



The H E E D

May 2025

Newsletter of the Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Socials Committee

1. Please save *Sunday, May 18*, for a **Potluck Luncheon** following the service at DUUF. Enjoy good food and good conversation with the wonderful people who attend our Fellowship. Bring a dish to share if you can.

2. *Sunday, June 1*, from 11 am to 2 pm is the **End of Year Picnic** for the Fellowship at the home of **Maria and Nick Isaak at 35 Oyster River Rd.** in Durham. The custom is to bring something to grill for your family and something to drink for your family and a side dish, salad or dessert to share with others. Ketchup, relish, and mustard will be provided. Hope to see you there.

Carol Bullivant
Socials Committee



(Photo by Debbie Hudson on Unsplash)

Join Our Services at 10:00 AM Sundays

May 4 – Betty Crepeau – Interdependence: Examining this Central Value of Unitarian Universalism

Our principles state that we “covenant to affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.” Article II further states, “With reverence for the great web of life and with humility we honor our place in it. We covenant to protect Earth and all beings from exploitation. We will create and nurture sustainable relationships of care and respect, mutuality, and justice. We will work to repair harm and damaged relationships.” How do we enact the value of interdependence in our daily lives for those close to us – our friends and family – and for those near and far who are suffering from famine, illness, warfare, and political vengeance? How do we honor this interdependent web through our actions regarding the environment?

Betty is a long-time member of our Fellowship.

May 11 – Tom Young – Food Insecurity in the U.S. and How Pantries Can Provide Mitigation

An enormous amount of food is produced in the United States yet food insecurity in the country is quite common. The reasons behind this are complex and deeply entrenched in western customs and norms. This talk will examine food insecurity in the United States and the valuable role that food pantries can play in mitigating this problem.

Thomas Young is a retired engineer who is passionate about world hunger. He started volunteering at the Cornucopia Food Pantry in 2010 and soon joined the Board of Directors. In 2024 he was chosen to be the Executive Director of the Waysmeet Center, the non-profit that runs the Cornucopia Food Pantry.

(cont. on Page 2)

President's Annual Report

This year marks the end of my three-year tenure as president of the Fellowship. Seems like I just agreed to take it on a few months ago. I'm glad that Rachel Legard will be taking over this summer. She will do an amazing job!

As I realized shortly after volunteering for this position, the Fellowship is almost an unstoppable organization, since our people never leave something undone, needed words unspoken, or community help not undertaken. I can honestly say that this organization runs better than any other with which I have been involved. Every officer, committee chair, and council coordinator, plus everyone who worked on these committees did a superlative job. Take a look at their reports throughout this HEED, you'll see what I mean.

My goal, as I set out three years ago, was to increase the membership and fortify our current membership in our efforts. I think I did an OK job, but there is so much more I should have done! We have increased our membership in a time when faith communities all across the country have continued to lose theirs. We have met unmet needs among ourselves, especially in the person-to-person realm. But there were a few tasks that I did not complete:

1. Send a postcard to

(cont. from Page 1)

May 18 – Rev. Maren Tirabassi – Poetry to Change the World ... from Psalms to Graffiti

In times of turmoil and new beginnings, in words of passion and peacefulness, poetry has reached out in challenge and comfort. Reflecting on the history of poetry to change the world and its current expressions, may lead us to our own new verses.

Rev. Maren Tirabassi is the author of twenty-four books. Those dealing with "story," include three murder mysteries, most recently "Death in Disguise," two children's books, one collection of short stories, stories of real people, blended for anonymity, in "Caring for Ourselves while Caring for our Elders," and the providing of space for people to tell their own stories in the LAMBDA nominated "Transgendering Faith," translated last year into Swahili and Luganda. She has been a UCC clergywoman for forty-four years, lives in Kittery, is a member of three book groups! and loves quilting, board games, and, most of all, beagles.

May 25 – Thomas Pistole – Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship: Who Are We?

Each week members, friends, and visitors gather in our sanctuary. We listen, we speak, we share, we sing, but who exactly are we. In this interactive service we will have an opportunity to learn about others with whom we gather on Sunday mornings and to, in turn, share a bit about ourselves. You may be surprised!

Thomas Pistole is a long-time member of this Fellowship and a Credentialed Religious Educator/Advanced Level.

every new resident of our greater community

2. Call every new visitor within two weeks of their visit
 3. Make a personal call or visit to the members and friends who have "fallen away" or become otherwise engaged to see how we could meet their needs, if possible
 4. Devise a regular schedule for our social media efforts, especially to attract young people and families
- There were a few others, but I'll let those go.

Sue Noon and I have taken on the social media efforts with renewed vigor. You are welcome to give us suggestions as you think of them. In that way, I hope to succeed with item 4 above.

Finally, I want to thank you for your support, humor, and kind words during my tenure. The Fellowship is certainly a big part of our lives, mine and Sue's, and we continue to draw comfort and hope from all of you. Thank you.

Fellowship Financial Considerations

Members have commented that they would like to know **what level of donations are necessary/appropriate for keeping the Fellowship running**. Here is information that should shed some light on their question:

This year the **DUUF Operating Budget** calls for income of approximately \$47,000 in order to balance the books for the current fiscal year. Income comes from several sources including \$27,000 from our tenants and other users of our facility and \$1,500 from fundraisers and interest. The balance, \$18,500, is needed from member donations.

We currently have 44 active adult members in 32 households. **We will meet this year's goal if donations are an average of \$420 per member or \$580 per household for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.**

As in the past, some can and will give more; others will do their best.

We appreciate all you do to help the Fellowship thrive!



The Six Sources Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote:

1. Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
2. Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
3. Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
4. Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
5. Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
6. Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

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.



Program Committee Annual Report

This year's committee consisted of Dawn Meredith, Betty Crepeau, and Thomas Pistole as chair.

In planning the Sunday programs for this Fellowship year we used three model formats. The first was our standard format that featured a speaker and discussion period. The second model was a reflection format and featured short periods of meditation interspersed with readings, music, and other activities. The third format was an interactive approach involving discussion, either in small groups or as a whole.

Among these varied formats we considered a wide variety of topics. Within the area of religion we explored agnosticism and humanism, and looked at components of the newly adopted shared values used to describe Unitarian Universalism. We began and ended our Fellowship year with an inward look at ourselves.

Within the sphere of our own lives we looked at gratitude, finding peace, love and forgiveness, loving conversations, and at death.

We looked at the power of poetry, of storytelling, and of music. We explored the spirituality of gardening. We learned more about the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and about the lives and accomplishments of several African-American women. We glimpsed the life of a hospice chaplain.

Because of events in our country this year we included more programs focusing on social justice issues. Topics included food insecurity, immigration challenges, the situation in Gaza, various voting issues, affordable housing, and peace.

We conducted a survey part way through the year. The results are summarized below and are based 11 responses. We used a five-point scale with 5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest.

Traditional format programs: 4.5; lowest rating was 3
Discussion format programs: 4.64

Reflection format programs: 3.73 [note: this showed a bimodal response. We made some modifications to this format and individual feedback was positive.]

Other comments/suggestions included leaving plenty of time for the speaker and having UU ministers come more often. There were very favorable comments regarding Maria and the music. Our sense is that we are on the right track and the committee will continue to make adjustments as appropriate.

Several folks gave suggestions for possible speakers, for which we are very grateful. Dawn and Betty will be continuing the committee and invite your comments or suggestions. Sending ideas for speakers via email is best, so we aren't relying only on our memory!

Caring Committee

The Caring Committee along with other members of the Fellowship have been making some meals for a family that we learned of through one of our members. The family has been struggling due to the long-term hospitalization of one of the parents. This parent, stricken with cancer, had been a crucial part in the fostering of, and cooking for, their many young children.

Our committee hasn't had a high profile recently, and indeed hasn't had much to do. While this is potentially a good thing in that we could take it to mean that our Members and Friends have been well, it could also mean that some people may be unaware of our existence and willingness to help. So, if you have any needs such as sympathy, visits, rides, prepared meals, etc., please contact me, or any member of the **Caring Committee** below.

*Chris Rodgers (603) 970-0502;
Dawn Meredith; Susan Bullivant;
Michael O'Sullivan*

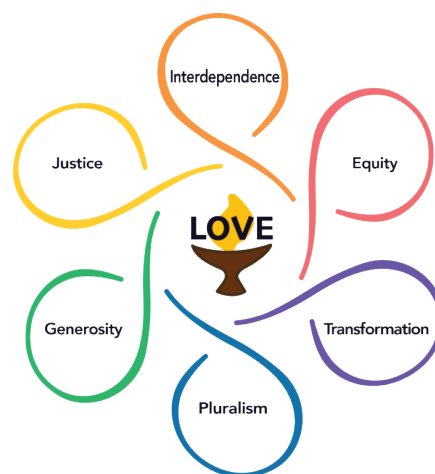
Nominating Committee

Time is running out and 3 positions still need volunteers for the continued operation and success of our Fellowship. **Open positions are House Manager, Vice President and Secretary.** Volunteer organizations rely on members to step up and assume roles. Experience is not required as there is considerable support within the Fellowship. Job descriptions are posted on the member portal of the website. If you have a question about any of these 3 roles, please talk to Sarge Legard or Tom Reichheld.

Socials Annual Report

Socials stayed true to its mission of providing food and fun for the Fellowship this year.

- We put on 3 potlucks which were very successful with great attendance. Thanks to Jon Babon and his daughter Krysta for helping with setup.
- We had a fun end of year picnic at Fort McClary last year and are planning a similar end of year picnic this year at the Isaak's home in Durham on June 1.
- We provided coffee and hot cocoa for the church fair.
- John Macri ran our much loved Easter egg roll complete with fabulous prizes. Between the fellowship hall floor and some very contrary eggs, we had good laughs and lots of fun!
- Finally, every week members of the socials committee set up coffee, tea and juice after the service in hopes of facilitating friendship and good conversation. Many thanks to Sue Noon, Julie Lipari, Deb Johnson and pinch hitter Tom Reichheld. Fellowship members volunteer to provide snacks, and we thank all of them very much too.



Unitarian Universalism is a living tradition that has changed in many ways from the original Christian roots of its Universalist and Unitarian heritages, and it continues to evolve today. Most recently, this evolution has taken the form of adopting new language to describe who we are as UUs. At General Assembly in June 2024, UUs voted to replace existing Seven Principles and Six Sources language in our bylaws with language describing Unitarian Universalism through these shared values:

Interdependence: We honor the interdependent web of all existence and acknowledge our place in it.

Pluralism: We are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.

Justice: We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all feel welcome and can thrive.

Transformation: We adapt to the changing world.

Generosity: We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.

Equity: We declare that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity, love, and compassion.

DUUF Officers, Chairpersons and Council Coordinators, and Members of Committees and Councils for 2023-2024 - Under 2018 By-Laws

BOARD OFFICERS

President: Chip Noon

Vice President: Rachel Legard

Treasurer: Jen Pavlik

Secretary: Julie Lipari

COMMITTEES

Program: Thomas Pistole (Chair), Dawn Meredith, Betty Crepeau

Religious Exploration: Bob Pavlik

House and Grounds: House: Jonathan Babon (Chair), John Macri; Grounds: (TBD); Dottie's Garden: Sarah Tambling; Rentals: Maria Isaak

Socials: Carol Bullivant (Chair), Deb Johnson

Membership: Tom Reicheld (Chair), Rachel Legard; Caring Subcommittee: Michael O'Sullivan, Dawn Meredith, Susan Bullivant, Chris Rodgers (co-ordinator)

COUNCILS

Nominations: Sarge Legard (Coordinator)

Music Council: Maria Isaak (Coordinator)

Green Sanctuary: Mike Fleming (Coordinator), Nick Isaak

Social Action: Dawn Meredith (Coordinator), Betty Crepeau

Communication & Outreach: TBD (Webmaster), Bob Bullivant (HEED Editor)

Marketing Subcommittee: Julie Lipari, Chip Noon, Susan Noon

Denominational Affairs: Deb Johnson (Coordinator)

Durham Housing Association Representative: Susan Noon, Secretary

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

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Matt Meyer: Singing for Resistance & Resilience

**2pm, Sunday, May 4, South Church UU Fellowship Hall (downstairs)
292 State Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801
\$25 Suggested Donation
SouthChurch-UU.org**

This moment is calling for a strong movement, and a strong movement needs strong music. Musician and activist Matt Meyer will lead a song circle guiding participants to learn and share songs for protests, rallies, and community organizing. We'll share songs that can be sung in the streets without accompaniment, songs for organizing meetings that bring the energy you need, and songs for community that ground us for the long haul. And it will simply be good to be and sing together.

Walk-ups are welcome, but we encourage folks to pre-register. We are asking for a suggested donation of \$25 and you can register either [HERE](#) or [HERE](#).

Matt Meyer serves as Director of Operations for Sanctuary Boston, a community of vibrant worship and real connection, and he is a much sought-after UU worship leader and song leader and has led hundreds of worship services throughout North America. Matt has performed alongside Ysaye Barnwell (of Sweet Honey in the Rock), Pete Seeger, Emma's Revolution, Jim Scott, Peter Mayer, and many others. Matt received a degree in hand drumming from Berklee College of Music, and has studied abroad in Cuba, Ghana, and Central America. Matt has a long background of activism and organizing for social and economic justice and is a founding organizer of several cooperative organizations having real impact in the Greater Boston area.



**SINGING for RESISTANCE
with MATT MEYER & RESILIENCE**

Social Action Committee Annual Report

We continued our faithful support of Seacoast Family Promise (SFP) this year, bringing hot delicious meals five different weeks during the year. We put together a Thanksgiving basket for a family, complete with homemade cookies and pies. We also contributed \$675 for much needed gas cards for families.

In other work, a small crew helped to organize the Durham Cornucopia Food Pantry storage room over the Christmas break, bringing order to an otherwise chaotic back room. We have supported 68 Hours of Hunger campaign modestly through the year (thanks to Chip and Ann for delivering).

With the disastrous results of the national elections, several of our Sunday programs have focused on social action and resistance: Get Out the Vote letter writing, Workforce Housing in Durham, conflict in the Middle East (2 talks), Immigration 101, and Food Insecurity. Lastly, Stephanie Griffin shared many ways to keep informed and advocate at the State and Federal levels.

We have also spent some time considering how we can engage deeply with one or more social action efforts. We recognize that we are too small to be effective on our own and so are looking at ways of joining with likeminded others. To this end, two of our Sunday services were focused on thinking about our priorities. Also, three of us (Chip, Larry, and Dawn) met with Pastor Dave Grishaw-Jones of the Community of Church of Durham to discuss opportunities for working together. Pastor Dave organized a workshop on April 5th lead by Granite State Organizing Project on how to create a community with “durable power...allowing them to influence key decision makers...” **Our next community organizing meeting will be Sunday May 18th 2-4 pm at St. George’s Church in Durham to plan next steps in creating community and setting priorities. All are invited to attend; keep an eye out for more details in your email.**

Lastly, we are just now mounting a campaign to raise funds to support the final push of the Joshua House which houses families for Seacoast Family Promise and at the same time honor Pati Frew Walters who has been director of SFP for 18+ years, and retired this winter. She was extraordinarily resourceful in getting funds (including finding a way to house families safely during Covid), and a dispenser of deep tough-love for the families, providing guidance, acceptance, and love in equal measure.

Annual Business Meeting of the Fellowship

The ABM of the Durham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship will be held on Wednesday, May 28, 2025 at 6pm at the Fellowship, 20 Madbury Road, Durham, NH. All members are encouraged (mightily encouraged) to attend. There will be Moe’s Sandwiches, a surprise appearance of one of your favorite officers, exciting agenda items, and a rousing adjournment! This is not to be missed! The official notice will be emailed to you in the near future! Get yer dancin’ shoes on! Come on down!



The last show of the OYSTER RIVER FOLK CONCERTS was held on Saturday, April 26th and featured Liz and Dan Faiella on fiddle (violin) and guitar. They were fantastic and received an enthusiastic standing ovation! Next year, the Fellowship will again host the ORFC programs, to our great delight. We would like to thank this year’s performers and audiences for giving to the community a most rewarding and heartwarming experience.

“A good song reminds us what we’re fighting for.” Pete Seeger