

NORTHSHORE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
ADVANCE • APRIL 2008

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Namaste

A colleague of mine often says, “No one – no one! – loves their job more than I do.” Well, I don’t know how love of one’s job might be weighed and measured for the purposes of comparison, but I do know that I love my job too. To be given the support, the professional standing, and a salary besides, so that I can spend my days engaging with others through the deepest, most thoughtful passages of their lives, reading and reflecting on spiritual matters, facilitating the development of a beloved community and reaching out to serve human need beyond the church’s walls – what a gift this is, and how I do love this opportunity to serve as a minister!

What is it that you love to do? What passions excite your soul? What challenges do you embrace with joy and imagination? What past-times bring you a quiet sense of contentment and fulfillment?

Donald Hall in his book *Life Work*, which is an unabashed confession of one who loves his work, says, “Contentment is work so engrossing that you do not know that you are working.” He uses the word *absorbedness*, saying that when he sits at his desk in the early morning and “. . . opens the folder that holds the day’s beginning, its desire and its hope . . . Then I lose myself. In the best part of the best day, *absorbedness* occupies me from footsole to skulltop.”

What is it that you love to do? What brings you to that deep state of absorbedness? I fear that it is only a few lucky souls who find that quality of life in their daily work. But if the work that you love isn’t found in your occupation, you still may find it elsewhere. Finding and living out your unique gifts could happen here in this beloved community.

If you find joy being with children, but seldom find the opportunity, there are meaningful and creative ways for you to be with children here. If you love words, but aren’t one of the rare few who can make a living as a writer, there are outlets here for your talents. If you yearn to serve the poor and oppressed, the church is a perfect channel for those energies. If you experience absorbedness digging in the good earth, but have no space for a garden, there is work for you here. If you thrive on organizing, or teaching, or compassionate listening, or singing, or decorating, but have no easy outlet for these passions, let’s talk.

To be a spiritually fulfilled person is to discern and to live out your unique gifts and talents, finding meaningful ways to express them, to share them with the world. How can we work together for you to grow into the fullness of your spiritual potential?

Namaste, Jeanne

Pastoral Notes

Congratulations to the Haight family on the marriage of their son Malcolm to Emily Jane Rocha on Saturday, March 29.

Our thoughts are with Gail Berger as she recuperates from gall bladder surgery, and with Fran Ridgely recovering from surgery to repair two fractured vertebrae. Bob Kelley, who has also been suffering from back pain, will not be undergoing surgery; a series of steroid treatments is expected to relieve his pain.

All of these folks would be happy to hear from you with your good wishes.

April 2008 Calendar

Singing Group rehearsals every Sunday morning at 9 A.M.

1	Tuesday at 10 A.M.	Small Group Ministry
1	Tuesday at 4 P.M.	Visioning Committee
1	Tuesday at 7 P.M.	Membership Committee
6	Sunday at 12:30	Small Group Ministry
7	Monday at 7 P.M.	Board Meeting
9	Wednesday at 6 P.M.	Leadership Development Committee
9	Wednesday at 7 P.M.	Small Group Ministry
14	Monday at 7 P.M.	Religious Services Committee
15	Tuesday at 10 A.M.	Small Group Ministry
20	Sunday at 12:30	Small Group Ministry
22	Tuesday at 7 P.M.	“Finding the Sermon Within”
23	Wednesday at 7 P.M.	Small Group Ministry
27 through May 4	CANDIDATING WEEK	

APRIL 6, 2008	SUNDAY SERVICE	10:30 A.M.
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Wordless Horizons

Paul Brailsford

After seventeen years at sea, and sixty years on land, Paul says, “*Wordless Horizons* helped me find my place on the planet earth, and inspired me when I came ashore to create a river of words that become this Sunday service.”

This is the first of several offerings from the “Finding the Sermon Within” group that has been meeting since last fall.

APRIL 13	SUNDAY SERVICE	10:30 A.M.
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The Spirit of the Child

Rev. Jeanne Nieuwejaar

From the Transcendentalists’ view that children have a fresh, pure understanding of divinity, to contemporary work by noted religious educators, many great thinkers, as well as many humble parents, find a kind of spiritual truth in children’s perceptions. This service will reflect on childhood’s gift of the spirit – and the tragic ways in which that spirit can be crushed.

The service will include the ritual of Child Dedication.

(At the church auction Ingrid Johnson and Deb Nelson 'purchased' the opportunity to choose the topic of this Sunday's service. Thank you, Deb and Ingrid, for this lovely topic.)

APRIL 20

SUNDAY SERVICE

10:30 A.M.

Earth Day 2008

Rev. Jeanne Nieuwejaar

April 22 was established as Earth Day in 1970 as a call for action to turn the tide of ecological destruction being wrought by the human animal. Our environmental concerns are not only scientific and social, but spiritual as well. Our faith calls us to support this 'interdependent web of life of which we are a part.' So, let us mark Earth Day 2008 with prayers, rituals, remembrances and a renewal of our commitment to be good stewards of this planet.

APRIL 27

SUNDAY SERVICE

10:30 A.M.

First Sunday of Candidating Week

The candidate for settled minister selected by the Ministerial Search Committee will be leading the service on this Sunday. Watch for a special mailing soon that will introduce that candidate to you.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE IMPORTANT SUNDAYS

MAY 4: Second Sunday of Candidating Week followed by a formal meeting of the congregation to vote on a motion to call your new minister.

MAY 11: Sunday Service at 10:30 followed by Annual Meeting. The agenda for the meeting and slate of nominees will be announced in the May newsletter.

From the Ministerial Search Committee.....

As most of you already know, we announced at our Easter service that we have chosen our candidate for the settled ministry. We are excited about the prospect of bringing our search to a successful conclusion, and we can't wait to tell you whom we have selected and to introduce her to you.

You will all have a chance to meet her during Candidating Week, which will take place from Saturday, April 26, through Sunday, May 4. During that week, she will meet with members of the congregation in both large gatherings and small groups. As we schedule specific events, we will post them on our church calendar at www.nsuu.org.

Our candidate will also conduct two services, on April 27 and May 4. After the May 4 service, we will hold a congregational meeting so that members can vote to ratify our choice. Soon we will make available the church's list of voting members so that you can verify your status.

We are thrilled to be able to celebrate this wonderful moment in the life of our church.

Notes from the Board of Directors.....

At our March meeting, we began work on the budget. Bo Batty walked us through the budget and the changes he made, to include line items for:

Buildings and Grounds, which will now include:

Maintenance (non-discretionary expenses) and

Projects (discretionary expenses), as well as

Capital Expenses (items whose utility extends beyond the current year)

Religious Services: need for line item coverage for 6 services/year @ \$250/service.

RE Director: Grant submitted.

First review included retained earnings from 07-08 of \$6000, as well as a projected 4/3% increase in pledges from last year...There was much discussion as we walked through the budget.

We were updated on the progress of the Ministerial Search Committee, "All Together Now" event, Leadership Development Committee, and Small Group Ministry.

We discussed Stewardship Sunday and the Stewardship Committee.

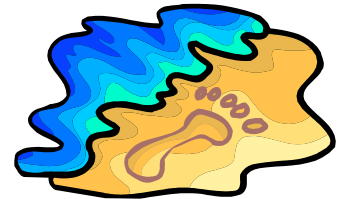
Submitted by: Nancy Levin

Retreat for Meditation and Centering Prayer

Originally scheduled for February, this program led by the interim minister will now occur on April 18 and 19 – Friday evening, 7:15 – 9:00, and Saturday, 9:00 – 3:30. The retreat will include guided exercises, journaling, movement and expressive art as well as long stretches of silence and times for group interaction. A particular focus of this retreat will be the practice known as centering or contemplative prayer.

Signup sheets and a flyer with more information are on the table in the Fellowship Hall.

FERRY BEACH WEEKEND – MAY 30 – JUNE 1 MARK YOUR CALENDAR



We will be sharing the weekend with Medford, as we did last year.

What is Ferry Beach? A UU retreat in Saco, Maine, a perfect spot right on the ocean...We reserve the weekend as a congregation, so come and relax, chat, eat, dig in the sand, run in the water, kids talent show and an adult drama or other suitable Saturday night activity. Babysitting can be arranged. Accommodations include: bunk beds in private rooms, with hall shared bathrooms, for a mere \$100/adult, \$70/youth, \$45/child (infants free)

Each adult is required to either prepare/serve OR cleanup/wash dishes for one meal...children are encouraged to sign up to help as well, with the supervision of a known adult- there are jobs for kids of all ages. There will be a sign-up sheet. Community cleanup before departure is also required.

Things to bring: towels, sheets, pillows, sleeping bags/blankets, games, sand toys/chairs, sunscreen...

More information on the Big Bulletin Board in the Fellowship Hall....

At this time we are looking for 2 VOLUNTEERS to coordinate cleanup in two of the four buildings. To volunteer, please contact Leonard Swanson.

If you're not going to Ferry Beach this year, please join us for a regular Sunday morning service on June 1 at 10:30 AM at NSUU Church. The Religious Services Committee is pleased to announce that Gail Berger will be speaking that Sunday. Please join us as we keep the doors of NSUU open every Sunday and welcome all who enter.

Looking for participants for our summer lay-led services

Do you have some particular form self of self expression that is related to your spiritual life or religious journey—including but not limited to music, art, poetry, photography, or a craft? Or do you have something meaningful to share about your work; a special travel experience; a significant hobby; a favorite book, author or artist; or some personal or family struggle, joy or other matter in your life that you'd like to share?

The Religious Services Committee is looking for people who may wish to take a significant role in one of NSUU's lay-led summer services, which will run throughout July and August. Those interested in being a speaker at one of the services would be assisted by a religious services committee member with planning, running the service, music, overseeing coffee hour refreshments and any other matters.

If interested, please contact Helen Brandt, Peter VanDeBogert, Judy Putnam, Amy Tedford or Jeanne Nieuwejaar.

Sharing the Plate

In conjunction with Jane Korins' fine service in our church in early March, our Sharing the Plate that Sunday brought in \$334 in support of the Pastoral Care Services of the North Shore Medical Center, a very worthy program serving the spiritual needs of patients and their families. Thank you to all who contributed.

**SHARE
THE
SPIRIT!**

Through our *Sharing the Plate* program, which is just five months old, we have now been able to send donations of over \$2000 into the larger community. And, there is more. Thanks to all who made contributions to the American Cancer Society on Easter Sunday, taking home daffodils as a symbol of hope. We raised more than \$200.

On April 20 our *Sharing the Plate* offering will be given to the Danvers Food Pantry. Please come prepared to give generously.

Newly Formed Membership Committee

Welcoming our visitors with warmth, companioning them as they find their way into a meaningful relationship with the congregation, being alert to the needs of our long-time members and supporting them through challenging times – what important work this is! A newly formed Membership Committee, Linda Budd, Joanne Ciaravella, Bob Cumming, Maureen Duram, Cindy

Salloway and Leonard Swanson, will be meeting with Jeanne on Tuesday evening, April 1 at 7:00 to clarify their mission and to get started. We'd love to have you join us.

Visioning Process

Have you noticed the foam boards with colorful flowers in the Fellowship Hall? Those are blossoming visions for the future of this good congregation. At an after church meeting in late January thirty thoughtful souls began the process of generating a vision. We now want everyone's voice to be heard so the fullest, most meaningful vision possible may emerge.

To articulate our shared vision is a spiritual invitation to be clear and compelling about how we should invest our talents and energies. "Without a vision the people will perish," is the old – but very wise – adage. Without a vision, without a shared sense of direction, we will simply spin our wheels.

You will be hearing soon about next steps in this visioning process, a journey which we hope will culminate with formal adoption of a Vision Statement at the annual meeting on May 11. In the meantime, add your thoughts, your flowers, to the garden growing on those foam boards in the Fellowship Hall.

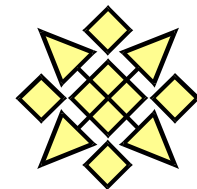
Child Dedication Ceremony

In the Unitarian Universalist tradition the ceremony of Child Dedication is a ritual for celebrating and blessing the life of the child, for parents to make a public commitment to bring their best selves to the work of parenting, and for the congregation to welcome the child and pledge support for the family.

Although traditionally this ceremony has been used with infants, it is also quite appropriate for older children and their families. The reality in this generation is that many families seek out a religious community only when their children are long past the stage of infancy. Such families may still find this ritual meaningful to bring their children formally into the life of the congregation.

On April 13 we will include the ritual of Child Dedication in our Sunday service. If you would like to have your family included, please contact the minister.

Profile of the Month The Doherty Family



John and Judith Doherty have been members of NSUU for nearly two decades, married by Ed Lynn 17 years ago.

Judy, a Peabody native, graduated from UMass Amherst with a teaching degree at a time when she and others found it impossible to get a job in their field. Thus she entered retail management at Sears and later at Lechmere. She is something of an expert on TV technology, and works from a home office writing and editing for Toshiba America Consumer Products.

John, owner of Caricatures, Etc. is a Quincy native who graduated from UMass Boston with a political science degree. He likes to say that he was an "SOB", or "South of Bostonian" before he married Judy, and moved to her home in Beverly. John was the house caricaturist at the Bull and

Finch ("Cheers" bar) in Boston, and has made his living as an artist and illustrator for 28 years.

John was invited to lecture on facial recognition at MIT and placed as one of the world's fastest caricaturist at a National Caricaturist Convention. He was also invited to the Salon of Cartoonists and Caricaturists at St. Just le Martel in France to display his work, including the satirical Bush House of Cards, 54 playing cards, each featuring a different key player or pundit involved with the Bush Administration. John often donates his caricature services to our church auctions.

While working full-time, Judy decided to go back to grad school and just shy of age 50, proudly completed an M.Ed program in Moderate Disabilities and Massachusetts Professional Licensure as a pre-K-8 teacher of Special Education and K-8 Elementary Education. Although not working as a teacher at this time, "Education is never wasted" is Judy's motto and she is using hers to help parents of children on with interpreting functional assessments and IEPs.

The Dohertys have two children, Brendon is 22, and Caroline is 16. Both Caroline and Brendon have Autism Spectrum Disorders, which have made life, as John and Judy say, "interesting." Brendon recently completed school at the NS Education Consortium and is thriving at a day program for adults with developmental disabilities and Caroline now attends residential high school in Waltham at The Protestant Guild Learning Center where she is doing well.

Judy's mother, Cynthia Garber, is a semi-retired newspaper reporter who covered the religion beat for The Salem Evening News for many years. She still writes a clubs column. She often comes to our church with Judy and John. John's father, George, has Alzheimer's disease, and now lives with John and Judy, which has been both challenging and rewarding. John remarks wryly, "We didn't know Alzheimer's was contagious until he moved in."

John and Judy' are active community volunteers. John has served on the NSUU Board and Judy is chair emeritus of the ASC (Autism Support Center) a program of the NS ARC, and the ASC representative to the Massachusetts legislative action committee. The Dohertys are very appreciative that the Isaac Munroe Foundation, administered by NSUU members, has made Autism Support Center one of the recipients of a yearly grant for family and children's recreational services.

The Dohertys believe in a liberal religious tradition within which they strive to do right, encompassing the principles of their Unitarian and Universalist, Jewish and Christian background into daily life. They choose to be involved with our congregation because it is socially responsible and welcoming of people from a wide variety of traditions and backgrounds.

THRIVING AND SURVIVING CONGREGATIONS

(Adapted from newsletter of Pilgrim United Church of Christ, Port Charlotte, FL)

Thriving congregations always have a parking problem.
Surviving congregations don't.

Thriving congregations are constantly changing their methods.
Surviving congregations do what they've always done.

Thriving congregations have lots of noisy kids.
Surviving congregations are quiet.

*Thriving congregations' expenses always exceed their income.
Surviving congregations take in more than they every dream of spending.*

Thriving congregations move forward and out in faith.
Surviving congregations keep it all at home.

*Thriving congregations support community work heavily.
Surviving congregations keep it all at home.*

*Thriving congregations are filled with healthy pledgers.
Surviving congregations are filled with tippers.*

*Thriving congregations celebrate differences.
Surviving congregations are homogeneous.*

*Thriving congregations spread the word—they evangelize.
Surviving congregations keep it for themselves—they fossilize.*

The Church Carpet

It is the business of every church to wear out its carpet as rapidly as possible. The process requires the combined efforts of numberless pairs of feet. Big feet and little feet, tired feet and happy feet; the feet of the long-faithful and the feet of the stranger. We do not know how long a church carpet should last before it becomes a reproach to the congregation. But we should say that after ten years if it doesn't show some signs of falling to pieces, the congregation should be looked on with suspicion. And in another year or two, if no marks of deterioration set in, one might be justified in assuming that it is the congregation that is deteriorating. Carpets are expensive, but any congregation that can succeed in wearing out a carpet has the vitality to replace it with a new one.

Dr. Clinton L. Scott, Parish Notes, Apr. 19, 1951