

# HEED February 2009



The most important thing to remember is this: To be ready at any moment to give up what you are for what you might become.

W.E.B. Du Bois

## UPCOMING SERVICES

February 1 Thomas Pistole

Who Says We  
Can't Sing

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### Inside this issue:

*Religious Education-  
What's in a Name* 2

February 8 Ron Abramson

Immigration  
De-MYTH-ification

*Religious Education* 3  
*Continued*

February 15 Green Sanctuary  
Committee

Green Sanctuary II

*RE Teachers* 4

February 22 Nick Isaak

About this Meeting House

March 1 Mary Edes

To Be Announced

*Wind Use* 4

## ON THE CALENDER

February 15

7:30

Board Meeting

*Thursday afternoon* 5

*Continued from page* 6  
5

March 1

Pot Luck Lunch after Service

*Continued from page* 7  
4

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

## What's in a Name?

Unitarian Universalists are pretty savvy individuals. We do not automatically accept assumptions held by others and we certainly know how to question authority. This quality extends into the language that we use—whether in altering statements or even songs to make them gender-neutral, or in attempting to develop spiritually inclusive language for the many and varied individuals within our association. Even the names we use for our individual congregations reflect this sensitivity. The term “fellowship,” for example, was originally used for those groups that functioned without a minister, yet we have a number of congregations that fiercely retain the term in their name long after they have called a minister and grown beyond the size typically associated with fellowships.

So, too, we grapple with a name for our children's programs. The phrase “religious education” is still commonly used within our churches and fellowships and the titles, “Director of...” or “Minister of ...,” are still typically followed by this phrase. Some congregations, including ours, have opted to modify the phrase to “religious exploration,” reflecting an underlying goal of our work with children and youth, namely to provide a safe place for everyone to build his/her own theology.

Another term that can still be heard in UU settings is Sunday School. A colleague, Martha Dallas, the Director of Religious Education, recently shared a sermon she gave on this subject with other District religious educators and graciously gave me permission to use it for this article. Another colleague, Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Strong, recently retired Program Consultant for the Mass Bay District, wrote a book on this subject and this is another resource I have used. At one time most churches had no separate children's program: babies, children, and youth were expected to sit with their parents in the sanctuary for the regular service, which in some traditions might be several hours long or even twice on Sunday!

The concept of “Sunday school” arose from a sense of altruism among affluent Christians. Before the advent of public education for all, children of poor families often had no opportunity for formal schooling. Classes were set up for these children both to share the “good news” from The Bible and to provide basic skills in reading, writing, and spelling. These children often worked six days a week so Sunday was the only time these classes could be offered, hence the name “Sunday School.”

The model of the lessons in these Sunday School classes was often rote memorization. There were scripted questions about The Bible and the responses were to be learned by heart. This approach is referred to as a catechism and is no doubt still in use in some re

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

religious settings. Some children became very adept at memorization and recitation; what they actually learned was less clear.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century the great Unitarian minister, William Ellery Channing, delivered a sermon whose message still rings true for us 170 years later. In condemning catechisms he said: "The great end in religious instruction is not to stamp our minds upon the young, but to stir up their own; Not to make them see with our eyes, but to look inquiringly and steadily with their own; Not to give them a definite amount of knowledge, but to inspire a fervent love of truth... In a word, the great end is to awake the soul...." Today we see this as a major turning point in our faith tradition but in fact his words had little effect on religious education in the short term. Nonetheless it planted a seed, one that seemed to lay dormant for quite a while before it was able to sprout.

Around 1900 the Universalists and the Unitarians, still distinct groups, separately began expanding their concepts of religious education for children and youth. In the 1930s, pre-dating their formal consolidation by 30 years, these two groups forged a collaboration and together created new educational materials. In 1937 a new curriculum director was hired; during her time in that position, Sophia Lyons Fahs, fostered the implement of Channing's ideas from nearly 100 years earlier.

From these two pillars—William Ellery Channing and Sophia Lyons Fahs—the programs we offer for our children and youth have evolved far beyond the catechism and Bible-centric programs of the past. Religious exploration continues to evolve in our Association. Regardless of the names we use, Unitarian-Universalists have created a rich array of curricula and other resources for our children and youth. If you would like to know more about the specific programs we are using in our Primary, Elementary, and Youth groups, just ask!

*Thomas Pistole*  
*Director of Religious Exploration*

## JUST FOR FUN

- Your body is creating and killing 15 million red blood cells per second!
- In Tokyo, a bicycle is faster than a car for most trips of less than 50 minutes!
- Tourists visiting Iceland should know that tipping at a restaurant is considered an insult!
- Every day 20 banks are robbed. The average take is \$2,500!
- The most popular first name in the world is Muhammad!

## RE TEACHERS

Our series of introductions to those involved in the RE program continues with our RE Committee Chair, Kate Clark.

Kate began life in Tucson, Arizona, which (except for her high school years spent in California) was home until she eventually landed here on the Seacoast in her early twenties. Her trek in the northeasterly direction then took her to Cape Breton, Nova Scotia where she spent ten years living on a small, but largely self-sustaining farm. In 1984 she and her husband moved back to the Seacoast where they bought an old fixer-upper on 10 acres in Newmarket which has been their home ever since--and which they are still fixing up. Kate began attending the Fellowship in 1993 with her two children in search of food for spiritual thought. She quickly became involved in the RE program—initially as a teacher, then RE Committee member and is now in her third stint as RE Chair. She is currently a partner in a small business which provides services to those who need help to maintain independent lives. Her other interests include in and outdoor gardening, traveling (she was in India and Nepal this past fall), singing with the NH Choral Society, spending time in the great outdoors and just being home!

## WIND PUT TO GOOD USE IN KITTERY

Cameron Wake, Kittery Energy Advisory Committee Member  
January 5, 2009

KITTERY - Used to be the wind just blew scraps of paper and small plastic bags around at the Kittery Solid Waste Transfer Station. And Kittery residents dutifully sorted their cans and papers and plastics while commenting to their neighbors "sure is windy up here". One weekend in 2006 a town councilor, Glenn Shwaery, thought that perhaps Kittery could put that wind energy to better use.

The first step was to install a wind anemometer to measure if the 100 foot hill where the transfer station is located had sufficient wind to justify the cost of installing a wind turbine. Data collection began in November 2006 and confirmed that the wind blew strongest during the winter months (no surprise there) and that there should be enough wind to make a wind turbine economically viable.

Continued on page 7

# THURSDAY AFTERNOON

DECEMBER 18, 2008  
BY LAWRENCE A. VOGELMAN

That Thursday morning, I waited in a courtroom in federal court in Atlanta, Georgia, for my client, Raymond Burgess. I have been representing Raymond, along with co-counsel, Gretchen Stork, for a little over ten years now. Raymond is black, in his mid-forties, and is retarded. He was convicted in 1991, along with a co-defendant, of killing a white man in a robbery at a motel. His co-defendant, who has admitted to being the actual shooter, received a sentence of life imprisonment, and later died in prison. Raymond was sentenced to death.

As we waited, Raymond was escorted into the courtroom by the marshals. Raymond, the marshals, court reporter, and court security officers were the only African Americans, in the courtroom. All the lawyers, clerks, and the judge, were white. Raymond, dressed in a spotless, white jumpsuit, shuffled to counsel table . . . his hands were shackled, as well as his feet. For the next hour-and-a-half he sat as lawyers "did their lawyer thing." He understood little, other than that two lawyers were fighting for his life. At the end of the hearing, we embraced, and he wished me a happy holiday. I started to reply, but stopped. What do you say to a man who has been on death row since 1992? Happy holidays? Merry Christmas? May next year be better than the last? I just nodded, and said nothing.

Gretchen and I took the elevator down, and left the courthouse. She drove me to the airport for my return to New Hampshire. I retrieved my cell phone that I had left in her car.

At the airport, I called my office. I was informed of the Michael Addison verdict. The jury had sentenced Michael Addison to death. I am not a very religious person, but my first thoughts were, "forgive them, for they know not what they do." I immediately flashed back to the first time I met Raymond. Georgia provides no counsel for condemned prisoners in their state court post-conviction proceedings. Like many states in the "death belt," they rely upon volunteers. I was one of those volunteers. I substituted for Raymond's prior lawyer, who had a "nervous breakdown" shortly before the state court habeas hearing.

Continued on page 6

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

I had just obtained a three-month continuance from the state habeas judge, due to my being newcase. Along with Gretchen, I traveled to the prison to visit Raymond for the first time. Death row is in Jackson, Georgia, a little over an hour south of Atlanta, in Butts County.

As we walked from the car, we approached a tower some one hundred feet high. At the bottom of the tower was a microphone and speaker so one could speak to the guards at the top. They asked where we were going, and we gave them our names to check against the visitors' list. Then, a metal bucket was lowered on a rope down from the top of the tower, and we placed our identification and keys in the bucket. We were then allowed to enter death row.

The room in which I first met Raymond was about thirty-five to forty feet long, and twelve feet wide, with plastic chairs bolted into the floor. In that room were approximately a half dozen men, in white jumpsuits, speaking to lawyers. Most were black, and all were condemned to death.

When I met Raymond that day, he embraced me, and began tearfully thanking me. I told him that I had done little. All that had been accomplished was a three-month continuance for his state habeas hearing. He responded, "at least I know that I will be alive for another three months." I fought to hold back the tears.

After the visit, Gretchen and I walked back out to the tower to retrieve our belongings; then we walked to the parking lot. When I reached Gretchen's car, I could no longer keep my emotions in check. I burst into tears. Gretchen stood by my side with her hand on my shoulder saying nothing. No words needed to pass between us.

All these images flashed before me as I heard of the Addison verdict. Do the people of New Hampshire understand what they have done? In their minds, they have meted out justice. But at what price?

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

The entire project shifted from wishful thinking to potential reality when a proposal requesting \$50,000 to cover 25% of the cost and installation of a 50-kilowatt wind turbine, written by the Kittery Energy Advisory Committee (KEAC), was funded by the Maine Renewable Resources fund.

The remaining funds for the project were then provided by the Town of Kittery grant match account (\$50,000) and borrowed from the solid waste equipment reserve account (\$100,000). In the fall of 2007, requests for proposals were sent out to nine companies. Three responded and KEAC unanimously selected the bid from Entegriety Wind Systems for the 50-kilowatt EW50 wind turbine on the basis of the 30 year design life, proven track record, relatively low cost, and five year warranty with operations and maintenance contract included. The town council voted 7-0 in favor of the project.

Site preparation began in the spring of 2007 with final installation in late September. The turbine, which has three 24 foot long blades and sits atop a 125 foot tower, started producing power on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Over the past month and a half, it has produced 1715 kilowatt hours of electricity. With stronger winter winds, electricity production should ramp up significantly over the next several months.

## A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

When submitting to HEED please send your information in a word or pdf file. When we are unable to open files it delays the publication.

Thank you so much!

Due date for March HEED, February 23, 2009.

## Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

### Mission Statement

The real test of our religion is the way we live our lives. The Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship affirms the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism.

We seek to be a place in which each person's unique worth and beliefs are acknowledged and respected and where each person's voice may be heard - a place in which each may freely explore his or her own spiritual path.

We join with others in reaching out to make the world more just, and commit ourselves to caring for the earth and all that makes up the web of life.

We strive to be a source of inspiration, a forum for intellectual exchange, a wellspring of comfort to those in need, and a nurturing, supportive community for each other and our children.

*Newsletter of the  
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