

The Light of Truth, The Warmth of Love and The Energy of Action.

January 13, 2010

Plumb Line



Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Andover (978) 475-4454

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*I will set a plumb line
in the midst of my
people-*

Amos.

**Unitarian
Universalist
Congregation
in Andover**

Six Locke Street
Andover, MA 01810
978 475-4454

www.uuandover.org

Office Hours:

September - June
Monday, Wednesday
9-3 pm
Thursday 4-8pm



Sunday Service, January 17, 10:30 a.m.

"Celebrate Martin Luther King Jr."

We will look at how the words of Dr. King are as relevant as ever.
Service led by Director of Religious Education, Thea Shapiro



Plumb Excited: Coming Alive

You might wonder sometimes how much time I put into writing my newsletter columns. If you read one you like, you might imagine that it took a great deal of time to write. If you read one that doesn't do as much for you, you might imagine that I whipped it out pretty quickly. The truth? I usually write them pretty quickly, relatively speaking. More often than not, I'm pleasantly surprised at how quickly they come along once I sit down to do it – they virtually write themselves. I like some better than others, just like you... but usually the process is fairly painless. Much easier than writing a sermon, for instance.

Except for this week, I went through four versions of this column. The first was an attempt to summarize some highlights from my recent thinking about the 5th Principle and the importance of voting on January 19. It turned out to be far too dense for a newsletter column. The second draft was an attempt to say something about the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. But Thea will lead the congregation in thinking about MLK on January 17; no need for me to do that here. In the third draft I was thinking about fear, on one hand, and positive thinking on the other. But I realized that those are my topics for sermons on January 24 and 31, respectively. So you see how I struggled, but at least it was comforting to discover that the themes that *seem* to be on my mind truly *are* on my mind. Besides, summarizing my struggle is a sneaky way to give you a snapshot of some upcoming services – and reminding you to vote!

I believe the reason I struggled to write this particular column is that I've been with you for more than half a year now, and my head is swimming with the richness of what is here in this congregation. There's so much potential! It boggles the mind.

And so, what can I possibly say in the length of a newsletter column? I keep coming back to a quotation that is usually attributed to Howard Thurman:

"Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."

Ultimately, that is my wish for each of us and for us as a congregation: to come alive. What makes us come alive? What would you just love to do together in 2010, and beyond? Howard Thurman also writes:

"There is something in every one of you that waits and listens for the sound of the genuine in yourself. It is the only true guide you will ever have. And if you cannot hear it, you will all of your life spend your days on the ends of strings that somebody else pulls."

May we have the courage and vision to listen for the sound of the genuine and to pull our own strings. May we discover together what makes us come alive, and reanimate ourselves and our world. I remain plumb excited to be a part of this wonderful congregation!

In faith,

Lara



President's Report

Our Mid Year Congregational Meeting is coming up on Sunday, January 31st, after service. I hope you can all be there. The Board would like to update you on what we are doing and to get a sense from you on what direction we should be going. Our membership has stabilized this year and we are looking for some growth. Where that growth comes from requires directing resources to various avenues and your input is essential.

We also need to discuss Board and Committee memberships. Some on the Board are ready to move on and the various committees need some people as well.

This is all the nuts and bolts of running a congregation - not exciting but it still needs to be done. Everyone's voice should be heard so we hope to see you on Sunday, the 31st of this month. Thank you all.

Bob Rougvie
President



From the RE Corner

With the holidays behind us, we go forward into the New Year. I offer you these thoughts:

The New Year
chance for new beginnings, an opportunity to let go of the old and start new, every once in a while do the things you put off and put off the things you do, be part of something larger than yourself, take a risk small or large but take one, let go of a fear and add a joy

The New Year can be a chance for new beginnings

In Peace,

Thea

A Month of Sundays

Sunday, January 17, 10:30 a.m. Celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. We will look at how the words of Dr. King are as relevant as ever. Service led by Director of Religious Education, Thea Shapiro

Sunday, January 24, 10:30 a.m. "Of Fear and Faith", with Rev. Lara Hoke. FDR famously said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Is fear really that fearful? Could fear be helpful to us? Lara will talk about the spiritual role of fear in our lives.

Sunday, January 31, 10:30 a.m. -- "Positively 'Bright-Sided'?" with Rev. Lara Hoke. For many decades, we have heard about Dr. Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking*. In more recent times, we've heard about "The Secret" and the "Law of Attraction". But how far does positive thinking really get us? Lara will consider "the power of positive thinking" and the "Law of Attraction" in light of Barbara Ehrenreich's new book, *Bright-Sided*. A congregational meeting follows the service.

Sunday, February 7, 10:30 a.m. "Getting Through the Winter" Gail Forsyth-Vail, guest speaker There is an Anishinabe tale of how Shingebiss, the duck, relies on creativity, courage and perseverance to confront and outlast the Winter-maker who blows his icy breath across the land and waters of the Great Lakes. What do we rely on to help us through the winters of our lives? What does the wintertime still have to teach us?

Gail Forsyth-Vail is the Adult Programs Director at the Unitarian Universalist Association, and author of *Stories in Faith: Exploring our Unitarian Universalist Principles and Sources through Wisdom Tales*, and co-author of *Harvest the Power: Developing Lay Leadership*. She lives in Georgetown with husband Steve, whom she married thirty-one years ago when they were both members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Andover. Gail preached on Easter last year, and we welcome her back to our pulpit!

Many Thanks!

The lovely poinsettias that graced our worship space over the holidays were donated by: Betsy Black, Thea Shapiro, Lara Hoke, Elinor Mondale, Deb Zahka, Patty Brayden, George Dudley, Kelly McInnis and Sam Sykora, Melissa Jezuit, Bob Genier, Carol Rougvie, Sue Imhoff, Lynne Batchelder, Eileen Lorenzo and Nancy Mulvey.

Many thanks to all, and special appreciation to Betsy Black for purchasing and transporting the plants and Elinor Mondale for "marketing and collection" assistance!

Hospitality Signup

Thanks to all who have provided refreshments after Sunday services we have been able to enjoy a fellowship time. Please remember there is a signup sheet in the foyer of the congregation to choose the most convenient date for you.

Guest at Your Table

Please remember to bring to Locke St. on Sunday the box containing your donation for the Guest at Your Table program of the UU Service Committee. If you prefer, you can write a check made out to the UU Service Committee. We hope to send in all of the contributions next week. Thanks for participating in this important social justice program that supports grassroots organizations for civil liberties, economic rights, environmental justice and humanitarian crisis projects world-wide.

Congregational Family Committee

Wednesday, January 13, 7:30 p.m.

Board Meeting

Thursday, January 14, 7:15 p.m.

Book Discussion Group

The book discussion group will meet on Tuesday, January 26, at 7:30 p.m. to discuss *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* by Stieg Larsson. We will meet at the home of Betsy Black, 16 Rock O'Dundee Rd. February's book is *The Way We Live Now* by Anthony Trollope, for discussion on Feb. 16. All are welcome to attend.

Woman's Spirituality

Full Moon Drum Circle

Friday January 29, 7 to 9 p.m. celebrate the full moon with drums and rhythm instruments. All are welcome, no experience necessary. Jane Gossard will teach some African rhythms and lead the drumming. \$15 or sliding scale.

Mass Bay Choir Festival

Sunday February 28, 2010, 2:15-4pm

First Unitarian Society in Newton www.fusn.org

1326 Washington Street

West Newton, MA 02465

Contact: Anne Watson Born, music@fusn.org

Several Mass Bay choirs will be meeting at the First Unitarian Society in Newton to sing for each other and to join in song together. The event will begin at 2:15pm with singers sharing warm-ups. The participating choirs will sing some of their repertoire and we'll close with everyone singing "Choose Something Like a Star," "We Are One," and possibly a couple of other pieces.

Please contact Anne Watson Born for more information (awborn@gmail.com or music@fusn.org)

Now, I say to you today my friends, even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: - 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.'

Martin Luther King Jr., *Speech at Civil Rights March on Washington, August 28, 1963*

US black civil rights leader & clergyman (1929 - 1968)

January 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 9:30a Choir Rehearsal 10:30a Sunday Service:	28	29	30 12p Busy	31	1	2
3 9:30a Choir Rehearsal 10:30a Sunday Service:	4 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm	5 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm	6 7:30p Worship Committee	7 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm	8 12p Busy 6p Busy	9 9a Keys for Kids 9 - 2 pm 10a Isha Yoga 4p Private Event
10 9:30a Choir Rehearsal 10:30a Sunday Service: 6p Women's Spirituality Series	11 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm	12 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm	13 7:30p Congregational Family Committee	14 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm 7:15p Board Meeting	15 12p Busy	16 9a Keys for Kids 9 - 2 pm
17 9:30a Choir Rehearsal 10:30a Sunday Service: 6p Women's Spirituality Series	18 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm	19 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm 7p Circle of Friends 7:30p Book Discussion	20	21 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm 7p Circle of Friends	22 12p Busy	23 9a Keys for Kids 9 - 2 pm
24 9:30a Choir Rehearsal 10:30a Sunday Service: Women's Spirit	25 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm	26 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm 7:30p Amnesty International	27	28 3p Keys for Kids 3 - 8 pm	29 12p Busy 6:30p Women's Spirituality	30 9a Keys for Kids 9 - 2 pm