

NORTHSHORE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

THE ADVANCE • MARCH 2015

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MARCH 1

SUNDAY SERVICE

10:30 am

“Mental Illness, There is Hope”

Deb Pacheco

Deb Pacheco, a dynamic speaker and tireless advocate for those suffering with mental illness, will share her experiences with families and her hopes for the reframing of mental illness to a concept of mental wellness. She is specifically concerned with the risks of untreated mental illness and will speak about this. It is her firm belief that there is hope in the setting of mental illness for both the individual and the family. Deb is on the Board of Directors of NAMI, Massachusetts, and is president of NAMI, Cape Ann.

Service Leader: Helen Brandt

MARCH 8

SUNDAY SERVICE

10:30 am

“Selma Sunday: A Call to Action”

Lois Markham

Nearly fifty years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. sent a telegram to faith leaders around the country, calling on them to join the protest for voting rights in Selma, Alabama. Unitarian Universalists heeded the call. Around 200 UU ministers and hundreds of laypeople joined the protest. Two of them lost their lives. Now, UUs are once more being called to continue witnessing against the “disease of racism,” voter disenfranchisement and the eroding of civil rights, the lack of justice especially for the deaths of young men and transgender women of color, and escalating inequality in our country. Join us as we celebrate Selma Sunday with a look back at UUs’ participation in the Selma protest and a look forward to a new call to witness for social justice.

Service Leader: Tracee Swanson

MARCH 15

SUNDAY SERVICE

10:30 am

“The Journey of a Square Peg in a World of Round Holes”

Allison Iantosca

Allison will share stories of her path through life: never quite fitting in, or perhaps just resisting “typical.” From farm girl to a theater major at a performing arts high school; from a stint on the West Coast, auditioning and performing (a.k.a. waiting tables), to the helm of a successful \$20 million general contracting business. Along the path there was never a perfect fit, yet there was much to be learned, people to be loved, and choices to be made. Still a square peg, she is beginning to reshape the round holes to fit and accept a bit of square-ness, discovering ways to soulfully manage her building business, and to share her experiences with others through her writing. Let us explore how we can bring our authentic stories and selves to bear on our passions and vocations.

Service Leader: Jennifer Revill

MARCH 22

SUNDAY SERVICE

10:30 am

Tom Duff

Topic TBA

Service Leader: Peter VanDeBogert

“Redemption Song”**Reverend Jeanne Nieuwejaar**

The word *redemption* may have an archaic ring to it, but it is, in fact, a principle that is central to our liberal religious faith. Our affirmation of the worth and dignity of every individual is hollow unless we also affirm our commitment to help reclaim the value of individual lives that have become lost or broken. This is the work of redemption. In this service we will look in particular at the challenge of reclaiming the value of the lives of those who are serving time in prison, reflecting through the lens of our faith on this very troubling issue.

Service Leader: Helen Brandt

Northshore Unitarian Universalist Church Annual Pledge Drive

Here we are again. Another year older, but are we wiser? I think so. I know I am. For the past year as part of a lay led congregation, I have learned many things. I've learned from all of your efforts, and watching how we've come together and remained whole during this tough year. I have learned that the spirit of this church is strong, and it will last as long as we all do as much as we can, and in every way that we can. This is the time of year when we ask you to make a financial pledge. So that you can help maintain our church and support its mission. Churches of all denominations canvass their membership to assure the funds necessary to conduct "business" for the next fiscal year. But please don't consider this request as simply encouragement to give. We see this annual process as an opportunity for each of us to identify and contemplate the reasons we call ourselves members of Northshore Church. To take serious stock in how we each contribute to our greater community. It is also a time to reconnect, reengage, and reinvigorate our commitment to Unitarian Universalist values for another year.

Last year's pledges reminded us that we are a joyful and caring spiritual community and that we care about each other and our common values. We raise funds for the purpose of doing good for each other and for our communities, both local and global. From this we, ourselves grow and flourish. Without an annual operating infrastructure at Northshore Church, our shared commitment to the greater good of all is fractured and individual. Together, as a church united, we do so much more. Together, we provide a nexus for many individuals and organizations to facilitate their commitment to the good.

We are blessed with an intelligent, responsive, and caring group of members and friends. We have an exceptional building, located in a setting of great natural beauty. We sponsor programs, services, and activities that stimulate the mind, enhance the spirit, and benefit our larger North Shore community. We enjoy wonderful uplifting music. And each Sunday have the opportunity to learn something new. Even if we are ourselves versed in a subject, we benefit from another's perspective.

So this year, when your pledge card arrives in the mail. Please take a moment to seriously contemplate what you believe in. Seriously think about how much you can afford to keep the well-earned liberal reputation of the Northshore Unitarian Universalist Church vibrant today, and for many, many years to come.

Chris Ruggles, Annual Pledge Drive Coordinator

In memoriam

Doran Koulack-Young, 82, died January 23 after a lengthy illness. Doran graduated from Harvard College and Harvard Law School and was a medical malpractice trial lawyer in Boston where he served as a

member of the prosecution team on which the movie “The Verdict” was loosely based. He was a founding partner in the cooperative construction firm CCC that operates out of Somerville. At age 50 he enrolled at Salem State University and took courses to become a certified teacher. He finally found the career he passionately loved and became head tutor at Upward Bound in Lynn, where he developed close relationships with students of all ethnicities.

A memorial service will be held on March 7 at 2 p.m. at the Northshore Unitarian Universalist Church. All are invited to attend.

Excerpts from February 17, 2015 Board Meeting

Administrator’s Report

Nancy presented an update on the building issues that have taken up a lot of time during the last few weeks. Most recently a hot water pipe was discovered frozen in the kitchen; Nancy thawed it out and seems to be fine now. The roof was cleared of snow and plywood has been put in front of windows in the nursery school wing to prevent the weight of the snow from breaking the windows. The plywood will remain in place until spring. She noted that with the plowing and treating of the driveway and parking areas, the hot top will continue to erode and spring will reveal a lot of broken pavement. Brian asked if the extra expenses because of the record amount of snow and the severe cold have negatively affected the budget. Vanessa noted that we are now 83% of the way through the budget year and expenses are at 74% of budget. Very little of the snow removal budget was spent until just in the last couple of weeks and she expects the budget will not need to be adjusted further because of these unusually busy last three weeks.

Nancy is continuing to address the heating situation, especially in the meeting room near the piano. She has been working with the electrician on the best solution for the relay switches that are not reliable, and she is going to ask the cleaning company if they would be willing to turn up the heat when they finish cleaning and setting up on Saturday. There was discussion of looking at alternative ways to heat the building rather than with the electric heaters that are now in use. Iain Goddard offered to spearhead an investigation into alternatives, beginning with an energy audit. Brian thanked him for offering to do that, and asked him to move forward with looking into an energy audit and alternative heating options.

The sewer repair has not been successful so far, and Nancy is working with J. Whyman, who installed the system, to find a solution. Nancy explained the way the septic and sewer connections work because of our location in relation to the city sewer lines. Whyman has an idea of a fix which will involve work on the leaching field, but the work cannot be done until spring.

Nancy said that they are dealing with the winter field mouse situation as best they can. She said that setting and emptying traps is something that can be done without the expense of an exterminator. It was suggested that a plan be made for a group of volunteers to examine the foundation next late summer or fall to close any cracks to prevent invasion next year when the temperature goes down.

The Administrator’s report also noted that she had filed the February certification of membership with the UUA, reporting Religious Education enrollment at 13 and total membership at 98.

Religious Exploration Director's Report

Meryl noted that the coming weeks will be busy. The Young Church students continue to work on the Superheroes curriculum, and she will be looking for a new volunteer for the last trimester. The Junior Youth Group completed their Cradles to Crayons project, completing 13 backpacks for distribution to local children in need. The Junior Youth Group has also expressed an interest in the history of oppression of black people in America, and Meryl is planning a trip to see the new movie *Selma*. Meryl is continuing to explore opportunities for a cultural exchange in Lynn and perhaps a visit to the House of Peace for refugee children in Ipswich. The Senior Youth Group has a very good visit to the Lucy Stone Coop and will be preparing and serving dinner at Lifebridge in Salem on February 22. They will be attending a Youth CON in North Andover at the end of February. There was a discussion of the budget for next year, especially the line for childcare. It was agreed that the Nursery Care line item could be taken out of the budget. The line item for background checks will also be addressed during the budget process.

Treasurer's Report

There is a budget meeting scheduled for this week with the Finance Committee to prepare a budget for approval at the annual meeting in May. The January budget reflects 83.33% of the fiscal year and indicates a forecast \$9,080.11 surplus. Vanessa removed the \$2,000.00 allocated from the Bequest Account as this will no longer be necessary. The Bequest Account shows a balance of \$81,000.00 and Vanessa suggested updating the Financial Pressure on Bequest as part of the budget process. In the Pass Thru and Fundraising Report, it was noted that the recent Piano/Trumpet concert proceeds will show up in the February report and are expected to be a little over \$1,200.00.

Search Committee Update

Brian reported for the Transition Team that five candidates have expressed interest in the part-time minister position. Bob will be setting up an interview schedule for March. One of the candidates has been scheduled to preach in April, and two have been scheduled to do services in May. Additional dates are being considered for the other candidates. As we are in interview stage, the Transition Team will now be the Search Committee.

Other Business

Brian will be talking with Early Discoveries regarding the renewal of their lease. Negotiating points will include paying for plowing the driveway when schools are closed, which costs are now being paid by the church, which is usually closed also.

Brian noted that the piano and trumpet concert was a great success, with 50-60 people in attendance and approximately \$1,200 in proceeds for the Church.

The board agreed to authorize the committees in charge of the Farnam and Millender awards to meet to decide on the awards and prepare for the presentation before we break for the summer.

We have not received the signing bonus from American Tower; legal discussions continue.

The Investment Committee has determined that the \$50,000 from the Bequest account to be transferred to replenish endowment will be invested in the UUA Fund.

New Business

The issue of security and building keys was discussed. It was noted that there is a key policy, but that it should be reviewed and perhaps adjusted slightly for expediency as well as security. Currently six individuals hold keys to the office and it was suggested that a board officer (chair or co-chair) should also have an office key. Brian will discuss with Nancy.

Leonard Swanson suggested that the board consider adding a fourth handicap parking spot near the front entrance. It was agreed to look at this in the spring.

Brian will talk with several members to see if they would be willing to serve on the Nominating Committee to prepare next year's slate for the Annual Meeting on May 3.

Transition Team

The Transition Team has now received five expressions of interest in the half-time contract minister position at Northshore Church. The names will be kept confidential in order to protect candidates who may wish to inform their employers that they are seeking a new position only after they have been designated as finalists.

At their meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 4, Transition Team members discussed the interview process and agreed that one or two members of the committee, Brian Orr and/or Bob Bullivant, should lead the interviews while other members may ask follow-up questions. It was felt that this would offer a more consistent interview process.

Bob had put together a list of 10 discussion points for the interviews, which will be scheduled beginning in March and will be held in the library at Northshore Church. Members will provide tea, coffee and dessert. Interviews may be scheduled for evenings and/or weekends, and it was decided that at least 6 of the 9 members of the committee should be present at each interview.

The question of travel expenses for possible out-of-town candidates was discussed. Decisions on the payment for various expenses will be made on a case-by-case basis. The start date was also discussed and while the preferred date would be August 1, 2015, this could be part of the contract negotiations with the successful candidate.

Brian thanked Bob for assembling the recruitment packet and posting the job description by the end of January. The job posting is now on the Unitarian Universalist District website, and Bob will be posting it on the Unitarian Universalist Association website and sending the job description to Unitarian Universalist seminaries. The recruitment packet, thanks to Dan Kennedy, is accessible to candidates via a password portal on the NSUU.org website, and is clear, concise and very substantive.

Religious Exploration

Wow! What storms we have! I guess our calm winter is over! It gives us all time to appreciate our warm homes and families as we enjoy forced days off in this winter wonderland.

We have a very busy time ahead as we continue working on curriculum that we have in place as well as working in special projects and events. I am so happy with the progress that we have made in the classrooms. The younger group continues to study amazing UU's and the older group impresses me with their deep commitment and knowledge of social justice issues that are current in our world. I see the same commitment in our senior group as well.

In RE we often discuss how we are fortunate to be able to change our plans based on what has happened in the world in any given week. As you know it changes minute by minute. We are fortunate to have families and children who embrace this. We embrace this as well and the thoughtful minds that we spend each Sunday with.

News from the Social Action Committee

March 1 – Food Sunday to Benefit the Danvers Food Pantry: Good nutrition is essential for good health and easy to donate. Please consider giving food in one of the following ways: 2 food items – one appropriate for a family with children and one for a senior, a check made out to “Danvers Food Pantry,” a gift card to a grocery store or store that sells basic necessities

Food donations may be placed in the Food Pantry basket in Fellowship Hall. Check or gift card donations may be given to Nelson, Gwen or Daniel Scottgale to deliver for you. Thanks for sharing with others!

March 8 – Share-the-Plate: On March 8, NSUU will join with UU congregations all over the country in celebrating Selma Sunday, the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights March from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. The collection taken up on March 8 will be donated to the James Reeb Fund for Multicultural Ministries and Leadership. James Reeb was a UU minister from Boston who was killed in Selma prior to the march. The James Reeb Fund supports multicultural growth throughout the UUA and in Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations. This includes supporting congregations doing voting rights work and programs such as Finding Our Way Home, a retreat for religious professionals of color. **If you wish to donate by check on March 8, please make the check out to Unitarian Universalist Association and put “James Reeb Fund” in the memo line.**

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. Application forms are posted on the Social Action Committee bulletin board near the front of Fellowship Hall.

March 29: Lunch and Discussion: After the service on March 29, the Reverend Jeanne Nieuwejaar invites you to meet with her for a discussion of the topic. The Social Action Committee will provide a light lunch.

Family Promise North Shore Boston: Family Promise North Shore Boston is a non-profit, interfaith hospitality network that provides temporary shelter, meals, hospitality, and case management for families experiencing homelessness on the North Shore of Boston. The goal is accomplished through the participation of hundreds of volunteers from North Shore congregations. Currently, the Social Action Committee is developing a group of volunteers from NSUU. After completing a two-hour orientation program, a volunteer commits to two hours of service four times a year. The service may take the form of providing a meal, serving a meal and visiting with the families, driving, spending time at the Day Center with families, etc. The organization is especially in need of volunteers to staff the Day Center on weekends. Please contact Cathy Sullivan-Bradley if you are interested in volunteering. Contact her at catherinegaia@comcast.net or 978-335-7878.

New Common Read: The next common read for NSUU is *Waking Up White: And Finding Myself in the Story of Race*, by Debby Irving. From the Amazon website: “Waking Up White is the book Irving wishes someone had handed her decades ago. By sharing her sometimes cringe-worthy struggle to understand racism and racial tensions, she offers a fresh perspective on bias, stereotypes, manners, and tolerance. As Irving unpacks her own long-held beliefs about colorblindness, being a good person, and wanting to help people of color, she reveals how each of these well-intentioned mindsets actually perpetuated her ill-conceived ideas about race. She also explains why and how she's changed the way she talks about racism, works in racially mixed groups, and understands the antiracism movement as a whole.” We will hold a discussion of the book in May.

Operation Troop Support: We've received a request from Dick Moody of OTS: “The troops are asking for popcorn and snacks. These donations would be appreciated and will be sent as soon as we receive them.” These and other donations may be left in the Operation Troop Support box in Fellowship Hall.

Sunday-Night Suppers at Lifebridge: Thanks to a dedicated crew of team leaders, who plan and organize, and volunteers, who buy food, cook, and serve, we provide a hot meal for about one hundred clients of Lifebridge in Salem on the fourth Sunday of each month. We welcome new volunteers. We are now signing up volunteers for the March 22, April 26, and May 24 dinners. The time commitment is 5:00 to 7:00 PM. You can 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.

Green Sanctuary: The Social Action Committee has formed a subcommittee to explore the process of becoming a Green Sanctuary. The subcommittee is open to anyone in the congregation. If you are interested in joining the subcommittee, please contact one of the two co-chairs: Lynette Gray or Gwen Scottgale.

Green America: Green America's National Green Pages, which lists environmentally friendly products in many categories, can be found at www.greenpages.org.

The Social Action Committee welcomes new members. Our next meeting is Sunday, March 15, after the service. Contact Lois Markham for more information.