



The H E E D

June/July 2024

Newsletter of the Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Membership Committee Report 2023-2024

The new members signing the membership book this year were **Liz Gerrish**, **Marie Sanborn**, and **Susan Neal**. We were also happy to welcome **Paige** as a new member. but unfortunately, they are moving away from the Durham area this summer. We also have some new friends who are regularly attending Sunday programs. Efforts continue to make ourselves more visible in the community and to attract new families.

Annual Picnic *Scene One*



Join Our Services at 10:00 AM Sundays*

***Starting on September 8, 2024** - Speakers and topics will be sent out before then. So, years ago, Bob Karnan, the former minister at South Church, told us that Unitarians used to take off in the summer to avoid the heat and humidity of Boston and Philadelphia. The New Englanders went to the Isles of Shoals and the Philadelphians went to the Jersey Shore. I can't find a definitive source for that comment, but we'll go with it here. Why the summer sabbatical is good for our Fellowship is because we are all so involved in so many things and we need a break!

Then that brings up the question of what do we do for people who need weekly gatherings: people going through tough times who need their friends; people who are just finding us and hope to partake of an ethical, thoughtful, welcoming community; people who just enjoy our programs?

That's a good question. It follows on some discussions we have been having about "extra-Sunday" services and events to broaden our availability and meet non-traditional congregants. I hope that through the coming year we can address these issues. As you can guess, having a larger membership to draw on will be critical to expanding our outreach and programs.

So as the gentle summer breezes murmur across your July and August days and nights, think about whom you can bring with you in September, who might need your compassionate invitation to the friendly group in town who are united in the free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

Chip Noon

Town of Durham “Thank You” for Durham Day

Hello,

I hope you and your set-up are all dry! We wanted to reach out to say thank you for participating in **Durham Day** this past weekend. Also, for having patience with us when we were debating the weather. We were very happy with the event and received positive feedback! Even though it got cut short due to the rain.

The event would not be possible without you joining in and being part of the day.

Please let us know if you have any feedback for us as well.

Thank you again, we truly appreciate your support.

Kellie DeSimone
Park & Recreation
Assistant Director
Town of Durham
(603) 817-4074
durhamrec.recdesk.com
Follow us on Facebook
“Durham Rec”

(see Page 11!)



DUUF Social Action Committee Report ‘23/’24

The main focus of our social action is Seacoast Family Promise, which supports families experiencing homelessness as they find their way to a new home. We hosted ten dinners, provided a Thanksgiving basket for one family, and provided about \$700 in gas cards. Our biggest push this year was to support the renovation of the Joshua House where families stay. This renovation will provide space for more and bigger families and make the house generally more functional. We raised \$895 for the Joshua House and added \$750 from our Social Action match for a total of \$1,645. An anonymous donor matched this so the total raised from DUUF is \$3,290 for Joshua House!

Oyster River Community Reads, with whom we often partner, put on an impressive program over the months of March and April about poverty and homelessness. As part of this event series, we hosted the showing of the documentary “God Knows Where I Am,” a story about the intersection of mental health care and homelessness. The ensuing discussion explored difficult questions about the best ways to support those with mental illness.

We have all continued to support “End 68 Hours of Hunger” which provides food for children over the 68 hours between the school lunch on Friday and school breakfast on Monday with on-going food donations. Special thanks to **Chip and Sue Noon** for bringing our donations to the “End 68 hours” Durham site for distribution.

In the cold winter months, **Mary Doane** initiated a drive for blankets for the homeless (a “Blanket Brigade”). Her call for donations garnered a literal mountain of contributions which Mary delivered to a warming shelter in Dover.

In October, **Hilary and Jon Babon** sponsored a dinner at DUUF for the Engutoto Day Care in Tanzania, which is run by their friend **Lucretia Fields**. This daycare is especially focused on the education of girls, and many of the graduates have gone on to successful careers. Lucretia, friends, and family cooked an astounding meal, and a small army of volunteers lead by the Babons got the Fellowship ready and did the cleanup. The after dinner event was an impactful documentary, by Fellowship member **Ben Isaak**, about the work done to restore and

(cont. on Page 3)

improve the Day Care. The movie was visually impressive and the storyline engaging. We are so proud of Ben! Fund-raising was supplemented by the sale of many beautiful items from Tanzania. The fellowship was packed, and the event raised nearly \$8,000 to support the daycare.

Thanks to everyone in the Fellowship for their ongoing support of these efforts.

Dawn Meredith and Betty Crepeau
Social Action Committee

Annual Picnic

Scenes 2 to 5



This year's Annual Picnic, as was last year's, took place at Ft. McClary State Park picnic area (not to be confused with Ft. Foster) on Sunday May 26th. The food was delicious! Thanks to all who contributed, especially Carol B. See you next year!

The Seven Principles

Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote seven Principles, which we hold as strong values and moral guides. We live out these Principles within a "living tradition" of wisdom and spirituality, drawn from sources as diverse as science, poetry, scripture, and personal experience.

As Rev. Barbara Wells ten Hove explains, "The Principles are not dogma or doctrine, but rather a guide for those of us who choose to join and participate in Unitarian Universalist religious communities."

1st Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

2nd Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

3rd Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

4th Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;

6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

7th Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The seven Principles and six Sources of the Unitarian Universalist Association grew out of the grassroots of our communities, were affirmed democratically, and are part of who we are.

Annual Business Meeting for the Fellowship Year 2023-2024

(by Julie Lipari, Secretary)

We had eighteen members attend this year's Annual Business Meeting (ABM). In addition to Board and Council updates, we had a meaningful discussion regarding the proposed amendments to Article II of the UUA bylaws. Delegates **Deb Johnson and John Macri** will vote their consciences, as reflected by the majority of our membership, while virtually attending the General Assembly to oppose the current amendments unless the language is changed to be more acceptable.

Language matters, and the words we use to describe our principles and values reflect who we are and what we stand for. Modifying, "we welcome all people" to "we welcome all people who share our values," is a change that contradicts foundational Unitarian Universalist beliefs.

Our website (uudurhamnh.org) articulates our beliefs well. The top of our homepage reminds us that, "Together, we create a force more powerful than one person or one belief system. Our beliefs are diverse and inclusive. We commit to a shared set of principles, and we are united in the free

and responsible search for truth and meaning." Welcoming diverse beliefs and committing to inclusivity, within the bounds of our shared principles, can be a balm to disagreement and toxic divisions. It's a remedy to myopic thinking and an avenue to supporting our communities and advancing our fellowship, enabling us to become the force of good we strive to achieve.

A heartfelt thank you to **Deb and John** for their dedication in understanding the proposed changes, and their diligence in providing education for our Fellowship to understand what's at stake. (*See their report on Page 7.*) The majority who attended the ABM were united in agreement to oppose the currently proposed changes.

Another heartfelt thank you goes to **Chip Noon**, our Board President, **and to each of the Board and Committee Members** for their service and commitment to the experiences of each of us individually and collectively. Some highlights from our Committee Reports are listed below.

• **Thomas Pistole**, and

each of us, want to thank the **Rev. Mary Doane** for her service this year as our Music Director! In addition to her musical contributions, she was pivotal in partnering with Thomas to develop and facilitate this year's programs. Mary is not returning when we reconvene at the end of the summer, and Thomas would love to hear from anyone who would like to support Sunday programs by joining the Program Committee.

• **Jon Babon**, as chair of the House Committee, was one busy person this year. Every Board meeting included a number of updates under his leadership. From security and HVAC system automations to physical ground and building improvements, our meeting space is well maintained and welcoming and our tenants are happy!

• Treasurer **Jen Pavlik** explained that some of our expenses increased, coupled with a loss in income and a decrease in donations. Building insurance costs continue to climb, and we have a website maintenance cost of \$150 a month. We also lost Hedgerows rental

(cont. on Page 6)

DUUF Officers, Chairpersons and Council Coordinators, and Members of Committees and Councils for 2024-2025 - Under 2018 By-Laws

BOARD OFFICERS

President: Chip Noon
Vice President: Rachel Legard
Treasurer: Jen Pavlik
Secretary: Julie Lipari

COMMITTEES

Program: Thomas Pistole
Religious Exploration: Bob Pavlik
House and Grounds: House: Jonathan Babon, Chair; John Macri; Dottie's Garden: Sarah Tambling; Rentals: Maria Isaak
Socials: Carol Bullivant
Caring Subcommittee: Chris Rodgers, Coordinator, Dawn Meredith, Susan Neal, Susan Bullivant and Michael O'Sullivan
Membership: Tom Reichheld

COUNCILS

Nominations: Sarge Legard
Music: Maria Isaak
Green Sanctuary: Mike Fleming, Coordinator, Nick Isaak
Social Action: Dawn Meredith, Coordinator, Betty Crepeau
Communication & Outreach: Brett Gibson (Webmaster), Bob Bullivant (HEED Editor)
Marketing Subcommittee: Julie Lipari, Chip Noon
Denominational Affairs: Deb Johnson

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.
Editor: Bob Bullivant
Layout: Chip Noon

20 Madbury Road
Durham, New Hampshire 03824
www.uudurhamnh.org

Annual Business Meeting

(cont. from Page 4)

income due to the school's closure. **We can meet our member donation goal if each member pledges \$130, or each family pledges \$180 by June 30th. Don't forget, we can submit donations from our website. Scroll to the bottom of the homepage and click on Donate. Receipts are sent to the email account provided.**

The Transitional Board meeting is scheduled for June 19th at 6:30 pm where some duties and responsibilities will shift to new volunteers. We're also grateful to all those continuing to serve in their current capacities. Our Board Members, Committee Chairs, and Council Chairs for the 2024-2025 year can be found on Page 5.



President's Message

This year will be my third year as president of the Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship board. It has truly been an important step I took when I said Yes to the nominating committee. It gave me a direction I needed at that time in my life, it helped me get to know the Fellowship as an organization and the members and friends as significant and interesting people, and the importance of Unitarian Universalism to Durham, to New Hampshire, and to the rest of the country.

I actually **do** want to sound like an evangelist for our denomination. Well, not like a TV evangelist, but someone who is out showing the world (ahem...) that there is a place for those like us seeking a spiritual home, where we can work to make the world a better place. Just look at the numbers of folks leaving churches and calling themselves "None"s. For example, the Episcopal Church's membership has declined 20% over the past decade. The same is approximately true for all other denominations; and Sunday church attendance has fallen off dramatically as well.

Later this summer, I'd like to have a Fellowship-wide meeting to focus again on our future. That would

include re-visiting the work that **Betty Crepeau** did with us to get some goals and objectives in front of us, to explore how we can re-invigorate our membership...meaning addressing those members who perhaps are not getting what they need or want at our services and have stopped coming regularly, talking to the visitors who come but may not return, and asking ourselves what it is we want on Sunday... and maybe during the rest of the week. **Thomas and Mary** did a wonderful job last year, but Thomas is the only member of the Program Committee left. How can we help him make next year even better?

And finally, what can we do for our Members and Friends beyond Sunday services and coffee hour? Is there anything we're missing? Are we being the fantastic Fellowship I have come to know for everyone? You've got some ideas, I know. How can we help you get them heard and noticed by the whole congregation?

Please think about this while you have a relaxing summer in our wonderful part of the world. There will be another HEED in August. Written submissions, or recorded submissions, are welcome. Take care, everyone!

(a list of some UU churches with online summer services can be found on Page 10.)

UUA 2024 General Assembly (GA)

by Deborah Johnson, 2024-2025 Denominational Affairs Coordinator

The 2024 General Assembly, with its theme “Love Unites, Stories Ignite”, was held from Thursday, June 20th through Sunday, June 25th (with pre-GA programming on Wednesday, June 19th). This year’s meeting was fully online but provided many opportunities to connect with fellow attendees via cohort groups, session chats, discussion boards and meetups.

At each General Assembly the UUA’s member congregations fulfill their mandated responsibility to “direct and control the [UUA’s] affairs” by sending delegates to democratically* decide upon the “overall policy for carrying out the purposes of the Association.” To this end we along with other credentialed delegates, attended multiple General Business sessions that reported the state of the UUA budget, the work of various UUA teams, committees and commissions and new and proposed initiatives.

To reach decisions about supporting particular policies, initiatives, and leadership candidates, we listened to presentations, pro/con statements, read discussion boards and followed the lively, and sometimes contentious, online chats accompanying presentations. This year your DUUF delegates (Deb and John) along with other attending delegates voted on a major, proposed policy (the revision of Article II of the UUA By-laws), elected members of UUA’s Board of Trustees and other Committees, and decided on several other significant policies.

*Though congregations are entitled to one voting delegate per 50 congregation members (with a minimum of 2 delegates per congregation), ministers, and RE directors (including emeritus/emera ministers/RE directors) are entitled to individual votes, resulting in their votes carrying significantly greater weight than the votes of UU congregation members.

The Planning Team for this online GA were successful in providing presenters and attendees opportunities to witness the diversity and energy of the UU movement. Many of the presentations incorporated videos of UU congregations celebrating their commitments and connectedness. Though the traditional banner parade could not be held, photo mosaics of congregations carrying their banners were periodically presented throughout the sessions. Some highlights: Rev. Molly Housh Gordon’s moving and inspiring Sunday sermon, “Weaving our Lives” was accompanied by videos of musicians, singers and multiple congregations “sharing and passing the threads of our tradition” to one another (access at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuPsOftQhfo>) note: the actual worship service begins after ~15:15 minutes of advertising.

Excellent speakers such as Columbia University Professor, Dr. Rashid Khalidi, author of *The Hundred Years’ War on Palestine* (2020) provided his insightful and stimulating perspective on the plight of Palestinians in Gaza and the associated political implications.

A new initiative - cohort interest groups - provided the opportunity for those in a particular topic (Deb chose the “small congregations” cohort) to meet for discussion on

(cont. on Page 8)

UUA 2024 General Assembly (GA) *(cont. from p.7)*

three successive days. I found the information provided and experiences shared to be extraordinarily useful and look forward to sharing several ideas with DUUF leaders. It was also exciting to hear about the upcoming Climate Justice Revival weekend to be held September 28th and 29th (<https://www.uuclimatejustice.org/>) and hope that DUUF will sponsor some of these activities. Amidst all the GA Sessions, musical and dance performances provided refreshing interludes.

The UUA had available an array of GA care teams (Systemic Justice, Covenant, Chaplain, Accessibility & Inclusion, App Moderation) ensure that all attendees conduct themselves with concern and respect for all and to intervene when violations of this agreement occur. These teams appear to have been effective; the tone of the chats and discussion board interactions, while not always uplifting, was, in my view, not as intense, demeaning, and angry as last year. However, discussions had to be curtailed several times to handle situations where attendees objected to statements made in presentations/chats. As a result, some sessions ran longer than planned.

I. Article II Purposes and Covenant

As the keystone of the UUA Bylaws, Article II sets the parameters for UUA policy and represents agreements among UUA member congregations (notwithstanding congregational polity). On Saturday, June 21 delegates voted to adopt the proposed new Article II with 80.2% of delegates voting in favor of adoption. Your DUUF delegates both voted against adoption. The new stated values of the faith are Equity, Generosity, Interdependence, Justice, Pluralism, and Transformation, centered around Love. An “accountability launch team” will be developing frameworks and practices to ensure the work of the UUA is aligned with these new values.

Prior to the Article II vote, delegates discussed and debated four proposed amendments to Article II, including one which called for adding “Peace” as a value, and one which called for adding “Reason” as a value (DUUF had voted to support this latter amendment). Neither of these amendments received the required 75% support for their inclusion in the proposal (“Peace” received 35.5% support; “Reason” received 30% support of the delegates).

Two other proposed amendments focused on language in the Equity Value description. One, which was adopted (with 92.5% support), included the revised language: “We declare that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity, love and compassion.” The second equity amendment, proposing the inclusion of “Equity” calls us to listen, understand, respect, and respond to one another” received only 28.4% support. Several delegates argued against this amendment asserting that they should not be obligated to “listen to and understand my oppressors” and that “contorting myself to look for good intent is not an act of self-love.” Thus, only one of these amendments, incorporating language changes to the Equity value description,

(cont. on Page 9)

UUA 2024 General Assembly (GA) *(cont. from p.8)*

was incorporated into the adopted Article II.

This modification of the UUA Bylaws will have a significant impact on Unitarian Universalism; one which many, but not all, feel is positive. As I wrote last year, this change in bylaws consolidates a shift from our current humanistic value orientation and liberal social justice perspective to a theologically driven orientation tied to a critical/systemic social justice perspective. It might also represent a shift from Unitarians' intellectual emphasis upon scientific evidence, critical thinking, and reasoning as the touchstone of our faith, to Universalists' emphasis on individual experience and feelings as the touchstone of our faith.

The Bylaws Renewal team announced that Article III of the UUA Bylaws, which stipulates the criteria for member congregations to join the UUA and to continue in good standing as members, will be the next Bylaws section to undergo review and revision (such review, scheduled to begin in 2023, was postponed until Spring 2024 according to the Bylaws Renewal team).

II. UUA Budget Overview

Carey McDonald, UUA Executive Vice-President, provided a clear presentation of UUA's financial situation. Currently the UUA is facing a deficit due to the departure of one of their major tenants (We Work), start-up funds approved for President Betancourt's new initiatives and a drop in revenue from congregations. However other sources were found to cover a portion of this gap leaving the proposed 2024-2025 budget with just a \$125,000 deficit gap between expenses and revenue. Concerns about future deficits were raised based upon the need to invest in the new marketing, curricula, hymnals and other resources.

III. Business Resolution

Business Resolutions address social justice concerns and, when adopted, commit the UUA to supporting the resolved actions with their full resources (i.e., both staff and money). A proposed Business Resolution, "Embracing Transgender, Nonbinary, Intersex and Gender Diverse People is a Fundamental Expression of UU Religious Values." was approved with 91.8% support.

IV. Amendment to Bylaws, Section 7.13 on Religious Education Credentialing Committee

Approved, with 96.3% support, an amendment allowing the RE Credentialing Committee to increase the number of members of its committee, if needed.

V. Articles of Immediate Witness (AIWs)

AIWs are statements about a significant action, event, or development in the world that necessitates immediate engagement and action among UU member congregations and groups (without requiring the commitment of UUA resources). Three proposed AIWs were offered; all three were adopted:

(cont. on Page 10)

UUA 2024 General Assembly (GA) *(cont. from p.9)*

- 1) World on Fire: Humanitarian Work and Climate Change--received 95.6% support
- 2) Centering Love Amidst the Ongoing Impact of COVID-19--received 86.1% support
- 3) Solidarity with Palestinians--received 73.5% support

VI. Responsive Resolution

Responsive resolutions are brief, advisory statements that express the sentiment of the delegates in response to a report by an officer or committee at a regular General Assembly, but do not become UUA policy nor commit the UUA to specific actions. The responsive resolution “UUA General Assembly Support for October 7 Hostages” was introduced Friday morning in response to comments by Rev. Sofia Betancourt. Calling for the immediate release of all Hamas-held hostages, it was adopted with 77% support from voting delegates.

VII. Election of UUA Leadership

In what might be interpreted as a sign of declining democratic vitality within our tradition, all candidates for UUA leadership positions [Board of Trustees (3), Nominating Committee (2), and Commission on Appraisal (1)] ran unopposed. All were elected/affirmed.

UU Churches with Online Summer Services

Here is a short list of Unitarian Universalist congregations who livestream or Zoom their services this summer. Links are available below.

Arlington Street Church, Boston 11 am (music 10:45):
ascboston.org

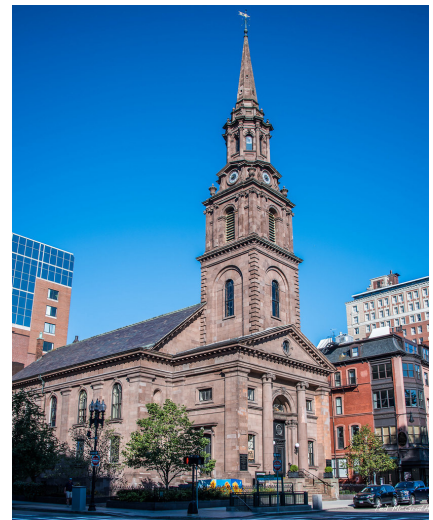
First Parish, Arlington, MA, 10 am: firstparish.info

South Church, Portsmouth, NH, 10 am: southchurch-uu.org

First UU Society of Burlington, VT, 10 am: uusociety.org

UU Westport, CT, 10 am: uuwestport.org

UU Church of Baton Rouge, LA, 10 am ET: unitarianbr.org



Arlington Street Church

All of who you are is sacred. All of who you are is welcome.



Unitarian Universalism

What a Time We Had!



DURHAM DAY

A Community Celebration of Durham!



Downtown Durham 12:30-3:00pm

Ice Cream Eating Competition at 1:30pm on Main St

See Parks & Rec table before 1:15 for more info & sign up!

Main Street Activities

- Durham Park & Recreation
 - Chili Voting
 - Bounce House
 - Gaga Pit
- Town & Campus Creamery
- Durham Public Library
 - craft & popcorn
- Live Music
- Clarks American Bistro
- Local B Studios
- BeSMART for Kids
- Durham Police
- Twenty-One Senses at Adara Salon
- McGregor EMS
- Durham Business Association
 - with 903 Salon

Jenkins Court

- Sweetened Memories
- Carrie Caldwell Pottery
- The Wheel House NH
- Amy's Frame Shop
- Beyone Escape
- New Moon
- Seating

Also Visit....

- Ceo's Gelato Bistro- Store Front
- Durham Historic Association
 - 1-4pm @ 2 Dover Road
- Harmony Homes
 - Bonfire Trivia Night
 - Fri, June 21st @5pm

66 Main Street

- OYHS First Robotics
- IWMAC Committee
- Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship- facepainting
- Durham Historic Association
- First Seacoast Bank
- Collins Aerospace
- Human Rights Commission
- Flori Fitness Personal & Group Training
- NH League of Women Voters
- On Belay, INC
- Oyster River Womenade
- United States Army
- Cowasuck Band of the Pouliot Abenaki People
- Agricultural Commission
- Great Bay Rotary
- Durham Fire Dept.
- Inflatable slide
- Energy Committee
- Conservation Commission & Land Stewardship Committee

Chili Challenge- Main St.

Look for the chili balloons

- Harmony Homes
 - 1st Place
 - Old Bay by The Bay
- Thermomix- ThermiChili

Durham Day Dash 5k

- Sunday, June 23rd @ 9am @ ORHS. Run, walk or cheer!

Web: durhamrec.reeddesk.com

Email: recreation@ci.durham.nh.us

Firetruck & Police Car visits

Live Music

Chili Challenge

Ice Cream eating Contest

DURHAM HISTORY

Games & Activities

Family Friendly

Info Tables & Booth



DUUF!