

the **HEED**

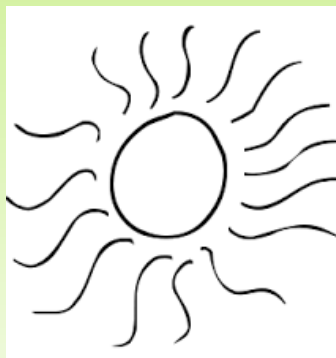
Newsletter of the Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Here comes the sun

Could the DUUF be solar powered by the end of 2015? This long-time goal, an offshoot of the DUUF's Green Sanctuary credentialing, is a very real possibility.

Mike Fleming, Bob Sheehan and John Macri have represented the fellowship at several meetings of members from four downtown Durham churches, all of which are interested in utilizing solar power. The Community Church of Durham, St. Thomas More Parish, and St. George Episcopal Church have joined the Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in the discussions, with important guidance from the Durham Energy Committee.

The group is soliciting proposals from contractors to make a solar energy project at the churches a reality. The hope is to have three proposals to choose from by this spring. If a consensus can be reached, the panels



could be up and running by the end of this year.

Much will depend on the details of the proposals, but a few things are likely: the churches would not have to pay to have the panels installed and they would have to commit to purchasing solar powered electricity for a set

number of years. Under this model, the winning bidder would install solar panels, possibly on the roofs of the church buildings, but also possibly at another site that has good sun exposure. The churches would pay to use electricity generated from the panels, and any electricity not used would flow into the general electricity grid to be purchased and re-distributed by Public Service of New Hampshire.

The money to install and maintain the panels would be raised from private investors, who would reap the dividends of the churches and PSNH purchasing the energy. The investors would also

Continued on page 2

Upcoming services:

Feb. 8 – Defying the Odds. *Speaker, Jason Crigler*

Feb. 15 – Our Place in the Family of Things. *Speakers, Joyce Sheehan*

For a complete listing of this month's Sunday services, see the February Calendar.

Welcome the sun

Continued from page 1

qualify for federal tax credits that apply to solar panels. The DUUF and other churches, being tax-exempt organizations, would not be able to receive these tax credits if they raised the money and install the panels themselves. Thus, the private investment model is important to keeping the price low. Likewise, the contractors and investors see the churches as good partners because of their stable standing in the community – it's not likely that any of the churches will be pulling up stakes and leaving town any time soon.

Should the churches institute solar panels, they would join Durham's library, police station, and Churchill Rink facility as solar power generators. The drive has its basis in environmental awareness, but it also looks to make fiscal sense, as electric rates will be locked in and there may be

Call for HEED editor answered

Joyce Sheehan has agreed to fill in as HEED editor while the Pavliks are away. Many thanks to Joyce.

To keep up on the Pavliks' family trip to Central America, visit inthebigpicture.com. See you in May!

a path for the churches to own the panels at some point depending on the contract.

The DUUF has done a great job keeping its carbon footprint down. Energy use was tracked during the proposal stage of our Green Sanctuary application, and it showed that we maintained pre-addition levels of oil and electricity use despite greatly increasing our floor space. The use of solar energy, particularly if panels were visible from the street, would be a sign to the community about our commitment to the environment.

At last week's Board meeting, it was agreed that the membership should be allowed to learn about the proposals when they are received and vote on the Fellowship's future involvement in the program once the details are available. That should be sometime this spring, perhaps in time for the Annual Business Meeting.

The magic number is...

Sarge Legard uncovered 63 hymnals in the sanctuary during the last month's official hymnal census. They have been sensibly distributed among the seats so as to be easily found. Please remember to return them to a logical spot.

Support in droves for SFP

The Fellowship supported Seacoast Family Promise in many ways this fall. Betty collected \$625 during the Christmas season for gas cards. Several families donated to baskets for the November fundraiser. During the October rotation we filled three out of 35 slots – this includes making meals, hosting dinner and hosting overnight. The other slots were filled by our partner faith group: Stratham Community Church. During the last week of the year we filled an impressive 11 of the 35 slots, including Maria bringing in the new year with the families.

Maria is also organizing and performing in a concert Sat. Feb. 7 at DUUF to support SFP. Our next rotation will be March 8 and the youth will do the cooking.

There are two further ways to support SFP. One is to visit Amazon Smiles and select Seacoast Family Promise (located in Stratham, NH). If you do this, .5 percent of your Amazon purchase will go to SFP.

The second way to help is by donating a used car. A current SFP family needs one. The program can offer a tax credit for a donated car, if that kind of thing appeals to you.



Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

HEED is published by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Durham, New Hampshire

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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.