

The HEED May, 2023

Newsletter of the Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



Services at 10AM Sundays

May 7: *"Attending to the Spiritual Life of Young People"*

Rev. Alexis Simpson, Volunteer Lead Chaplain, UNH

Following the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 7th Principles of our UUA, Alexis shares that we have plenty of contemporary experience and relevant information about how best to serve the spiritual needs of young people. Those of us in religious communities have unique opportunities and a responsibility to advocate for a world that values a holistic view of human growth and development.

May 14: *"Living from a Place of Surrender"*

Session 7: "Learning to Let Go" Michael Singer Video

Following the 3rd and 4th Principles of our UUA, we will be experiencing our final video in the series. All of spiritual growth is about letting go. It is not about getting anything. You are not going to go where you want to go until you let go of yourself. You must let go of who you think you are in order to become who you really are. In this session, we learn how to do just that—let go. Michael provides instruction on how to relax and release the samskaras. We learn to start with the easy things—the low-hanging fruit. This gives us strength to handle the bigger things that come up. Letting go is the highest spiritual path there is. We learn to surrender to the moment.

Please Read: [LivingfromaPlaceofSurrender-SessionSeven-07-01.pdf](#)

May 21: *"This I Believe"*

DUUF Youth

Following the 3rd and 4th Principles of our UUA, we have asked the Youth of our Fellowship to write and share their own statement of personal beliefs thus far and what has influenced these beliefs.

May 28: **ANNUAL SPRING PICNIC**

Our ANNUAL SPRING PICNIC will be held on May 28th this year at Fort McClary in Kittery, Maine!

PROGRAM COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

This past year has been a very meaningful one as we approached the element of change and growth in relation to who we are as a diverse Unitarian Universalist community of faith, specifically, a Fellowship. For those of you wishing to know more about the difference between a UU Church and a UUFellowship, please read the UUA site about the movement, “between 1948 and 1967 that saved Unitarianism from near extinction and converted a regional religious movement into a truly national one. Along with growing the denomination, fellowships brought innovation, vitality, and lay leadership into a religious community greatly in need of fresh air...”

We began our Services in the Fall of 2022 with “Building an Accepting Spiritual Community for ALL.” Betty Crepeau and I led the Service with members and friends of the Fellowship sharing how the Fellowship has added to their life’s meaning quest. With our primary goal of meeting and defining Spirituality and following our 7 Principles, this year we aimed to define an accepting, inclusive faith community as we strive to actually build that authentic community which aims to meet the spiritual needs of those who participate in our faith community.

We were fortunate to discover Dan Moran who gave a Service, “Inside the Mind of a Humanist Poet”, sharing his poetry and relating how he found a spiritual path in the art of creating poems. What a wonderful experience! As we were just beginning our in-person services again, our own Frank Rodgers was asked to discuss where we were with current variants and vaccines, the ongoing mask issues and how monkeypox relates to the pox virus world with “Masks, Mutations and Monkeypox Oh My.”

October began with local writer, Michael Ward, who shared parts of his life story through his writing of prose and shared how he discovered his purpose for being in his endeavor to influence and support others with a title, “Express Your Spirit, Write!” From there we started with our first, once-a-month video series on concepts, practices, as well as instructions on how we grow Spiritually as we start to look inward, titled “Living from a Place of Surrender” Session 1: “Who Am I?” produced by Spiritual Director of the Temple of the Universe, a non-profit organization, established in the year of 1957, Michael (Mickey) Singer. The organization was founded with the only purpose of helping people gain inner peace. People from all religions are welcomed there to learn meditation and yoga to help them attain inner harmony. Next came, Bring a Child Sunday: “A Story Time for All”? We invited children to join with us for our Sunday morning time together. The Service was followed with a pizza lunch and face painting for the kids.

Then came “The Arctic and New England: Changing Connections in a Changing Climate” given by Jake Kritzer, a member of our Green Sanctuary Committee. We heard about the impact of changes in the Arctic and how they are affecting our areas here in New England. Finishing the month of October were Sylvia Foster & Mary Doane, with a program on “Living Peaceably in the Present.”

Betty Crepeau began the month of November with “Metta Bhavana Sutra and Meditation”, a well-known tool for Spiritual Growth, followed by the next in our Michael Singer series, “Session 2: The Outside World.” The next Sunday Maria Isaak and the Quint-Essential Winds Quintet, a group of five musicians with more than 150 years of collective study and performance, spanning three continents in a program titled, “Spirituality within Musical Kinship” gave us a live spiritual experience that morning with their performance. They certainly helped us better understand how music can become a personal experience. What a way to end our November services! Thank you, again, Maria!

The first of two Services on “This I Believe”, was on December 4th. Members and friends, Rachel Legard, Michael O’Sullivan, Betty Nordgren, Larry Vogelmann, Hilary Babon, Rich Lipari, and Sarah Tambling were asked to write and share their own statement of personal beliefs and how they have grown and changed in those beliefs throughout their lives. Wow, what a fantastic Service this was! After the next in our video series, “Session 3: The Mind, Part 1,” we invited Richard Haynes, an artist of profound talent and spiritual insight, and currently the Director of Admissions for Diversity at the University of New Hampshire. Richard led us to experience how Art becomes a form of Spiritual Practice and relates to all in a non-verbal experience of profound joy. Another service that received many shared words of positivity.

We started our new year on January 8th with “Session 4: “The Mind”, Part 2 from “Living from a Place of Surrender”, our Video series by Michael Singer, again with our volunteer group facilitators, Sue Noon, Tom Reichheld, Bob
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Sheehan, and me, as needed. Next came “Poetry as a Spiritual Practice,” with Betty Crepeau, Dawn Meredith, Thomas Pistole, Larry Vogelmann, our Music Director, Mary Doane, and Chip Noon! Who knew what a group of created poets we have amongst us! Next came Paul Friedrichs, M.D., a local retired physician, who had cared for a few of our members while in practice. Paul shared his poetry and photography with us under the title, “Heeding the Call to Create,” Joany and Al Lincoln finished the month of January with “Music, the Spiritual Food” by sharing how Music becomes a form of Spiritual Practice and relates to all in an experience of awareness.

Beginning in February 2023 with the title, “The Baha’i Faith and Spirituality,” Jim Griffin helped us gain insight into many dimensions of the Baha’i Faith and how that faith supports one’s personal Spiritual Practice. Next came “Session 5: The Heart” in our video series. Next, we asked several members to share their works of art and photography in a wonderful display as they shared insight into how Art becomes a form of Spiritual Practice and can add a visual experience to one’s faith journey. Our members participating were Betty Nordgren, Larry Vogelmann, Nick Isaak, Mike Fleming and me.

Finishing the month of February, in “Revisiting Gratitude,” Betty Crepeau and I explored one of the most important topics in one’s Spiritual life, Gratitude. Being grateful is a skill we can develop and, in doing so will enhance and enrich our lives. Hopefully, those of you present that day are using your “gratitude rocks” in your daily practice. (We do have more if you don’t have one!)

March began with our second “This I Believe” Service with asking more members of our Fellowship to write and share their own statement of personal beliefs and how they have grown and changed in those beliefs throughout their lives. Chris Rodgers, Eric Nordgren, Bob Pavlik, Chip Noon, Tom Reichheld & Thomas Pistole left us amazed with their very unique expressions of how their faith and spirituality has grown and developed over time. Thank you again! Next came “Session 6: The Predicament & the Spiritual Path” with meaningful discussions following the video presentation. “Journey to Africa, A Call to Action” was presented by Jonathan Babon with Hilary Babon and Lucretia Kokusima as Jon discussed how his intention of helping with construction turned from a vacation to a deeper meaning for him and a better understanding of community and how education is crucial for upward mobility. “Vulnerability & Authenticity Revealed” was shared by Willow Young, on the staff at South Church, Portsmouth, NH, in leading up to the Transgender Day of Visibility. Willow took a closer look at the shifting landscape of gender through the lens of transgender identities. She discussed about new efforts at authenticity and visibility which is shifting the landscape of the transgender experience, how that can evoke a better understanding of ourselves, and the constraints we still face with our own gender experience in the modern world.

We started our April Services with Marty Quinn, a data scientist involved with the Climate Change Research Center and Space Plasma Group of the University of New Hampshire and keenly interested in the vocal improvisation of sacred writings. Marty, musician/drummer/composer/vocalist, delivered an impressive performance using a few percussion instruments in his accompaniment while presenting 7 pieces based on the 'Hidden Words' of Baha'u'llah, speaking about the idea of finding the music to match the sentiment of each short, poetic, and ethical teaching expressed in these 148 or so statements written in 1858 by the banks of the Tigris River. Marty sent a very impressive bio!

On Easter Sunday I shared “An Easter Story” written by Kirk Wareham. The Easter Service was followed by a traditional Easter Egg Roll enjoyed by all our children, youth and adults! Thank you to all for participating! The following Sunday, honoring EARTH DAY, was led by our Green Sanctuary Council Coordinator, Mike Fleming, was titled, “The Bad News, the Good News, and the Hard News on Climate.” Mike focused on The Bad News: American and world policies are not going to be big enough or timely enough to prevent many of the worst effects of climate change. The Good News: Policies are changing to a degree, if slowly, which if we are lucky may avoid the worst possible outcomes over the next decade. The Hard News: By the end of this century, preventing further catastrophic environmental disasters and resource exhaustion will require a degree of civilizational change we humans currently aren't ready for. Mike ended with the plea: “People of faith, including UUs, can help, but we need to figure out how.”

The following Sunday, April 23, I lead the Service with a version of The UUA Flower Ceremony which gave our Fellowship an excellent opportunity to join with Unitarian Universalist congregations throughout our world to

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express our commitment to our Sixth Principle: We Covenant to Affirm and Promote the Goal of World Community with Peace, Liberty, and Justice for All. Many found it to be a very meaningful experience. The last Sunday in April brought a very enlightening experience as we discovered “What it Means to Be Muslim, Here and Now” presented by Mohammed Ebrahim, Ph.D., who is Imam and Director of ISSA. Mohammed gave us a better understanding of what it means to be a Muslim in today’s society and how many of our misunderstandings of the Muslim religion come from the culture in Muslim countries rather than from the Muslim religion itself.

May brings to us the Rev. Alexis Simpson, Volunteer Lead Chaplain at UNH, who will discuss “Attending to the Spiritual Life of Young People,” which are looking forward to helping us in our efforts to reach out to students from the UNH, Durham Campus. Alexis plans to share that we have plenty of contemporary experience and relevant information about how best to serve the spiritual needs of young people. So, those of us in religious communities have unique opportunities and a responsibility to advocate for a world that values a holistic view of human growth and development. Our final in the video series by Michael Singer is Session 7: “Learning to Let Go.” In this video Michael provides instruction on how to relax and release the samskaras. We learn to start with the easy things—the low-hanging fruit. This gives us strength to handle the bigger things that come up. We discover that letting go is the highest spiritual path there is. We learn to surrender to the moment. And, we learn to stop our ego’s desire to take control!

To end our Sunday Services this year we have asked the Youth of our Fellowship, under the direction of our R.E. Chairperson, Bob Pavlik, to write and share their own statement of personal beliefs thus far and what has influenced these beliefs. We look forward to having them share their journeys and discoveries with us.

Addendum: I would like to thank the committee members that I chose to assist me for their willingness to make suggestions, give me info on who might be good to invite, willingness to help with facilitating discussion groups, willingness to lead some services when I was away and to present when called upon. One of the highlights of this year, other than the fantastic people whom I was able to recruit, was the addition of our Music Director, Rev. Mary Doane. Mary has brought such a gift of music ability to us and was able and willing to choose a wide and inspiring array of musical arrangements for us, as well as choose all of our Sunday morning Hymns. Mary also invited various musicians to accompany her along the way. Thank you, Mary.

I also want to thank those of you who attended our Services, gave both positive feedback as well as, “Michael Singer, again?” comments. I do hope that you have benefited from our Services this year and have gained a more varied understanding of what our Sunday morning Services are all about as well as what Spirituality means. I would like to thank the many committees that I have worked with and have helped our Sunday morning Services, especially Carol Bullivant and her team in providing a time and space to socialize together. I thank you all for giving me the privilege of serving the Fellowship this year as Program Chairperson and I feel I have found my niche here at our Fellowship. Thank you!

Joyce Sheehan, Program Chair; Committee Members, Chip Noon, Sue Noon, Bob Sheehan

Caring Committee

I would also like to thank Chris Rodgers and members of the Caring Committee for all the outreach and caring they have done for the Fellowship this year. They have provided soups and shakes and meals for members who have had health issues throughout this past year. Sending cards and flowers to members whose situation warranted them as well contacting members whom we have concerns about are among the outreach of our Caring Committee.

-Bob Sheehan, Chairperson of Membership Committee

Annual DUUF Picnic

The annual end of the year DUUF picnic will be held on Sunday, May 28, at Fort McClary in Kittery, Maine. Please save the date. We have reserved the small pavilion. There are additional picnic tables that we can use. Please look for an email with extra details closer to the time!

Social Action Report May 2023

Dawn Meredith

In the Fall, we hosted "Welcome To Leith" - a 2015 movie about white supremacists taking over the very small town of Leith, North Dakota (population 16). This showing was part of "Palaces for the People" program, whose goal was to bring healing through community, and was run by Oyster River Community Reads.

We continued to support Seacoast Family Promise (SFP), providing seven meals over the year, including one in October when the youth did the cooking. They were especially happy to be able to push their culinary skills by baking an apple tart. (Thanks to Deb J for the supervision!) For Thanksgiving, the Fellowship pooled our resources to put together a basket for a family, that included homemade pies and cookies baked by the youth. Betty also collected for gas cards in December; these gas cards are always essential to get families to school and jobs.

If you like jazz and good food, consider supporting SFP by attending a concert by singer Nicole Henry at Jimmy's Jazz and Blues Club in Portsmouth NH on Thursday, May 18th, shows at 6 and 9 PM. Tickets are \$200, which cover the meal and a donation to SFP. Tickets may be purchased at <https://www.seacoastfamilypromise.org/jimmys>

This spring we established a connection with Oyster River Branch of End 68 Hours of Hunger, which supplies children with food for the weekend. We learned that they spend \$1000/week supplying food to students who have signed up for the program. We gave both monetary donations, and donations of food. You can learn more here <https://www.end68hoursofhunger.org/find-your-community/new-hampshire/oyster-river/>.

In March, Jon and Hilary Babon shared the story of Jon's "Call to Action" in Africa, helping to repair and renovate a daycare established by their friend Lucretia Fields. This daycare, and the education it provides, is essential for upward mobility, especially for young women who are often neglected by the schools. The Social Action Committee donated \$500 to Lucretia's daycare <https://www.engutotodaycare.com/one-time-donation>, to further support Jon's work when he returns later this summer.

Annual Report from the Socials Committee

Despite the constraints of the continuing Covid epidemic this year, the Socials Committee offered a jam packed calendar of get togethers for the DUUF community.

Our offerings ranged from walks in downtown Durham to look at the mill pond and its dam; another, where we ended up exploring inside the brand new middle school, and a third that just gave us wonderful, outdoor exercise. We had a wonderful, well attended Oktoberfest, complete with brats, roast chicken, and two kinds of authentic German potato salad. At Easter, we returned to our preCovid traditions with a potluck breakfast, and an after service egg roll. The whole day was a great success.

For a change of pace, Jack DesBois came and sang traditional New England folk songs to us. Although the concert was not as well attended as we would've hoped, everyone there enjoyed his music and the interesting history behind some of the songs. Finally, to round out the year, we are planning a church picnic at Fort McClary in Kittery, Maine.

Thanks to my fellow committee members and hard-working coffee makers: Deb Johnson, Julie Lipari, Rachel Legard and Tom Reichheld.

—Carol Bullivant

Bylaws Committee

Bob Bullivant, Thomas Pistole and Deb Johnson worked incredibly diligently, in long meetings over zoom and also independently, to revise the current bylaws and bring them up to date. It was no mean feat. The committee members are all perfectionists, but worked very well together. Please thank them for this hard work.

I am so grateful that they said yes when I asked for their help!

--Carol Bullivant

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT 2022-2023

Returning to meeting at the Fellowship in-person has greatly enhanced our Sunday mornings.

Currently, we have 50 members and 20 friends, who either actively attend, contribute or support our Fellowship as well as a number of children and youth.

We have gained 5 members this year who will be welcomed and recognized at a September 2023 Service.

-Bob Sheehan, Chairperson of Membership Committee

NOMINATIONS REPORT

DUUF Officers, Chairpersons and Council Coordinators to be approved at the ABM for 2023-2024

OFFICERS

President - Chip Noon

Vice President - Larry Vogelmann

Treasurer - Jen Pavlik

Secretary - Julie Lipari

COMMITTEES

Program - Joyce Sheehan

Religious Exploration - Bob Pavlik

House and Grounds - Jonathan Babon

Socials - Carol Bullivant

Membership - Bob Sheehan

COUNCILS

Nominations - Michael O'Sullivan

Submitted by Nominations Council members, Michael O'Sullivan and Bob Sheehan

**DUUF Officers, Chairpersons and Council Coordinators and
Members of Committees and Councils for 2022-2023
Under 2018 By Laws**

OFFICERS

President: Chip Noon
Vice President: Larry Vogelmann
Treasurer: Jen Pavlik
Secretary: Betty Nordgren

COMMITTEES

Program: Joyce Sheehan (Chair), Chip Noon, Sue Noon, Bob Sheehan
Religious Exploration: Bob Pavlik
House and Grounds: House: Jonathan Babon (Chair), Sarge Legard, John Macri;
Dottie's Garden: Sarah Tambling; Rentals: Maria Isaak
Socials: Carol Bullivant (Chair), Deb Johnson, Tom Reichheld
Membership: Bob Sheehan (Chair); Caring Subcommittee: Chris Rodgers (Coordinator),
Betty Crepeau, Michael O'Sullivan, Joyce Sheehan, Chip Noon

COUNCILS

Nominations: Michael O'Sullivan (Coordinator); Bob Sheehan
Music Council: Maria Isaak (Coordinator)
Green Sanctuary: Mike Fleming (Coordinator), Nick Isaak, Jake Kritzer
Social Action: Dawn Meredith (Coordinator), Betty Crepeau
**Communication &
Outreach:** Brett Gibson (Webmaster), Stefanie Griffin (HEED Editor)
**Denominational
Affairs:** Thomas Pistole (Coordinator)



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.

Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

HEED is published by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Durham, New Hampshire
20 Madbury Road Road • Durham, New Hampshire 03824 • www.uudurham.com