to act in best interest of FUSN as a whole; possessing moral courage and ethical integrity to hold self and others accountable (and resist Groupthink); committing to our aspiration of being a welcoming, inclusive and multicultural community and being approachable to congregants and able to hold and encourage a diversity of viewpoints.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES (continued)

The Board of Trustees meets monthly, and our meetings are open to members of the congregation who would like to attend. We aspire to be responsive to the needs of the congregation and are available to speak with anyone with questions or concerns related to our FUSN community. Please feel free to contact us anytime. Happy Spring! *Josie Greene, Board of Trustees*

Cathy Morocco (Chair), Brian Burba (vice-chair), Eric Haas, Gregg DiBiaso, Lesley Sneddon, Josie Greene, Sara Fazli and Juliana Lakomski

A reminder that the Annual Meeting will be held in two parts this year:

On June 4, we will vote on the FY18 Budget and the Nominating Committee's slate of nominations for open officers positions.

In September (date to be announced), we will present the Final Reports of the minister, staff and committees, and discuss and vote on any proposals to the Congregation.

INVITATION TO NEW UU RETREAT

Are you a newcomer to the FUSN congregation? Are you a recent member, or an occasional visitor, or a valued friend of the community, who wants to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and what it means to become a member?

You are warmly invited to join us for our first "New to UU" retreat of the year, which will be held on Saturday, April 8, from 9:00 a.m. until noon in the Children's Chapel. This will be a fun, low-key opportunity to get to know other members of the FUSN community, share your own spiritual journey, hear from key leaders, explore our historic building with a guided tour, and engage in a discussion about what it means to be UU in the present time. Members as well as friends and visitors to the congregation are all welcome to attend. Breakfast will be served (bagels!) and childcare will be provided.

RSVP to Sam, sam@fusn.org by Monday, April 3, mentioning any childcare needs you may have. If you would like to attend, but are unable to this time around, the next retreat will be held in the fall.

-Samuel Foster, Membership Coordinator

RE-CONNECTIONS

What really is Religious Education? Is it just learning a particular curriculum?

When we talk about Religious Education (RE), we try and focus on the “5 C’s” -- Curriculum, Covenant, Community, Context, and Call. The curriculum is one of the considerations, when we’re thinking about what we want our children, youth, and adults to learn. Each year, the RE Council and staff review the curriculum map of what we will offer for the following year. Right now, we’re in the early stages of exploring different models of curriculum delivery and how we want to structure our Children’s RE program.

Equally important, though, is our **covenant**. What promises do we make to each other about how we want to be together? Because we’re human and imperfect (or perfect in our imperfections), we are bound to break our covenant to each other at times. How we return to right relationship with each other and make things as right again as they can be is a deeply important and religious act. Our Coming of Age class recently engaged in a restorative justice process to respond to an issue that arose in the community. They used a circle process to share what the impacts were on everyone and to make a plan to return to right relationship. This process has enabled a tremendous amount of healing to occur.

Creating a **community** where people can feel welcome and included is another part of religious education. Classroom covenants go a long way, and our Our Whole Loves (OWL) sexuality education classes, which we currently offer at the upper elementary 5th grade) and middle school (8th grade) levels, affirm a diversity of gender identities and expressions and sexual orientations. Our recent Youth Field Day for 5th-12th graders brought together a great group of 19 children and youth for team building and fun. I was blown away by how our high schoolers reached out to and how our younger participants rose to the occasion, exemplifying a multi-age community.

The last two C’s, **context** and **call**, have to do with understanding and responding to what it means to be Unitarian Universalists in Newton in 2017. Our 5th/6th grade class spent time learning about the Newton Food Pantry, running a food drive, and visiting the facilities. Our Adult Faith Development Task Force held a number of focus groups and interviews, in addition to running a survey, which collected information about what people are wanting right now in their spirituality. This will help us better understand what we are uniquely called to do, so we can make our programs and ministries responsive to the needs of ourselves, our congregation, and our world.

Lastly, I hope you will all join us for our annual **Lifespan Religious Education Sunday on April 9**. We have been preparing music and reflections over the past several weeks. This year’s service will be an opportunity to hear many voices of children, youth, and adults in our community, sharing what the seven UU principles mean to them. The first graders will be recognized during this service by receiving a copy of the Sunday and Everyday books.

In faith, Rowan Van Ness, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Welcoming Congregation Team has decided to keep FUSN members informed of notable dates regarding the LGBTQ Community. International Transgender Day of Visibility, recognized annually on **March 31**, is dedicated to celebrating transgender people and raising awareness of discrimination faced by transgender people worldwide. Celebrate Diversity Month was created to recognize and honor the diversity surrounding us all. By celebrating differences and similarities during this month, of April, it is hoped that people will get a deeper understanding of each other.

Social Action Opportunities for Kids - Parents and caretakers of young children are invited to attend a discussion of social action opportunities for kids at the FUSN Social Action Committee meeting on Sunday, **April 9**, from 12:00 - 12:45 in the Alliance Room. Soup and bread will be served, and childcare is available with child-friendly snacks.

The Mother’s Day Walk for Peace FUSN Team invites you to stop by their table at Coffee Hour to learn about the annual Walk for Peace and see pictures of last year’s event. These annual springtime Walks and marches are terrific opportunities to put your faith into action with your entire family. In addition to the Mother’s Day Walk on **May 14**, the Walk for Hunger is **May 7**, the NAMI Walk (National Alliance on Mental Illness) is **May 13** and Boston Pride is June 10! Lace up your walking shoes!

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Join us for our next Community Breakfast, the best way to start your Sunday, on **April 9** 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 \$5 for adults and \$3 for kids. Newcomers eat free. We have high chairs, too. Upcoming breakfasts: May 7

EVENING SONG

Join Vermilion for the Evening Song service on Sunday, **April 2** 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.

NEWCOMER POTLUCK



We are holding our semi-annual newcomer potluck dinner on Saturday, April 29 at 6:00 p.m., in the home of FUSN Members Jay Flynn and Barbara Niles. If you are new to FUSN or still feel you are new, we would love to have you! Childcare will be provided. There will be time to discuss our congregation's services and activities as well as to ask questions. It will also be a great opportunity to get to know one another and to talk with other newcomers who are interested in Unitarian Universalism and FUSN. Please RSVP to Pat Rohan jprohan@verizon.net or 617-852-5290 with any questions or to tell us if you can come and what you would like to bring (suggestions: an appetizer, main dish, side dish, salad or dessert that serves 6-8 people). We will provide beverages. We look forward to seeing you there!

Pat Rohan on behalf of the Member Services Committee

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