

NEWS & VIEWS

June, 2018

Unitarian
Universalist
Church
of Rutland



President's Letter

DEMOCRACY AT TOO MUCH EXPENSE AND DISTANCE?

This continues a discussion that began at our Annual Meeting. When I got the materials for the UU Northern New England District's annual April meeting this year, I was shocked to see that the District Board wanted to dissolve the District. This was a far cry from the District's 2017 report, which listed the good things the District had done and included the former President's statement "So, as I look ahead, I see the Northern New England District board doing good things for the foreseeable future."

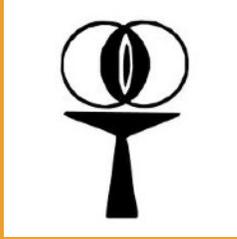
So far, I think dissolution is a bad idea. We in Northern New England would lose the ability to direct the income from the District's approximately \$4 million endowment. I think there are many good uses of that endowment locally. Examples of possible future uses and present uses are managing the Lay Pulpit Exchange, the Chalice Lighter grant program, sponsoring people to attend General Assembly who could not otherwise afford to go, organizing meetings of church presidents (this used to be an interesting and useful support group), and ensuring there are trainings in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine that promote our local goals, which include supporting small congregations. I'm particularly interested in helping folks attend district and national

meetings. To what extent should we ask people to apply for "scholarships" to pay registration and other fees? Should the UUA or at least the District experiment with merely suggesting a contribution to cover the expenses of putting on annual meetings but not actually requiring payment?

Not only at what cost, but also at what distance do we want UU democracy to function? Under a contract the Northern New England District signed with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), New England Region staff, which replaced District staff, are supervised directly by the UUA. The District Executives of the four districts in the New England Region have been replaced by a "Regional Lead," who is "directly supervised by the Director of Congregational Life" of the UUA. There is no regional governance, just an Advisory Council. Therefore, if a church is dissatisfied with staff's response to a request, it has to go straight to UUA leadership in Boston to request a remedy.

If you'd like more information on the proposed District dissolution or have an opinion on the above, please tell me at hogden@vermontel.net and, if you wish, I will pass your thoughts on to the District Board and the UUA.

-Herb Ogden



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Rev. Barbara Threet

President:

Herb Ogden 293-2510

Vice President:

Kapi Reith 773-9181

Moderator:

Kevin Kiefaber 779-3637

Treasurer:

Diane Sander 459-2919

Secretary:

Theresa Krieger 683-7794

Trustees:

Rebecca Mattis 773-3535

Sara Neller 747-4020

Church Secretary:

Tejal Dholakia

Available by appointment

Poet's Corner

“Tis Moonlight, Summer Moonlight”
by Emily Jane Bronte

'Tis moonlight, summer moonlight,
All soft and still and fair;
The solemn hour of midnight
Breathes sweet thoughts everywhere,

But most where trees are sending
Their breezy boughs on high,
Or stooping low are lending
A shelter from the sky.

And there in those wild bowers
A lovely form is laid;
Green grass and dew-steeped flowers
Wave gently round her head.

**“Be like the flower, turn your
face to the sun.”**

- Kahlil Gibran



Time lapse of summer solstice north of the Arctic Circle. Photo by Alamy.

From Reverend Barbara's Desk...

Waiting. It feels like a lot of my energy has been spent this past month on waiting, usually impatiently.

Waiting for spring to finally arrive, of course. In 1816, which is referred to as the 'Year Without A Summer' there was lake and river ice in Pennsylvania in July and August, and frost as far south as Virginia. Crops barely grew and much of what did grow never reached maturity: the worst famine of the century was widespread in Europe. I began to wonder if this year would be a repeat, some macabre anniversary – spring was beginning to feel pretty tenuous this year. And then, quite suddenly, it appeared, and none the quicker for all my worries!

I waited with a friend who had undergone a series of medical tests. The outcome could have been dire. As it turns out, her condition is serious but entirely operable, with a very good prognosis. The waiting was more difficult than dealing with the results. The not-knowing was the hardest part of her situation.

And I waited for a snarl in my summer plans to untangle itself. I'd done what I could, and the outcome was out of my hands. Now, I pride myself on planning carefully, with contingencies, fully aware that plans will change and thing will go differently whether it's for a summer's adventures or a church year or what I'll buy at the grocery store, and I do allow for that. But this snarl was big, and not something I could have anticipated. So I made lists of alternatives: if this happens I'll go with Plan B, and if this other thing happens, it's Plan C instead. Plan B would affect another part of my plans: should I go ahead and make that adjustment now? The waiting was dreadful. (As fate would have it, just when I had figured out all the various alternatives, the original plan fell into place perfectly, so all my extra planning was for naught!)

All of this waiting felt passive: I couldn't affect the outcome and couldn't really plan until the outcome had revealed itself. Moving forward, as

is so often the case in life, meant moving forward without certainty, and moving forward was easier if I could leave my mind and soul open to several possibilities, including ones I couldn't even imagine.

I'm reminded once again of the Buddhist concept of non-attachment. It doesn't mean not caring. It doesn't mean not planning or preparing. It doesn't mean ignoring the ramifications of what we do, or denying personal responsibility. It doesn't mean floating along passively with no goals in mind. It simply means remaining open to whatever might actually happen, and being willing to adapt, rather than frustratedly trying to force a situation into a pre-planned mold even when the mold no longer fits. It means honoring the journey and not focusing just a single destination, especially given how often destinations and outcomes shift in life as the journey progresses.



I thought of this non-attachment especially as our Short-Term Task Force met again a few days ago. We're tasked with exploring many possibilities for our future, gathering lots of information, and examining several options including some that may not have come up before. Our task is to stay open, to try to weigh many alternatives with new eyes and open minds and

hearts. We are waiting together and actively moving forward at the same time, willing for the process to take as long as it takes to unfold. And non-attachment to any particular outcome is our ally – it's what will allow us to see most widely.

The truth is that most of us are waiting most of the time. Learning to wait patiently while remaining actively involved – being engaged but not attached - that may be among the great spiritual challenges!

Blessings on the journey!
Rev. Barbara

Announcements

JEAN DAVIES MEMORIAL

There will be a memorial service for Jean Davies on Sat., June 9th at 2pm at the Pittsford Congregational Church.

REV. BARBARA'S SUMMER COVERAGE

Rev. Barbara Threet will be on hiatus during the coming summer months! If you need assistance from the Pastoral Care Committee then, please call Marsha Roy(chairman)at (802)773 -9014 or e-mail her at frostharbor@yahoo.com

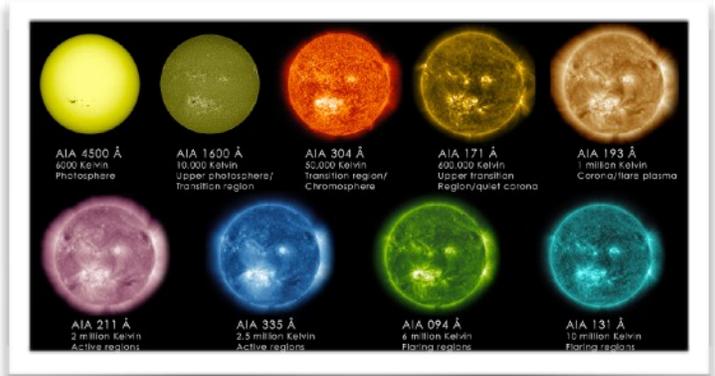
Thank you!
Best regards,
Marsha Roy

June Half-Plate Donations
6/3: Project Vision
6/10: Reserve for Major Maintenance

June Birthdays
6/3 John Suddarth
6/6 Erin Piotrowski
6/15 Becky Eno
6/19 Kathy Archer
Best wishes to you... and all other June birthdays!

ABOUT THE PHOTOS...

In this issue, we celebrate the summer solstice. Photos are borrowed liberally from the web, credits are maintained where available. We offer their creators our sincere appreciation for lending their beauty and visual concept to our humble newsletter.



THE SUN HOW BIG? HOW POWERFUL?

1.3 MILLION EARTHS CAN FIT INSIDE THE SUN.

Planet	Comparison
JUPITER	1,328 times the diameter, 1,328 times the volume
SATURN	950 times the diameter, 950 times the volume
URANUS	40,000 times the diameter, 40,000 times the volume
NEPTUNE	43,200 times the diameter, 43,200 times the volume
THE EARTH	109 times the diameter, 1,300,000 times the volume
VENUS	109 times the diameter, 1,300,000 times the volume
MARS	228 times the diameter, 228 times the volume
MERCURY	4,300 times the diameter, 4,300 times the volume
PLUTO*	93 times the diameter, 93 times the volume

THE SUN CONTAINS MORE THAN **99.8%** OF THE TOTAL MASS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

386 BILLION BILLION MEGAWATTS OF POWER

AT THE CENTRE OF THE CORE 150 TIMES THAT OF WATER

THE SUN'S DENSITY IS MORE THAN

COMPOSITION: HYDROGEN, HELIUM, METALS

SOURCE: [HTTP://NINEPLANETS.ORG](http://nineplanets.org) INFOGRAPHIC DESIGNED BY NATALIE BARRINGTON [HTTP://WWW.NATALIEBARRINGTON.CO.UK](http://www.nataliebarrington.co.uk)

Unitarian Universalist Church of Rutland Minutes of Board of Trustees April 9th, 2018

Board Members Present: Diane Sander, Theresa Krieger, Herb Ogden, Rev. Barbara Threet, Sara Neller and Rebecca Mattis, Kevin Kiefaber, Kapi Reith

Also Present: Ed Safford, Bela Francoeur Schug

Secretary's Report: Motion Kapi Reith/ Sara Neller to accept minutes from March. Passed unanimously with one correction.

Treasurer's Report: Reviewed budget proposal, balance sheet and Budget v actuals. We are in the black. We have \$3000 left in pre-buy and our utilities are down without a renter.

RE Proposal: On behalf of the RE Committee Bela brought a proposal for hiring an RE assistant. This would be for an average of 6 hours a month, though more at the beginning of the the year. She would help with publicity and communication for the committee. Motion Rebecca Mattis/ Kapi Reith to accept the proposal with amendment of amount budgeted be \$2000 to cover FICA and specifying that the RE chair will supervise. Passed unanimously.

Budget Proposal: Motion Kevin Kiefaber/ Kapi Reith to accept the budget proposal. Passed unanimously.

President's Report: Appointed Cathy Archer to Sunday Service Committee. Motion Rebecca Mattis/ Theresa Krieger to accept appointment. Passed. Appointed Luther Brown to Membership Committee. Motion Diane Sander/ Rebecca Mattis to accept. Passed. Herb noted that we had a vote by email to sponsor the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants Vermont so that we could allow them to use our building. This passed unanimously.

Committee & Task Force Reports:

Buildings & Grounds: Partition behind pulpit was removed by Jim Haley and J.P.

Cass and reredos installed by Jim Haley and Herb Ogden. Partition is stored in balcony. Heating system update: Lohsen replaced circulator last week. The plumber, Roland, thinks another failure is unlikely, but failure occurs without warning. Lohsen will include an estimate for a freeze alarm in the bill for the circulator.

Old Business:

Discussion of Mission Statement: Motion Diane Sander/ Kapi Reith to agree that someone makes the motion suggested by Rebecca to edit the mission statement. Someone from the board would explain that it is to clear up the grammar. Passed by 4-3 vote.

New Business:

- We sent a lease to the perspective tenant. Their lawyer is reviewing it.
- We are looking for an alternate tenant liaison for when Ed is away. Someone familiar with Buildings and Grounds would be good because this is the kind of thing most likely to come up. Knowing who to call is important.
- Discussed possibility of adding a third toilet. This would expand how many children a daycare could be licensed to have. The board is open to exploring possibilities.
- Herb and Cathy are going to NNED meeting. Whether the NNED will continue to exist is being discussed. Discussion of small congregations and hope that the district could serve as a resource for small congregations. Consensus preference to not dissolve the district.
- Discussion of discussing policies. We will have a discussion of proposed change to the membership policy as drafted by Barbara.

Respectfully Submitted,
Theresa Krieger

Upcoming Services: June

June 3: Phillip Crossman

“First Impressions: Vermonters in the Ottoman Empire and Early American Perceptions of Islam”

For example one of President George Bush’s great great great great great grandfathers was from Norwich, Vermont and that his nephew (The Reverend George Bush) wrote the first biography of Muhammad published in the U.S.

ALSO: RE Sunday! We are concluding our year with a review of the items in our Toolbox of Faith, and planning what to present to the congregation the following Sunday. Please join us downstairs at 10:30am.



June 10: Rev. Barbara Threet

“Looking Back & Flower Ceremony”

A reflection on the past church year including a presentation by our children, and our flower communion, followed by an ice cream social!

June 21: Herb Ogden, Becky Eno, Fredda Mangel

“Summer Solstice Celebration”

Our annual Summer Solstice Celebration will be held at Haroldhenge, the stone circle. All are welcome. There will be short readings by a variety of readers, spiritually experiential guided meditation and response, movement, chanting and singing, along with the usual spectacular burning of the dry evergreen with what we wish to be rid of. Bring drums and noisemakers. Potluck picnic supper on the church lawn at 5:30 p.m. We will car pool from the church at 6:30. Bug repellent may be useful, though we will have citronella torches. If weather is bad, we will move everything but the tree burning inside the church. **THIS IS NOT HELD ON SUNDAY, BUT RATHER ON THE ACTUAL SOLSTICE.**

July 15th begins summer schedule, which is more informal. Services are still held at 10:30 a.m. Child care is not available for summer services, we apologize for any inconvenience.

Upcoming Events

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| June 3rd | RE SUNDAY: Toolbox of Faith |
| June 9th | Jean Davies memorial |
| June 10th | Flower Communion and Ice Cream Social |
| June 14th | Non-Violent Communication group meeting |
| June 21st | Summer Solstice Service at HaroldHenge |
| June 24th | Eric Hangen concert |

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