

NORTHSHORE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

THE ADVANCE • APRIL 2011

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From Frieda...

I wonder if you remember a children's book called *The Phantom Tollbooth* by Norton Juster. I didn't come across it until I was in high school I loved its plays on words. There is a scene at the beginning of the book, which is the story of some children who find this strange alternative world, where they are about to be taken somewhere in a vehicle. The driver sits quietly not doing anything and the children want to know when they are going to get started. The driver says something like, "Shhh! It goes without saying." Then as soon as they were all quiet, the vehicle began to move.

I thought of it this morning when settling down to work after a stressful start to my day. Jennifer is out of town on business, and I overslept. Leaping up at ten to seven, I knocked on Tim's door. He has to be at school at seven. He groggily told me that he threw up and felt lousy. He was staying home today. Worrying about him, I forgot to wake up Julia until 7:30—a half an hour later than she asked me to wake her. Quickly making her lunch and then she's off to school.

I sat down with my tea to read the latest Newsweek magazine. In it were pictures of the disaster in Japan, the news of which just gets worse every day. There was also an article about the three major quakes: the one in Chile last year, the one in New Zealand in February and the one that just happened in Japan. All of them are on the Pacific plates and in fact are in the southwest, southeast and northwest corners of it respectively. The only place that hasn't shifted yet is the northeast corner. The northeast is formed by the San Andreas fault—the fault that moved causing the two major earthquakes I experienced in Los Angeles as well as an even bigger one in the 1800's.

I grew up with predictions of "The Big One" to come. It was like the apocalypse that never comes and the date just keeps getting shifted out. Well, now there seems to be some solid reason to expect that it may be soon (the earthquake, not the apocalypse). As I read this author's prediction that the West Coast may be the next location for a tsunami, I wept. I could so clearly see where all of my dearest friends and my brother live close to the ocean. Even those who are near mountains would have a slim chance of getting to high ground in time unless they planned ahead: earthquake – head for the hills as quickly as possible, on foot if necessary. That's never been our plan or concern before. We always imagined that the coastline would just break away from the mainland – a child's view of a disaster. We joked about the San Fernando Valley becoming beachfront property.

Our minds race with possibilities of all that could go wrong. It's easy to be paralyzed with the fear of things large and small. This has been the bane of my existence—those nagging fears. My life flows only with stillness. Stillness of mind wherein a different kind of tsunami is possible: a flood of knowing that all will be well. Not denial of the possibilities, they do exist, but a resurgence of the knowledge that life is meant to be good and is good. Death is a certainty for all

of us, but we don't have to suffer every day until we die. Much better to be still and awake, allowing the stillness to guide our actions and thoughts. Christian mystic Julian of Norwich's famous quote is, "All will be well, and all will be well, all manner of things will be well."

Rev. Meg Barnhouse in her song "All Will Be Well" has a friendly argument with Julian about this, saying, "Do you not know about sorrow...pain...hunger...shame?" and Julian replies, "No one does not know about sorrow...pain...hunger... shame." And then she asks Meg, "Babygirl do you not know about tenderness...friends...the Spirit... it's only love that never ends?"

"All will be well, and all will be well, all manner of things, will be well."

Letter from John Forbes, NSUU Church Board Chair

It is with regard for you all, not to mention enormous respect, that I am telling you of my intention to step down as Chairman of the Northshore Church Board, at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting, on May 15th. Two years is an appropriate period to have served in that role, on a number of levels. In that space of time, you can come up to speed on the needs of the church and help the Board realize its potential to address issues of urgent importance, as well as to implement changes and policies that help the church in its present and future mission. But, at this point, it's important to step aside, and allow someone else to bring a fresher perspective to this process. On a practical level, in my one remaining year on the Board, I can assist the new Chairperson in a consultative fashion, much as Frank Armstrong has helped me, during this period he has served on the Board, following his term as Chairman. The continuity of that hand-off was indispensable to me. I hope that I can be as helpful.

I do want to say that I've been heartened by this experience. During these two years, we have all witnessed and become supportive of the permanent ministry of Frieda Gillespie. Her cerebral and soft-spoken manner has created a wonderful environment for spiritual reflection and growth. I've been impressed by the evolving presence of the various committees. Their continued involvement can only strengthen us as a church, going forward. It was a privilege to be part of the Religious Education Task Force that Frieda established, which took up the challenge of defining the new Multigenerational Religious Education Program, as well as finding and recruiting our dynamic Interim RE Director, Ashley Benner. The enormous success of that effort is its own reward. The physical improvements to the church are both impressive and lasting. Most notably, the energy and generosity that the congregation displayed, after serious roof problems threatened to shut down the operation of Early Discoveries Nursery School, our principal tenant, was as surprising to me as it was compelling. Those of you who contributed to the fund established for the new roof know who you are, and I am in awe of you.

Most of all, I am happy to have served as Board Chairman because it has allowed me, a relative short-timer, to become so much better acquainted with so many of you. I will take comfort in those relationships, in the years to come.

With warmest regards,
John Forbes

APRIL 2011 SERVICES

APRIL 3	SUNDAY SERVICE	10:30 am
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Roots Service

Rev. Frieda Gillespie and members of Northshore Church

Helen Brandt, Gary Nelson and Jill Updegraph will share the history of their spiritual journey as we reflect on the roots from which we've grown.

APRIL 10	SUNDAY SERVICE	10:30 am
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The Mystery of the Child

Rev. Frieda Gillespie

Contemporary theologian Martin Marty suggests that our wonder about children and the state of childhood can inform many aspects of our lives. It begins with thinking of children as “mystery” rather than as “problem.”

APRIL 17	SUNDAY SERVICE	10:30 am
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To be announced

APRIL 24	EASTER SERVICES	5:45 am and 10:30 am
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Sunrise Service

Rev. Frieda Gillespie and Rev. Kelly Asprooth-Jackson

This informal service will take place at 5:45 AM at Lynch Park in Beverly. We'll share our feelings and thoughts about the coming of spring.

Meet at the far side of the rose garden where it looks out over the ocean. From the parking lot follow the paved path to the rose garden on the left. There will be benches there for some people to sit. There will be a potluck breakfast to follow. Bring breakfast foods/drinks to share. Rain or shine. This service is being jointly sponsored by Northshore Church and First Parish UU in Beverly.

Easter Service: Resurrecting Our Life

Rev. Frieda Gillespie

10:30 AM: We must resurrect our life periodically in order to stay awake and alive. This involves dying to the old and allowing the emergence of the new. There will be an Easter egg hunt following the service.

Northshore Church Board Highlights
April 2011
Submitted by Lisa Judd, Board Clerk

The last few months have been busy and productive ones for Northshore Church's Board of Directors. Under the leadership of Chair John Forbes, and with the enthusiastic participation of committees and individuals from the congregation, we undertook long-deferred maintenance and improvements to our more than 40-year-old building. Chief among these were the reconstruction of the church roof and repairs to the aging heating system. Results are apparent. The new roof has stood up to an unusually severe winter, with the assistance of only one partial clearing of the snow burden, and the heating system repairs are expected to result in substantial future savings in our heating bills. We owe John Gibson many thanks for close monitoring of our roof/snow situation.

Another recent achievement for Northshore Church is the creation and establishment of an exciting new multigenerational religious education curriculum, launched by Ashley Benner, with the help of a dedicated cadre of volunteers and facilitators. This new venture is cutting edge! As far as we know, there is nothing else quite like it in our denomination and other Unitarian Universalists are watching our progress with interest. Our religious education approach has taken us from the more traditional position of targeting religious education programs mainly to our children to program offerings for the entire congregation, featuring a variety of learning styles, spiritual approaches and activities. The *Spirit of Life* and *Reflections* groups have been enthusiastically received, as has a Sunday evening youth group, added recently. We welcome your feedback as we fine-tune and modify these new programs to better meet our congregational needs.

As we come to the end of our current fiscal year, we will be losing some of our board members who have come to the end of their terms. John will be relinquishing the Board Chair position and Barbara Haight, Frank Armstrong and Deb Nelson will be rotating off the Board. These good people have been tireless and dedicated workers for the church in a multitude of capacities, and I know that you will want to join me in saying an enthusiastic "thank you" for all their time, energy and creativity.

We're now getting ready for the annual meeting and the election of new board members. For those of you who might be thinking of serving in this capacity, I can only say that, based on my experience, I recommend it. It is hard work, but also fun and a wonderful way to make a difference in the spiritual life of our congregation. Board members are a great group of people and you can be sure that they will welcome and appreciate your contributions. We are looking forward to seeing some of you at the Board meetings.

Lisa Judd

DRE Dabbles

Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow. - Anthony J. D'Angelo

In like a lion, and out like a lamb, March has magically come and gone; the sun is shining, April is upon us, and SPRING has sprung! Spring is a time of beautiful new beginnings, and that is certainly the case in the RE Department. This year, we are celebrating the beginning of a number of exciting new traditions: a church-wide Egg Roll, the annual Project Bread Walk for Hunger, Youth Sunday (prepared and led entirely by our 6-12 grade youth), and a joyous Appreciation After-party honoring our invaluable RE volunteers. I hope that each of these will become an exciting landmark on the NSUU calendar and joyous celebration of community for years to come.

On a personal note, I would like to thank everyone for their kind congratulations and enthusiasm following my engagement to Christopher at the end of February. We are very excited for the future, but even further blessed to have found such a loving and supportive church family. We look forward to sharing our journey to the altar with you and to raising our own family in the welcoming community of NSUU.

Wishing you all a wonderful start to Spring!

Ashley Benner
Interim Director of Religious Education

Youth Group

The youth group has been diligently working on their service, scheduled for the beginning of May. It is a wonderful incorporation of hot-topic issues and modern, youthful appeal that is sure to be a wonderful time for all. We hope you can join us! On March 27, we had the pleasure of serving at Lifebridge. Our time there was a great experience of service and team building, and we look forward to going back soon. If you have not yet had the opportunity, please visit the green classroom (off the library) to see the "Diversity Mural" that the youth have created.

The Youth Group is open to everyone in grades 6-12, meeting every other Sunday evening from 5-7pm. Please encourage anyone who may be interested to attend – the more the merrier!

Contacting the Interim DRE

Ashley is available at the church on Mondays from 10am-1pm. She can also be reached 7 days a week at: northshoredre@gmail.com
617-987-0607 (Home Office) 772-359-1750 (Cell)

NSUU Egg Roll

On Easter Sunday, April 24, we will be holding our first annual NSUU Egg Roll immediately following the service. Join us at the bell as we celebrate the day with egg-and-spoon relays, tosses, and a classic egg hunt. All ages are invited!

NSUU - No One Starves Under Us

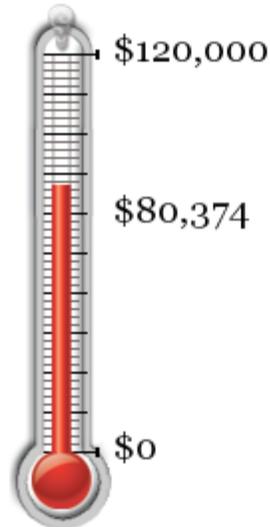
Project Bread is a Boston-based organization committed to providing healthy meals to children and families in need. On Sunday, May 1, Project Bread will hold their annual 20-mile Walk for Hunger, raising funds to support their important work throughout our community. We have set a team fundraising goal of \$1000, and are certain we can do even more to help end hunger in our area. This is a wonderful time of community bonding, partnership, and encouragement that is inspiring and moving for all involved. We invite you all to join the youth as we journey through Boston in search of provisions for all of our children. To sign-up to walk with our team, or to donate, please visit our team page: http://www.projectbread.org/site/TR/Walk/General?team_id=65075&pg=team&fr_id=1150

Coming Events

Sunday, April 10 Youth Group
Sunday, April 17 Youth Group
Sunday, April 24 1st Annual Egg Roll
Sunday, May 1 Walk for Hunger

CAN'T STOP TIL WE GET ENOUGH!

THE 2011 PLEDGE DRIVE CONTINUES...



To date, we have received \$80,374 in pledges from 57 pledging families. While this is a wonderful contribution, we are only at 66% of the \$120,000 needed to fulfill the church's annual operating budget.

If you have not yet pledged, please contact Frank Armstrong or return your pledge card to the church office as soon as possible. Our community is counting on you!

Circle Dancing

Date: Saturday April 9th 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Circle dance (aka Sacred Circle Dance) has grown out of the European traditional folk dance community. The dances come from all parts of the world; some are traditional, some are new, and most of them represent some story. Many dances tell stories of cycles of nature, gender and age relationships. The dances are done in a circle, holding hands, and are performed to wonderful music from Greece, Israel, Scotland, Bulgaria, Russia, Romania, France, the Americas, and elsewhere. All dances are taught first, so experience is not required. The circle dance steps are simple, or moderately easy. Children and adults of all ages are welcome. The circle dance will last for about 1.5 hours with a break mid-way through the dance. There is no fee, but donations to the church will be accepted.

See or call Gary Nelson (978-762-4782) for more information.

News from the Social Action Committee

April Share-the-Plate: The offering collected on April 17 will be donated to the Essex County Greenbelt Association. Guest speaker at the church that day will be Edward O. Becker, executive director of the association. The Essex County Greenbelt Association is a member-supported nonprofit land trust that has conserved nearly 14,000 acres of land in Essex County. Greenbelt works with local communities and landowners to acquire and protect ecological areas, farmland and scenic vistas. One of its major goals is the creation of “greenbelts,” consisting of river, trail, and other natural corridors, coastal systems, and visually intact landscapes. For more information, visit the website: www.ecga.org.

Share-the-Plate Applications: The Social Action Committee welcomes proposals for the share-the-plate program. If you support a charitable organization whose goals are consistent with UU principles, please consider submitting an application for that organization to share the plate. Contact Lois Markham for an application.

Operation Troop Support: Those who attended the March 13 service heard a very moving account of the work of Operation Troop Support by Lt. Colonel Richard Moody, Retired. Thanks to Barbara Haight, NSUU will now be a collection point for Operation Troop Support. Here is a list of some of the items that are requested for the troops: stationery products; puzzle books, games, holiday gifts; coffee; snacks; toiletries (include feminine hygiene products for female troops); body protection (sunscreen, band aids, etc.), clothing accessories; books and magazines. Important morale builders are encouragement cards and letters and get-well cards for troops in the hospital. A more detailed list of desired items is posted on the Social Action Committee bulletin board near the front of Fellowship Hall. Each month there is an “Item of the Month.” For April, combat support hospitals need new twin sheets, blankets, and sweat suits.

Sunday-Night Suppers at Lifebridge: We are now signing up volunteers for the April 24 and May 22 dinners. The time commitment is 5:00 to 7:00 PM. Please sign up on the white board in Fellowship Hall. If you would like to donate money for the purchase of food, you can make out a check to NSUU, write “Lifebridge” in the memo line, and put your check in the offering any Sunday.

Danvers Food Pantry: Sunday, April 3, is Food Sunday. Please bring a nonperishable food items for the Danvers Food Pantry. Donations can be left in the basket in Fellowship Hall. You are, of course, also welcome and encouraged to bring food donations at any other time it is convenient for you.

Northshore Unitarian Universalist Church



No one Starves Under Us

**Please join us on Sunday, May 1st
for Project Bread's annual Walk for Hunger**

Project Bread is a Boston-based non-profit organization committed to providing healthy meals to those in need in our community. The 20-mile walk raises funds to support the organization's invaluable work throughout the Greater Boston area. In Massachusetts, more than 660,000 people do not have enough food to eat. The Walk for Hunger raises millions of dollars for the 400 emergency food programs that support families in crisis.

This year, we will be joining 40,000 other walkers as we too do our part to knock out hunger in Massachusetts. The walk is an inspirational and moving experience for all involved, and a wonderful time of friendship and teambuilding. To find out more, join our team, or make a donation toward our \$1000 fundraising goal, please visit our team page at:

http://www.projectbread.org/site/TR/Walk/General?team_id=65075&pg=team&fr_id=1150

On the day of the event, we will be meeting at the church for a quick power-breakfast before carpooling to Boston for a fun-filled day of making a difference. All level of abilities are welcome, and walking even one mile makes a tremendous difference for those struggling to feed their families in our community.

We hope you all can join us!

April 2011 Profile
Chris and Tony Patton
By Martha Ardoff, Chris Patton and Tony Patton

Chris and Tony Patton, members of Northshore Church since 1966, both grew up in Arlington, Massachusetts, Chris in a strict Methodist home and Tony in a very religiously liberal one. They were in the same high school class but didn't date until college, when Chris was at Wellesley and Tony at Harvard. When Chris went to the University of Chicago for her master's in social service administration, she'd never heard of Unitarian Universalism. But there she found a large city UU church whose minister was Rev. Leslie Pennington, "one of the giants of the '50s." She was thrilled to find a church whose beliefs and values so closely reflected her own. Upon her return to the Boston area, she and Tony were married while he was part-way through his medical training at Harvard and the MGH. They lived in Boston and attended the Arlington Street Church, where two more UU "giants" officiated: Rev. Dana McLean Greeley and Rev. Jack Mendelsohn. Chris worked for a year and a half as a social worker at Mass. General Hospital, and then had three children, Kimberley, Geoff, and Laurie. They moved to Somerville and just happened to meet Charles and Hilde Wilson through their children's kindergarten.

In 1964 the Patton family moved to Danvers. Finding the commute to Arlington Street difficult, they joined the Peabody UU Church, which was soon part of the merger when NSUU was built in 1966-'67. The Wilsons had also moved to Danvers after Charles was called to be our first minister. The Pattons joined NSUU, and Tony served on the Board of Directors for two years. However, in the 1970s, with increasingly busy lives and what they perceived to be the growing political and social extremism which affected the church during the Vietnam War years, their attendance dropped off. They continued to make a small annual financial contribution because they believed so strongly in its philosophy and wanted its core values to be always visible in this community.

Among these values was the religious education program, which at that time used the wonderful book *The Church Across the Street*, by Sophia Fahs. It taught children tolerance and appreciation of a variety of religious beliefs. Kimberley and Laurie grew up to continue the practice of what Ms. Fahs preached. They both became professors of comparative religion, Kimberley at Harvard Divinity School, and Laurie at Emory University in Atlanta. In July Laurie will take on a new job as dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Duke. Their own spiritual journeys have taken Kimberley to Greek Orthodoxy and Laurie to Conservative Judaism. Just for balance, Geoff, a hospital administrator at the MGH, remains a skeptic outside the framework of organized religion.

In the 1970s and '80s, Tony was establishing a busy practice in thoracic and vascular surgery on the North Shore, primarily at Salem Hospital. He had a significant role in the early phases of health planning and the hospice movement on the North Shore — and in his free time loved playing golf. Chris was extremely active as a community volunteer. Some of us met her in the League of Women Voters of Danvers, but her primary activity was in women's auxiliaries for

Hunt and Salem Hospitals, where she became president of the group and then became a trustee of the hospital. Chris says, "In 1984 I had a mini mid-life crisis. I went to my 30th college reunion, had my ears pierced and decided I was tired of being a volunteer." For 11 years after that she had what was for her a "dream job," combining her interest in historic preservation with social service, when she worked as the assistant to the director of the House of Seven Gables. At this historic site in Salem, tourist admissions still support a settlement house program founded in 1910 to assist immigrant families adapt to a new life in America. Both Tony and Chris were interested in historic preservation from the time they moved into their 1756 home in Danvers and have been active members of the Danvers Historical Society ever since.

Since retiring in 1995, Chris has gradually returned to active membership in NSUU. Tony, now also retired, has not pursued regular involvement in the church, but he is happy to attend on special occasions. He also helped lead discussions during our interim period when we were preparing to seek a new settled minister. Chris spearheaded action to include Solstice services at NSUU and did much of the work organizing them. She has served on the Board recently and enjoyed two or three years on the Religious Services Committee. Now she is actively involved with the Membership Team.

The Pattons have always loved the outdoors, and conservation is an important value to them. Since 1986 they've had a home on the coast of Maine where they go in the summer, and where they have been active in the Boothbay Region Land Trust. Recently they have been working with the Essex County Greenbelt on setting up a conservation easement to prevent possible future development of their property on Locust Street, and they are hopeful that their efforts will encourage others to take steps to protect the small amount of open space remaining in Danvers.

Says Tony, "Now that our beloved chocolate Lab, Toastie, has died, we are really empty nesters. But we truly love our old house and our life here in Danvers, spending time with our children and four grandchildren, our friends and our community activities. After one abortive attempt to pack up and move to smaller quarters and a smaller life, we've decided that this life right here is the right one for us — and we'll live it with joy and gratitude as long as health and the economy permit."