

AN OFFICIAL WELCOMING CONGREGATION  
ALL ARE WORTHY, ALL ARE WELCOME.

169 Pleasant Street, Auburn, ME 04210  
(207) 783-0461 - office@auburnuu.org  
Website: www.auburnuu.org

*Rooted in the Sacred and strengthened by our diversity,  
we equip ourselves to minister through the transformative power of Love.*

## JODI'S CORNER: WORDS FROM OUR MINISTER

*Excerpt from the Easter sermon, preached by Jodi on March 27, 2016*

"Somewhere across the world, Easter is breaking.  
not the Easter we may think of,  
with arms upraised and "he is risen" echoing from canyons,  
but a much quieter, less dramatic Easter."

— Kathleen Rolenz

"...That very first Easter had no uplifted hands, with "he is risen" echoing from the canyons. It was a quieter, less dramatic Easter. It was an Easter in which reality shifted just a little bit; in which previously hidden paths were revealed, or at least hinted at; in which hope discarded was picked up again and courage was renewed. The next days didn't bring heaven on earth. But they did bring opportunities for holy, transformative work. They did bring moments when love could be shared and tiny pockets of justice created.

And it seems to me that that is an Easter that has deep and powerful resonance with our own weary and battered world. There are no victories that are going to create heaven on earth tomorrow. But still Easter comes to us every day. Still we are offered the gift of holy and transformative work. Still we are given the opportunity to create small pockets of justice.

Every time we have a conversation with someone, deeply listening, being heard, our hearts moving together just a bit

*Continued, next page*



toward deeper love and understanding, Easter breaks. Every time we show up at a protest, or send a letter, or make a phone call, or share our resources with those in need, Easter breaks. Every time we see Muslims surrounding and protecting Christians in prayer in response to an attack, or Christians surrounding mosques to keep them from harm, Easter breaks. Every time a Greek citizen pulls a Syrian refugee to shore and wraps those babies in blankets and gives the parents food and welcomes them with love, Easter breaks. Every time people of color refuse to be treated as less than, or white people sit down and listen and commit to giving up our privilege in service to equality, Easter breaks. Every time we rise up and insist that love will create a culture not hate, not fear, Easter breaks..."

May your days and nights be blessed.

– Jodi

---

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This past month members of the board of directors balanced attention between both policy and mission work.

First, an update on the policy work. The enactment of a law in October 2015 allowing the carrying of concealed weapons in most public places in Maine without a permit prompted the board to consider the firearms policy. According to the statute, private property owners retain the right to prohibit firearms. The board agreed that our values, as articulated in the congregational mission and vision statements, mandate the prohibition of firearms from the church and church office. (Such

### **Auburn UU Firearms Policy Statement**

Maine law currently allows possession of concealed firearms in most public places. It is the prerogative of property owners to prohibit the possession of firearms. It is the policy of the First Universalist Church of Auburn, Unitarian Universalist, in accordance with our mission and vision statements, to prohibit firearms from the church and church office.

prohibitions, of course, do not apply to on-duty military and public safety officials.)

The board also passed an updated safety policy that includes emergency procedures—in case of fire, for instance. If you're not a current or former board member you may not know that all church policies are accessible to the congregation. For now, they are available through the church office. In the near future they will also be accessible through the new Auburn UU website.

Ongoing focus on the mission of the church led to participation in an informative, hour-long webinar hosted by the New England Region district office of the UUA. I'd like to thank Anne Kinney, board president emeritus, for arranging for Auburn UU's participation in this event. I certainly encourage participation in future offerings. The hosts of the webinar made a compelling case for congregational relevance. Among the provocative arguments, I found the following statement especially appropriate to reflect on: "Relevance is discerning and living into your community's unique niche."

The board will consider how this statement applies to the First Universalist Church of Auburn, among other issues, when we meet again on Monday, April 11, at 6:30 in the church office.

– Eben Miller

---

## MARKETING TASK FORCE

Auburn UU's newly-formed Marketing Task Force will convene soon. Members are Peter Floyd, Reverend Jodi, Tracey Miller, Sara Goodrich, Charles Nero, Craig Saddlemire, Mary Lou Hoffman, Toby Haber-Giasson, Kitsie Claxton, Bill Eldridge, Anne Kinney, and Peggy Cox.

## AND OUR 2016 CHILI WINNER IS...

...Chili Number 16, made by Rebecca Pape! The last in our lineup of sixteen chilies took the top honors in the Chili Cook-Off this year, and helped raise hundreds of dollars for scholarships for our All-Church Ferry Beach Retreat April 29, 30 and May 1.

We raised \$380 directly from the cook-off, which was augmented by an additional \$100 donation from Betsy Jo Whitcomb from herself and in memory of her mother, Marion Emery.

Dozens of church members contributed the chili, coleslaws, desserts, sandwiches, breads, drinks, and tasting cups for the annual event, plus volunteer assistance for organization, set-up, and clean-up. That we ran out of cold drinks, tasting cups, and desserts was testimony to the large turnout and rousing good time we shared. The chili competition itself was stiff, and final tallies were close!

Many thanks to the entire community for your participation on so many levels. And additional appreciation to Pam Weeks and Bill Olson for supplying the talented fiddling and calling for the Contra Dance afterwards, and to the R.E. Committee for sponsoring them.

All funds raised will provide financial assistance to members to make the Ferry Beach Retreat more affordable. Scholarship applications are in the Retreat Registration packets, and must be turned in to Anne Kinney by April 3.

– Anne Kinney & Ron Spofford



## SOCIAL JUSTICE CORNER

### SECOND COLLECTION SCHEDULE

*Second Collection is taken on the first Sunday of each month.*

April 2016	New Beginnings
May 2016	United Somali Women of Maine
June 2016	Greater Androscoggin Humane Soc.

*Please note that this is the corrected schedule!  
The March newsletter listed the recipients incorrectly.*

### SJ supports SURJ Vigils 4th Monday

Central Maine Showing up for Racial Justice (SURJ) will hold its monthly vigil in support of Black Lives on **Monday, April 25 at 4:30 p.m.** Join SURJ on the Auburn side of the Longley Bridge (next to Gritty's).

Central Maine SURJ is dedicated to racial justice world-wide and in our region. We know that even though we live in the whitest state in the country, racism and colonialism play out here in systemic ways just as it does elsewhere. We are dedicated to stop this violence.

PLUS, join us for **Post-Vigil Game Night**, also on the 4th Monday of the month at 5:45 p.m. in the vestry. Bring snacks, board games, or cards.

\* \* \* \* \*

### SJ Microloan Repaid

Five years ago, Social Justice invested \$5,000 from a bequest to do good in our community. Working with Coastal Enterprises, Inc., we were able to offer a loan to a local Somali merchant. Five years later, the loan principle was repaid-with interest! We hope to re-invest it, to help another worthy effort in our area.

– Toby Haber-Giasson and Jane Pentheny, OD,  
Social Justice co-chairs

### GOT SNAPSHOTS?

We need your great photos of church people & events for our upcoming website redesign. Share them at [newsletter@auburnuu.org](mailto:newsletter@auburnuu.org).

---

## OPEN MIC 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

More than 50 attendees joined in a toast to the past decade of sharing the spirituality of music and spoken word. The March edition featured new tablecloths and candles, as well as eighteen performers, five brand new to us. Welcome Charly, Josh, Christine, and Taylor B.!

We also honored five Open Mic performers who passed away during the past 10 years: Roland Forgues, Dick Secord, Laurie Anctil, Bill Giasson and Kris Gustavson.

See you at the next Open Mic on Friday, April 8 at 7:30 p.m.



Above: A toast to 10 years with Open Mic veterans: (L to R) Ron Spoffard, Maureen Perry, Angelo Giberti, Brian Bickford, Mike Giasson and Toby Haber-Giasson (Photo: Karen Hill)  
Other photos, clockwise from top right: Christine, Mike & John, Taylor, Brian, Ron, Toby, Adam, and Lorelei



---

## THE YARD SALE IS COMING...



The Church will be holding a Spring Yard Sale on Saturday, April 23 from 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. in the Vestry. We

will also be offering tables for rent to individuals/groups who would like to join us to sell their own items. You may bring in your donations and put them on the stage in the Vestry between Sunday, April 3 and Thursday, April 21. We will NOT be able to accept items after Thursday, April 21 so we will have time to finish pricing before the event.

*Items that sell well:* kitchen items (dishes, silverware, pots/pans); small appliances (i.e. toasters, microwaves, mixers, blenders); books/cookbooks; CDs/DVDs; children's games/toys; children's clothes; crafting/sewing materials/items; sports equipment; musical instruments; holiday decorations; small furniture (tables, lamps, small chairs); collectibles.

*Items we can NOT take:* technology (computers, printers, cell phones, etc), adult clothing, any items that don't work or are missing parts. Children's clothes must be clean and in good condition.

Please be judicious about what you donate. Is the item clean enough and in good enough condition that *you* would be willing to purchase it? If the answer is "no," please dispose of it in another way. We would like to have higher quality items that we can sell for higher prices, therefore increasing our profit.

We are still looking for folks to help with pricing and to work on the day of the sale. Please contact Mary Lou Hofmann at 777-1833 or even.sleeves@gmail.com.

---

## FERRY BEACH RETREAT REGISTRATION CLOSES APRIL 10

Registration forms for our All-Church Ferry Beach Retreat must be mailed in to the Registrar by Sunday, April 10. Pre-addressed



envelopes are in the registration packets. Forms can also be downloaded from our church website: <http://auburnuu.org>

This year dorm rooms are first come, first served to be fair to registrants from our three participating congregations: Auburn UU, Norway UU, and Allen Avenue UU. First floor dorm rooms and rooms for larger families are especially at a premium and in demand. We will do our very best to accommodate everyone.

You may indicate special needs, including food allergies, on the registration form, and Pangea, our contracted food service, will accommodate dietary requests. Scholarship requests are due to Anne Kinney by Sunday April 3.

Register for the full weekend—or one day—and plan to enjoy singing, art, our variety show, discussion groups, fireside chats, yoga, nature walks, the playground, duct tape hat-making, delicious organic food, ice cream cones and the BEACH. And always feel free to take private retreat time.

Questions? Please email Anne at [akinneyuu@twc.com](mailto:akinneyuu@twc.com) or speak to Anne or Ron Spofford.

**Drumming Circle**

3rd Thursday every month  
+ bring or borrow +  
*This month:*  
**April 21 from 6:30-8:00**



---

## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS



Two of our newest members from our last Membership class are Judy and Bob Bishop. They have been attending First Universalist since March, 2016. Judy is a retired second and third grade teacher and Bob a retired CPA. They are active members of several historical societies and travel frequently as well as enjoying time with their family. Bob and Judy have both become very engaged and active at church. Bob has shared his poetry at Open Mic, and Judy provides delicious baked goodies for Coffee Hour whenever they are at church. We are so fortunate to have Bob and Judy among our membership. Blessings,

– Peggy Cox, Membership Chair

---

## BEYOND THE WALLS OF OUR CONGREGATION



Let's spread the word about the Unitarian Universalist Alliance of Camp and Conference Centers (UUACCC) in the United States and Canada.

Families can access a wide range of opportunities for fellowship, self-discovery, and learning provided by these Camp and Conference Centers throughout the year in spectacular natural settings. Learn more at <http://uuaccc.org>.

---

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Two-thirds of the year has elapsed and we are still on stable financial ground. From the standpoint of day-to-day operating needs, this is good news. However, I focus on trends. In fact, \$7,500 in pledges due over the next five months were paid all at once and if we prorate this windfall, then we are falling short of our slippage goal year-to-date by at least 3%. Shortly you will be receiving a pledge status statement. Please stay current with your stewardship gifts. This is essential if we are to reach our goal of no more than 3% slippage for the year.

On the costs side, our expenses are at 61% of budget—almost 6% less than projected while revenue including the windfall pledge collection stands at 69%. By the way, thank you for your donations to support coffee hour. Those collections are way ahead of our budgeted amount; with your help maybe we can actually break even on this activity.

All budgeted expense totals are under 66.67%; even buildings and grounds is at 64%. There is one large expense to Nason Mechanical for curing the furnace burner flame-out problem that is being renegotiated and remains unpaid.

I moved fund balances for the UUTheater, Open Mic, Social Justice, and Ferry Beach Scholarships cluttering our operating account to the 0144 account managed by John Davidson. We have a current balance of \$15,735.46 in our Operating Account. These are funds that we can *actually use*.

Whether our year ends in the black is very dependent on your stewardship gifts and on the results of our two up-coming fundraising events: the “Yard Sale” and the Service Auction: ***bid early and often!***

– Al Sargent

## UU THEATER NEWS



### V-Day Thanks

UU Theater thanks **Bill Eldridge** for his fabulous sketch of the Vagina Monologues cast. We love it!

\* \* \* \* \*

### “Wings of Spring” Drag Show

Let’s support this exciting church benefit on **Saturday, April 2**. Producer/director Christopher Dufour, also host of the show, says “My girls are not angels, but their performances are heaven sent!”

Featured performers are Miss Jacinda, Shaunna Rai, Miss E’on and Sheneeda Diet, with special guests Jersey Dior, Cherry Lemonade, Gigi Gabor, Denny Do-me-right, Prodigy Diamond, Luna Vortex and Angelo.

Tickets are \$10 for general admission/\$15 for VIP seating at the Elks Lodge, 1675 Lisbon Road, Lewiston. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. to meet and greet the cast; show starts at 8:00 p.m. Drinks, pub-style food and 50/50 raffle will be sold. Dancing and karaoke follow the show. FMI [www.facebook.com/GoldenGoddessProductions](http://www.facebook.com/GoldenGoddessProductions) or [www.auburnuu.org](http://www.auburnuu.org).

## IS OUR CONGREGATION STILL RELEVANT?

Five Auburn UU church leaders recently attended a webinar to explore new possibilities for congregational relevance in today’s changing world and family cultures.

Our participants were Eben Miller, Peggy Cox, Toby Haber, Paula Spruill and Anne Kinney. Using internet conferencing technology we joined UUs from across New England, the Midwest and Canada to consider ways to adapt to new trends, and leverage our strengths for greater impact. One concept emphasized: nothing changes until you say “yes!” And...the answer to “How?” is... “yes!” This poses a question for each of us: What can *I* contribute to the evolution of Auburn UU’s relevance?

Our New England Region (<http://www.newenglanduua.org/congregations>) UU staff offers weekly programs on many topics of concern to our congregations. Some of these are live, some are webinars. Current topics include worship, stewardship, growing shared ministries with sister congregations, lifespan religious exploration, curriculum planning, climate justice, restorative justice, culture, conflict and collaboration, volunteerism, full time church with part time staff, OWL facilitator training, and choosing our futures.

– Denominational Affairs

### OPEN DOOR SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for the MAY newsletter is  
**SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 2016**

Submissions should be simple and reader-friendly (no longer than 275 words, please) and should pertain to church or denominational events, announcements, reports and activities. If photos or graphics are desired, please send them along with your submission or contact the editor for assistance. You will receive an acknowledgement from the editor when your submission is received. Please send submissions to [TraceyMiller@auburnuu.org](mailto:TraceyMiller@auburnuu.org)

## MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE

Thanks to so many who donated food for members in need. We're all set for now, and will let you know when a need arises again.

However, if you like to give, here are a couple more opportunities:

### Trinity Soup Kitchen Wish List (bring for collection on Sundays)

- disposable plates, styrofoam cups, plastic silverware, tin foil, and napkins
- diapers to be distributed at the food pantry. All sizes, especially 4, 5, and 6
- drinks - juice, milk, coffee, creamer & sugar, and lemonade or iced tea mixes

### Calvary Methodist Church Wish List

Calvary offers a warm place for the homeless on Sundays from noon-4:00 p.m.

They need instant coffee, powdered creamer, or hot chocolate. Now that's welcoming!

Mark items for Calvary and leave them near the sanctuary door. We will deliver them for you.

– Auburn UU

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Toby Haber-Giasson was on local radio again recently, talking about the church and the 10-year anniversary of Open Mic. Listen here: <http://goo.gl/rqVo4b>

\* \* \* \* \*

Auburn UU has joined the Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. Will you represent us at a **Chamber Breakfast on Thursday, April 14** (\$20 reg. fee) or at an **After Hours Networking event on Thursday, April 21** (free)? Contact Toby at [news@auburnuu.org](mailto:news@auburnuu.org).

\* \* \* \* \*

**Check In @ Church** on your smartphone, to let your friends know where you are on Sunday morning (then turn it OFF).



**Please send event news to Toby at [news@auburnuu.org](mailto:news@auburnuu.org) for an e-blast, Facebook post, newsletter piece, or press release!**

## APRIL EVENTS

[www.auburnuu.org/news-events/calendar/](http://www.auburnuu.org/news-events/calendar/)

<b>Sun, Apr 3</b>	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service / Religious Exploration classes <i>Second Collection: New Beginnings</i>
	11:30 a.m.	RE Committee Meeting
<b>Fri, Apr 8</b>	7:30 p.m.	Open Mic / Poetry Slam
<b>Sun, Apr 10</b>	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service / Religious Exploration classes Registration deadline for Ferry Beach Retreat
<b>Mon, Apr 11</b>	6:30 p.m.	Board Meeting (in the office - open to all)
<b>Sun, Apr 17</b>	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service / Religious Exploration classes
	11:15 a.m.	Membership Committee Meeting
<b>Thurs, Apr 21</b>	5:30 p.m.	Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)
	6:30 p.m.	Drumming Circle
<b>Sat, Apr 23</b>	8:30 - 2:30	YARD SALE (vestry)
<b>Sun, Apr 24</b>	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service / Religious Exploration classes Newsletter submission deadline for April issue
<b>Mon, Apr 25</b>	4:30 p.m.	SURJ Vigil for Racial Justice on Longley Bridge (near Gritty's)
	5:45 p.m.	Game Night following SURJ Vigil
<b>Fri, Apr 29</b>		Ferry Beach Retreat (through Sunday, May 1)