



# HEED

## Newsletter of the Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Issue #1

Durham, New Hampshire

September 2009

### Greetings from the President

Dear DUUFers,

Welcome to another year at the Fellowship. This will be an exciting and busy year, with the expansion of our little building to take place. It will be fun to watch it grow. I look forward to seeing all of you in September -- *Joyce Sheffield*

***As we begin a new season, let us rededicate ourselves to the seven Unitarian Universalist principles.***

- *The inherent worth and dignity of every person;*
  - *Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;*
  - *Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;*
- *A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;*
- *The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;*
  - *The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;*
  - *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.*

### DUUF emphasizing a welcoming congregation

In 1987 the Unitarian Universalist Association sensing that there was a great deal of unexamined and hurtful homophobia in local congregations established the Common Vision Planning Committee. It was the task of this diverse committee of clergy and laity from across North America to assess the degree to which bisexual, gay, and lesbian persons felt welcomed and accepted in their own congregations, so that if necessary, a remedial program could be developed. No one was quite prepared for the painful stories that emerged.

Although the Unitarian Universalist Association had been on record since 1970 as supporting the rights and worth of bisexual, gay, and lesbian persons, the Common Vision Planning Committee heard from many individuals who felt profoundly unwelcomed, unaffirmed and unsupported in their local congregations. Anonymous surveys of thousands of individual Unitarian Universalists further revealed many negative attitudes, deep prejudices and profound ignorance about bisexual, gay and lesbian life and persons. The hurtful exclusion that resulted (much of which is subtle, polite and unintentional) made many bisexual, gay and lesbian Unitarian Universalists feel that they did not have a safe or comfortable place in their home churches. This lack of an accepting and affirming environment led many of them to either drift away from their congregation, or stay deep "in the closet," hiding this fundamental fact about who they were from other church members. The problem of homophobia which is so pervasive in our society also runs deeply in all kinds of religious communities. The reality and pervasiveness of this homophobia and exclusion in Unitarian Universalist churches troubled many in our faith tradition. They became committed to making our congregations welcoming and inclusive places for all people especially minorities (cont. page 2)





The Unitarian Universalist  
Fellowship  
Durham, New Hampshire  
[www.duuf.net](http://www.duuf.net)

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Brett Gibson

that are despised and dismissed in our society. Citing the first principle of our Unitarian Universalist faith -- that we "covenant to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of all persons"--the delegates of our denominational General Assembly voted in 1989 to initiate the Welcoming Congregation Program recommended by the Common Vision Planning Committee. It was a call to make our congregations truly welcoming places for people of all sexual orientations. At the May Annual Meeting DUUF voted to become a "Welcoming Congregation." This year we will examine homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and heterosexism (conscious and unconscious) and move toward new and more inclusive attitudes and behaviors that will make bisexual, gay, lesbian, and/or transgender people in congregations feel genuinely safe and at home in our Fellowship. Welcoming Congregations, the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Durham Fellowship.

-- Dottie Oliver, Program Committee

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**THINK ABOUT THE OTHER**

Think about the other.

When you're making your breakfast, think about the other  
*(Don't forget the food for the doves)*

When you're making your wars, think about the other  
*(Don't forget those who seek for peace)*

When you're paying your water bill, think about the other  
*(Don't forget those who drink from the clouds)*

When you're returning home, your home, think about the other  
*(Don't forget those who live in tents)*

When you're sleeping and counting the stars, think about the other  
*(There are some who can't find a place for sleep)*

When you're giving your mind or your spirit a place to fly, think about  
the other  
*(Think about those who lost their right for words)*

When you are thinking about the others, the distant others, think  
about yourself

*(say: I wish I was a candle in the dark)*

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*Mahmoud Darwish (1941-2008) was a Palestinian poet and author who won numerous awards and was regarded as the Palestinian national poet.*

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**Committee Updates**

**Social Action Committee:** As individuals, members of the DUUF find many ways to make an impact on the world around us. Collectively, one of the fellowship's means to achieve this end is its social action budget and the committee that administers it. Aside from managing the funds, the committee helps oversee volunteer efforts undertaken in the name of the DUUF. Our involvement in the Seacoast Interfaith Hospitality Network (SIHN) has increased over the past year, with more members taking on a greater portion of the (cont. on page 3)

cooking and hosting duties from our partner organization the Stratham Congregational Church. Through the program, area families who are between homes spend their evenings and nights at a network of local churches, on a weekly-rotating basis. The families can spend their days at the SIHN Day Center in Stratham, which serves as a headquarters from which parents seek permanent housing and/or employment.

DUUFers have volunteered in the Day Center and have also provided meals and hosted dinners for the families in the program. The fellowship also provided financial support to the program over the past year. Contributions made to a coffee hour collection basket last fall totaled \$400. The Social Action Committee also set aside \$200 of its budget for the SIHN last spring.

Overall, last year's Social Action budget was \$1,200 and was dispersed with the help of suggestions from the Fellowship. The list of last year's recipient are:

- \$100 Larry Brinkner-Wood/UNH Waysmeet Center
- \$400 Seacoast Interfaith Hospitality Network (\$400 offset from collection box)
- \$250 Roberta Finkelstein/UU Action Network
- \$250 Sara Funk/Downstairs Fellowship Micro-loan Project
- \$200 Seacoast Interfaith Hospitality Network
- \$200 Rachel Robillard/ NH Women's Policy Institute
- \$200 Avis Goodwin Community Health Center/Dental Care Program

*cont.. on page 4*



## **Seacoast Interfaith Hospitality Network Announcements**

- SIHN has had a very busy summer with more families referred than they can accept. A new sponsoring church has been added, so there are now 11 churches that serve as sponsors. We are a support "church" for the Stratham Community Church. Our next host week is the week of September 20.
  - There is a reception for volunteers on Wednesday, September 23rd from 5:30 to 8:30 at Christ Church, 43 Pine Street Exeter. A light dinner will be served. If you plan to attend please let me know no later than Sunday September 13.
  - The auction is going to be held November 5th from 5 to 9:00 pm at the Masonic Temple in Portsmouth. This is the most important fund raiser for the Network. If you are interested in soliciting donations, please check with me. I'll have tickets (\$20) sometime in October. We will be donating a sustainability bag filled with low energy light bulbs, organic soaps, recycled paper products, shopping bags, etc.
  - There will be a volunteer training this fall, date to be announced. They need volunteers for the host week, particularly people who are willing to sleep over night. Also, if you are interested in volunteering at the Day Center located at the Stratham Community Church during the day, they welcome people who are willing to play, read, or work with the children.
  - The Network is always looking for expended ink cartridges (a fund raiser for them), diapers, laundry detergent, etc.
  - If you are interested in learning more about the Network please talk to me, Bob Pavlik, Edna O'Sullivan, Dawn Merideth, and Rachel Legard. We have all been involved and would like to share our experiences with you.
- Elizabeth Crepeau

This year's Social Action budget remains at \$1,200. The committee is seeking input about how the money should be spent. Please contact a member of the committee with any suggestions. This year's committee members are Karen Smith and Mike Flemming. Bob Pavlik is chairman of this committee for the second year in a row. To volunteer your time contact Betty Crepeau for information on the Seacoast Interfaith Hospitality Network or Bob Pavlik or Mike Flemming to learn about our new effort, beginning this fall, to put in time at the Habitat for Humanity Re-Store in Dover. Many thanks to Rachael Legard, Betty Crepeau, and Edna O'Sullivan for serving on the committee last year.

-- Bob Pavlik

**Denominational Affairs:** I am greatly looking forward to serving as Chair of Denominational Affairs in 2009-2010. Attending the June 2009 General Assembly in Salt Lake City, Utah, gave me a much greater understanding of what we UUs are all about than I had ever had before. While I have been a UU since the 1990s, I really had not thought too much about the greater denomination, focusing, instead, upon our Fellowship and its needs. This denominational year will be a very important one for our Fellowship. Achieving Green sanctuary status definitely puts us at the forefront of UU efforts to help our species survive on planet Earth.

*Additional opportunities for congregational action.* DUUF has a justly proud history of contributing to UUSC for many years, receiving the Banner for Creating Justice Banner Society (for contributions by 25-49% of the congregation), and being an Honor Congregation for 10+ years. The highest contributions percentage DUUF has sent in the last four years was 46% in 2006 (these figures were accurate as of 3/5/09). Maybe it's time to obtain a new banner? The Vision of Justice Banner Society is given when 50-74% of all members give to UUSC, the Beacon of Justice Banner Society for 75-99% membership, and The Spirit of Justice Chalice Society award for 100% congregational membership. We might also strive for the Helen Fogg Chalice, in which the Helen Fogg Chalice award is given for churches and fellowships giving \$25 or more per member. I know that things are tough for many of us, but we are still among the most privileged people on this planet. If you need a reminder, please read the poem on Page 2 of this issue.

### **Justice Sunday**

On Justice Sunday, congregations build education and action into their worship and social activities, using resources provided by the UUSC. Justice Sunday focuses upon a different issue each year, always promoting activism with global reach and local impact. Our partnership and advocacy approach allows us to connect congregants to people whose lives are profoundly affected by the struggle for human rights. Justice Sunday offers meaningful actions that congregants of all ages can take so that, together, we can move the world closer to justice. Our DUUF Justice Sunday will be on March 28, 2010. You'll hear more about this in future announcements.

### **Association Sunday**

On Sunday, October 4, we will have our second DUF celebration of Association Sunday. We have asked to be a Connecting Congregation and get matched with another UU congregation as part of our Association Sunday celebration. Details will be announced in late September.

### **Chalice Lighters**

Chalice Lighters help build or expand facilities, including improving energy efficiency; help start new congregations; help secure professional leadership; help growth programs get off the ground. For further information and/or to become a Chalice Lighter, please see me.

*Look for denominational affairs in each issue of HEED. Keep up with and take part in the exciting things being done by Unitarian universalists nationally and internationally. -- Carmen Buford-Paige*

## Religious Education:

### ***Religious Exploration Program for Children and Youth***

As we begin our new Fellowship year, I want to welcome back continuing families to our RE program. I especially want to welcome new families who may be joining us this year. As many of you know, we are set to begin some major building and renovation activities for our Fellowship and when they are completed our RE space will be significantly changed. For the present, however, things will be similar to this past year. One change that we have made is to move the childcare space to one of the vacated offices on the main floor. Many folks have kindly volunteered to provide support for our programs this year. I have provided a brief overview of our plans below. More information can be found in the RE brochure.

**Childcare.** We offer childcare for infants and toddlers. Hannah Legard will again be our primary childcare provider.

**Pre-K/K group.** This is a new venture for us. This year we will be offering a regular program for our 3-5 year-olds. Initially we will be providing this on an alternate week basis. If all goes well, we will work to offer the curriculum each Sunday. Stefanie Griffin will be the coordinator for this group and the curriculum we will be using is *We Are Many, We Are One*.

**Primary group.** For children in grades 1 & 2 we will be offering a curriculum entitled *Moral Tales*. Shirley Zembruski is the coordinator for this group.

**Elementary group.** Brad Kinsey will serve as coordinator for this group, which is designed for young people in grades 3 through 6. Our curriculum this year will be *Spirit of Adventure*.

**Youth group.** Our youth will continue with the curriculum *Neighboring Faiths*, which they began last year. Sara Funk will once again facilitate this group. We expect to continue the evening programs on an irregular basis for this group as well.

This year we begin on Sept. 13 with an intergenerational program, so the children and youth will remain with the adults for the entire



program. We will provide childcare for infants and toddlers, and for other young children, if desired. On Sept. 20 we will begin our regular RE programs. For families new to our Fellowship, we typically begin each Sunday with everyone gathered in our main meeting room. Following opening activities, the young people are invited to move to their respective meeting places as the congregation sings "*This Little Light of Mine*." Parents are always welcome to join their child/ren for part or all of the young people's program. Conversely, young people may remain with their parents, if preferred. Activity boxes are available in the front hall for children who decide to remain for the adult program.

Our RE Committee members this year are Kate Clark, Chair; Shirley Zembruski; Sara Funk; and me. Please do not hesitate to contact any one of us with and questions or concerns you may have. - - *In faith,* Thomas Pistole, Director of Religious Exploration

### **From the Webmaster: Website survey results**

Of the 61 surveys sent to members in June, 19 people responded (as of August 6), fewer than I'd hoped for in deciding how or even whether to expand or contract the website content, but still quite useful. PCs outnumbered Macs (13 to 6), and browsers used are Internet Explorer (10), Safari (5), and Foxfire (3). I check the site in Safari, Firefox, and sometimes Opera, but as there is no Mac version of Internet Explorer (IE), I don't know how it looks on that (apparently it depends a great deal on which version of IE one has). Perhaps those using  
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IE will let me know of any ungainly pages. Frequency of visits to the site ranged from almost daily to never. Most popular content on the passworded portion of the site is contact information for members and friends, with meeting minutes, positions (board, committees, job descriptions), house construction, and finance pages all close runners-up. It seems that there is enough use of the members only site to justify the effort of maintaining it. The most popular possible additions to the site were more photos and a member info page. Several of you commented on the specially designed stamp used to mail the survey – glad you liked it!

*Things to check out on the website*

- Please make sure that the contact information listed for you is current
- Officers and committee chairs are encouraged to review the content on pages devoted to their area (RE, social action, finances, membership, etc.) and submit desired changes. If a page does not exist for what you are "in charge of," let me know if you would like one and provide some content for it.
- All are invited to offer suggestions for ways to make the public portion of our site more useful and welcoming to folks checking us out online.
- Consider emailing me digital photos of Fellowship activities (past and present) that might be posted on the site (if you specifically do not want a photo in the public portion, be sure to note that).
- When considering your 2009-2010 donation to DUUF, check the finances page for information to help you decide on an amount; you can also download a pledge form.
- Check out a new section in the members only site entitled "Past Plans for the Future," where you can read what changes DUUFers have hoped for in past years. As renovations progress and we celebrate our 50th anniversary year(s), it is interesting to read what past concerns and goals have been and to ponder how we've progressed toward those goals (and, indeed, to consider if our goals themselves have changed).

*A final note*

The public portion of our website is designed primarily to introduce ourselves to visitors (though Sunday service information and calendar items, etc., are also of use to members). The "members only" portion of the website serves a different purpose. Since DUUF does not have a church administrator one can go to with questions or to get documents, this site is a kind of de facto "remote office" for you. Think about going there when you need information and let me know what other items would be helpful to you. Our site has changed a great deal since its inception in 1999; your suggestions and contributions will help to keep it current, lively, and useful. - - *Donna Pistole*

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## **Joys & Sorrows**

**DUUF Member appointed to Committee for State Government.** Following a recommendation for application to the Legislative Youth Advisory Council by Thomas Pistole, Ellyn Legard contacted Senate President Sylvia Larsen and was appointed for a two year term. She welcomes input from other DUUF youth regarding any State Legislation which affects young people. The Council consists of 19 high school and college aged students from NH, a representative and a senator.

**Fellowship Banner.** To celebrate our 50th anniversary I will be making a new banner for the fellowship. It will be a double-sided quilt constructed of squares drawn by the children and young people and connected by strips of fabric. I will be using new 100% cotton fabric, but hope to supplement this with strips of fabric given by members of the fellowship. The fabric should be 100% lightweight cotton (an old shirt, child's dress, etc. would be appropriate) a minimum size of 10 by 15." This way, you can be part of the banner. I will incorporate these fabric pieces into the quilt design. We are planning to write the names of former members on the banner. All current members will have the opportunity to sign their own name to it when the banner is completed. Please bring your fabric to one of the services in September. Thanks! - - *Elizabeth Crepeau*

Lois Swan, a founding member of the DUUF, passed away recently. She was predeceased by her husband, Emory. A memorial service was held on Saturday, August, 29<sup>th</sup> at the Unitarian Church in Concord. Notes of condolence to her three daughters, Olive, Barbara, and Betsey may be sent to Olive McGregor, 6 Riverdale Parkway, Lebanon, NH 03766.

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## Workshops and Training

### District Events

The Northern New England District of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (more commonly noted as NNED) provides a variety of opportunities for folks in our district and beyond to participate in workshops, trainings, gatherings, etc. I want to call your attention to several upcoming events. More information about these and other activities can be found at the district website <http://nned.uua.org/> as well as on the bulletin board in the front hall lobby.

#### *Congregations as Caring Communities*

How do we care for our members and friends when they are in need? What are some guidelines and tips for lay persons who wish to help others in the congregation? The Reverend Karen Foley has an extensive portfolio of activities associated with pastoral care. I took a similar training with her several years ago that focused on the role of religious educators in the congregation. Offered twice: Sept. 19 in Concord, NH; Sept. 26 in Brunswick, ME.

#### *Guide My Feet Leadership Track Meet*

Instead of a major fall conference, the district will offer two one-day gatherings that will focus on several key topics. These include Community Building: Radical Welcoming; Educational Ministry: Multi-generational Congregations; Social Justice: Climate Change; Spiritual Leadership: Leading from the Values of our Faith; and Stewardship: Beyond the Canvass—Finding the Giver's Heart. Dates and places for this repeated program are Oct. 3, Kennebunk, ME; Oct. 17, Springfield, VT. I will be co-leading the Educational Ministry track in Springfield.

#### *RPM – for Religious Educators, Presidents, and Ministers*

What kind of resource can our Fellowship be for other UU congregations in our area? Conversely, what can we learn from those congregations? The District will be sponsoring a series of regional gatherings to discuss this important issue and help each cluster decide what its next steps might be.

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## Important Resources

- Northern New England District: [www.nned.uua.org](http://www.nned.uua.org) - email: [uua-me.nh.vt@comcast.net](mailto:uua-me.nh.vt@comcast.net), phone 603-228-8704, 10 Ferry St., Suite #318, Concord, NH 03301
  - Unitarian Universalist Action Network: email [crueggeberg@comcast.net](mailto:crueggeberg@comcast.net), [rcriobby@totalnetnh.net](mailto:rcriobby@totalnetnh.net), phone 603-228-8704
  - Express UU values to legislators and the general public about poverty, environmental degradation, and injustice in the structure of society. Educate, witness, advocate for fair, responsible legislation and a healthier, more humane society. Our faith calls us to ct! Equality and access for UUs with disabilities: email [access@uua.org](mailto:access@uua.org), UUA-IDBM, Equal Access, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108. Goal: to achieve comprehensive accessibility in our faith, identify, counter and dismantle ableism, advocate for people with physical, sensory, mental health, intellectual disabilities, and families with children who have disabilities. Friends and allies most welcome.
  - Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF) [www.clfuu.org](http://www.clfuu.org), Email [bmurray@clfuu.org](mailto:bmurray@clfuu.org)  
Spiritual community available 24/7; for active members of local congregations who want even more; for members unable to attend DUUF regularly, and others.
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## Upcoming Services

### **Sept 13: Betty Crepeau - “With Grateful Hearts: An Intergenerational Service”**

In keeping with our sustainability efforts this service will focus on our gratitude for the beauty of our natural environment and the joys we have experienced this summer in the outdoors - though some gardeners might also want to address some "sorrows"! All participants - children, young people, and adults are invited to bring a poem, short essay, or their own personal reflections on the theme of the service. This will be a joyful way to begin our year together.

- There will be a potluck following the service. In keeping with the sustainability theme, if possible, bring food from your garden or locally grown food.

### **Sept 20: Dottie Oliver - “A Welcoming UU Congregation”**

### **Sept 27: Larry Vogelmann - “Yom Kippur”**

### **Oct 4: Reverend Dick Dutton - “How the Moon Got in the Sky”**

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## Our 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.