The HEED

October 2026

Newsletter of the Durhham Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Denominational Affairs

I look forward to my role as denominational affairs coordinator and plan to provide information and perspective regarding Unitarian Universalism and the Association of which we are a part. My goal is to help members and friends know more about the faith community to which we belong. The UU experiences I have had give me a background to do just that.

My wife Donna and I joined the Fellowship in May 1983. I served in several Board positions before focusing on Religious Education (later changed to Religious Exploration) and in 1990, working with other RE folks, became the Fellowship's first director of religious education/exploration, a position I held for 23 years. In that role I completed all 9 of the then-available Renaissance modules, which are 15-hour educational programs for religious educators and others.

Also, in 1990 I began attending RE Week on Star

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Join Our Services at 10:00 AM Sundays

(and stay afterward for coffee/tea, snacks, & conversation)

October 4 - Mary Downes - "Election Shenanigans"
Mary will draw upon her experience as a ballot clerk (organizing all ballot clerks) in Madbury, NH as well as trainings from the NH Secretary of State's office to provide insight into how local elections are run, and how secure they actually are. She will also look into recent efforts to restrict voting at the state and federal levels and talk about what might happen not just on Election Day on November 8, but on January 3, when the new House of Representatives is (supposed to be) sworn in.

October 11 - Josh Yeaton - "The Abenaki People: Past and Present"
Before the arrival of European colonists, the Abenaki people thrived here with far-reaching trade relationships, ingenious food production and land management practices, and a rich cultural heritage.

Inspired by the Fellowship's land acknowledgement, Josh Yeaton will lead us through the history of the Abenaki and Wabanaki peoples, sharing the realities of loss, lingering pain, and resilience.

After studying many areas of American history, Josh was intrigued to learn more about the first people to live on the land he grew up on. Josh was raised in Strafford, educated in Keene, and is now raising his own family in Nottingham.

October 18 - Chris Chance - An introduction to Colette and friends: Experiences of a community of Congolese women in Manchester, NH
Chris Chance will speak and sing about her learning with a group of Congolese women immigrants as a volunteer with the International Institute of New England (IINE) in Manchester. The outreach experience has been eye-opening,

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Happy Fall!

The DUUF board has begun to have conversations about how to best attract new families. All new members are great, but for sustainability we need more younger people. Families are great, but we also need people from age 20 to 60 who are up for sharing in the activities to keep our Fellowship running. In recent years, we have a larger percentage of people who are older. Our programs are excellent, music is wonderful and we have really great people in RE ready to work with children. We are open and welcoming. Your ideas for growth are welcome and are best with some energy behind them to help implement them!

If anyone wants to take a turn doing moments for young people, talk to the program committee. Carol is always open to welcoming more people to the coffee-making team. Jon Babon will be sharing information about a fall weeding day. We are already starting to talk about the December 5 Christmas Fair which is a great community outreach day. Working together on all of these tasks helps build our community.

Rachel Legard, President

October Programs *(continued from Page 1)*

humbling, and offers an opportunity for our congregation to become a caring presence in the lives of neighbors who embody resilient love and hope after surviving some of the greatest atrocities modern greed and warfare have perpetuated. It is Chris' hope to honor the wishes of Colette Ramazani, now a resident of Manchester NH, by amplifying the story of her people. Colette's life is the subject of the book *Tell This To My Mother* (author: Joseph Mwantuali). She survived war in the Congo against all odds, and is now a published author, speaker in the fight for human rights, and translator assisting her local Congolese community (speaking 5 languages fluently). Her vibrant voice has helped improve civil rights law in her home country, as well as the welfare of her local friends and family. Inspired by the beauty of a tree, she has authored the first in an envisioned children's book series: *Lily and the Gift Planet Earth*

The Congolese womens' experiences help us understand the current real life impact of inhumane policies in already traumatized and marginalized communities.

Let's open our hearts and minds to a deeper understanding of the day-to-day experiences of our immigrant neighbors in the spirit of kinship needed to meet the moment!

Chris Chance, PhD (she/her) is a singer and occasional song leader at DUUF, our representative to the Dover Area Religious Leaders Association (DARLA), a practicing local Clinical Psychologist, and recently began part-time formal study in interfaith support and social justice engagement at the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine (ChIME).

October 25 - Laura Cleminson - "The importance of keeping the die-a-logue alive."
One of the best kept secrets might be that talking about dying and death paves a path to living more fully and gaining clarity about what matters most along the way. Laura will share insights gained from growing a compassionate community with the Pre-Dead Social Club (last year they filled over 1,200 seats at their events) and discuss her belief that everyone has a bit of a death doula in us waiting to be recognized.

Laura Cleminson is the founder of the Pre-Dead Social Club, an end-of-life doula, a member of the Health Care Decisions Coalition of New Hampshire, and a remote caregiver. With her thoughtful humor, compassionate insights, and practical strategies, Laura supports others in finding clarity, connection, and agency about the thing we all have in common--that we'll all die someday.

Denominational Affairs *(continued from Page 1)*

Island, spending several years attending RE Week on Star Island, spending several years on the teaching staff and eventually in the leadership roles of Children's Dean and Conference Dean. A few years later I served as the equivalent of conference dean for RE Week at Ferry Beach.

Initially working with our then-NH/VT District program/RE consultant Cindy Spring, I began co-leading Renaissance modules that led me not only to venues in New England but to places as far west as Minnesota, Missouri, and Texas, and to southern sites, including Florida and North Carolina. In 2002 I was selected as one of ~12 individuals from the US and Canada to serve as a trainer for religious educators who wished to become Renaissance leaders.

In 2005 I completed the requirements to become a Credentialed Religious Educator/Advanced Level. I subsequently became a mentor for those seeking credentialing, eventually serving on the LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators) Mentoring Committee for five years, including two as chair. I joined the then-NH/VT District Board of Directors, four years as vice-president and two as president. I also served for several years on the Board of Directors of the Unitarian Sunday School Society.

I have attended about 15 General Assembly gatherings, which include the multi-day business meeting for our Association, most often as a delegate for our Fellowship.

I have shared my UU past with you so you might get a feel for the scope of topics I hope to share with you. Of course, Unitarian Universalism is a dynamic entity, so there have been many changes over the past 40 years, but I believe that past experience is beneficial in gaining a good understanding of who we are today. In each HEED issue I plan to bring you a vignette of our story. We might look at the limited number of presidents of our Association and how that position has changed. We might explore what brought about the consolidation of Unitarians and Universalists in 1961. We might consider UUA headquarters in Boston vs. the people who serve in leadership roles. (Hint: They don't all live and work in Boston.) We might ask what issues we can expect to be a part of the next year's GA agenda and learn about the differences between actions of immediate witness, congregational study/action issues, business resolutions, and statements of conscience. We can talk about about the new virtual hymnal. And so much more!

Please let me know if there are particular things you would like to know about. I will do my best to provide answers.

Thomas Pistole

New Recycling Policy

Durham has changed its recycling policy to the single-stream system. With single-stream recycling, all acceptable recyclable materials may be placed together in the recycling bin with no sorting required. The Fellowship kitchen will now maintain just 1 bin under the back counter.

Although Durham does not pick up regular trash at the DUUF curb, it did provide us with a large toter and will pick up our recyclables. Please rinse cans & bottles and follow the guidelines that are posted in the kitchen.

Another change to food & drink containers is that the Fellowship is moving to a 'carry in-carry out' policy. Large groups like DUUF, AA, and 4 Rivers will continue to take out their own trash bag after each get-together. For every other person using the building for any reason, individual responsibility is expected. Food waste left in a trash can for days (or longer) is attracting fruit flies, ants, mice and flies.

For those unfamiliar with carry in-carry out, it simply means if you are able to carry in a package of food, then you can carry out any unconsumed parts of that food as well as the packaging.

Sarge Legard, House Chair



News from the UUA: Spotlight on the UU Church of Saco & Biddeford

Earlier this summer, a young father named Johan Sebastian Duran Guerrero was murdered by an ICE agent in Biddeford, Maine. Rev. Lori Whittemore of our UU Church of Saco and Biddeford, along with UU clergy colleagues including Rev. Jodi Hyashida and Rev. Tori Rosati, responded immediately. Together they helped hold sacred space for mourners meeting in quiet clusters on sidewalks and streets usually bustling with beach goers and lobster roll lunches - now dampened by grief. Our deep gratitude remains with our UU clergy in Maine who responded to the call of public witness, and to the congregation who leaped in and hosted a deeply moving interfaith vigil. You can hear more from Rev Lori herself - she shared her story with the August meeting of The Gathering.





Lucas Kamon and Erin Dubois - September 27



Story Time with Mary Downes (Betty Crepeau leading the Program) September 27

Socials Announcement: Fall Stroll

Zoe Pavlik and Emma Kinsey have generously agreed to lead a Walk for the Socials activity in October. Watch your email for the announcement of when and where the walk will occur. The news will be in Sunday Announcements.

Carol Bullivant
Socials Committee



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.



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 the 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.

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.

DUUF Officers, Chairpersons and Council Coordinators, and Members of Committees and Councils for 2025-2026 - *Under 2023 amended by-laws*

BOARD OFFICERS

President: Rachel Legard
Vice President: Mary Downes
Treasurer: Jen Pavlik
Secretary: Nick Isaak

COMMITTEES

Program: Dawn Meredith (Chair), Bob Pavlik, Mary Downes, Larry Vogelman
Religious Exploration: Bob Pavlik (Chair)
House and Grounds: Sarge Legard (Chair), Grounds: Jon Babon, Rentals: Maria Isaak
Green Sanctuary: Jon Babon (Coordinator), Nick Isaak
Socials: Carol Bullivant (Chair), Jon Babon, Christopher Dunning, Susan Noon
Membership: Tom Reichheld (Chair); Caring Subcommittee: Chris Rodgers (Coordinator), Dawn Meredith, Rachel Legard, Carol Bullivant

COUNCILS

Nominations: Sarge Legard (Coordinator)
Music: Maria Isaak (Coordinator)
Social Action: Mary Downes (Coordinator), Betty Creapeau
Denominational Affairs: Thomas Pistole (Coordinator)
Communication & Outreach: Christopher Dunning (Website Administrator), Bob Bullivant (HEED Editor), Chip Noon (HEED Design & Layout)
Ad Hoc Marketing: Susan Noon, Chip Noon
Dover Area Religious Leaders Association: Chris Chance (Representative)
Oyster River Folk Music Concerts: Brad Kinsey, Bob Pavlik (with Durham Community Church)

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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