



First Parish, Hingham

Old Ship Church

Unitarian Universalist

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February 2016 Newsletter

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February Worship Services

Sunday, February 7

Ken's sermon will be "What Are We Talking About When We Talk About God?" It is all too easy and all too common to assume that we know what we're talking about when we talk about God - whether you "believe" in God or not. Ken will explore the various ways in which people (from fundamentalist to Unitarian Universalist, Christian to Muslim to Hindu... to atheist) understand, use (and abuse) the word "God" - and why it matters.



The Memorial Bell Tower ringers will hold another open house right after our service. If you are interested in learning more about the bells, change ringing, how to ring, and the history of the tower... this will be your chance! The Bell Tower was built in 1912 as a joint project of our congregation and the larger Hingham community; it is now owned by the Town of Hingham.

See details elsewhere in the newsletter for details about the "Warm Hearts Hot Potatoes" youth group fundraiser during coffee hour, and details as well about the Social Justice Council's film to be shown as well.

Sunday, February 14

Our preaching will be Old Ship member Diane Elliott. Her sermon will be "Acts of Faith" (I hope I don't get booed for using this particular F word) Diane writes: "There are times when decisions are made and paths are taken without knowing where you are going or what you will find when you get there. For me a decision of this nature was an Act of Faith when I decided to attend the Parliament of World Religions, which was first created in 1893 to cultivate harmony among the world's religions and spiritual communities. In October ten thousand people from over 80 countries and 50 different religious and spiritual communities came together for interfaith dialogues. What does living in an interfaith world look like today and how can we be a part of it?"

Diane has been a member of Old Ship for 29 years. She was a Director of Religious Education for 23 years and served at three different congregations, including ours. She attended Andover Newton Theological School and graduated in 2007. (Now she lazes about stirring up trouble whenever she can.)

Sunday, February 21

We will have a guest preacher, Rev. Carol Cissel. Her sermon will be "Loss, Remembrance, and Joy." She writes: From the moment we enter the world, our brains begin preparing us to leave it. Part of that preparation includes the gathering and storing of beautiful and painful memories. Why do we remember...what we remember? How do our

emotions affect our memories? Is it possible to grieve, learn from and lovingly catalog our losses? Why do we remember...the things we remember?"

Rev. Cissel serves the Unitarian Society in East Brunswick, NJ; she has three adult children and one grandchild.

Sunday, February 28

"Blessings" will be Ken's sermon. Here are Ken's thoughts about this sermon:

"I am frequently (though probably not often enough) somewhat overwhelmed with the extent of my good fortune. From the blessings and love of family and friends to the blessing of being your minister, sharing in joys and sorrow, learning and serving, to the blessing in my life that is Unitarian Universalism. Yes, I've had some share of sorrow in my life too - who hasn't - but at the same time I am of course well aware of the far greater depths of sorrow and struggle and suffering that all too many others experience. What, then, are we to do with whatever measure of good fortune is ours?"

Most Sunday mornings...

Most Sunday mornings at Old Ship begin with gatherings in small circles in the Parish House parlor for sharing and spiritual enrichment. And we are all invited! Our web site has more detailed information about these opportunities: The "Way of the Bodhisattva Study Group" meets at 8:30 on the first and third Sundays of each month, offering time for meditation and then conversation concerning a Buddhist book the group is reading. "Men's Breakfast" meets at 8:30 on the second Sunday of each month for sharing and conversation (and bagels and coffee too). And the Knitting Group meets at 8:30 on the fourth Sunday of each month.

Childcare available before Sunday services: If you plan to attend the Men's Breakfast or Bodhisattva Study Group or a Sunday early morning committee meeting and need childcare in order to do so, please call our office by Wednesday before the Sunday, and we will do our best to arrange childcare in the nursery for you.

from the minister's desk **Musings**

The practice of zakat (or "charity") for Muslims is one of the five "pillars" of Islam. One is meant each year to donate 2.5% of one's wealth (not income, but wealth) to religious charity. In the same spirit, many Christians practice tithing, which as you know means giving 10% of one's annual income to the church.

We Unitarian Universalists have no set percentages required, but we do ask ourselves each year to consider a significant pledge to our congregations, in addition to whatever other charities and causes we support. Our Old Ship pledge campaign will be underway soon. You can find a few preliminary words about this year's pledge drive elsewhere in the newsletter. Meanwhile we are all invited to begin reflecting on the many ways that Old Ship and Unitarian Universalism enrich our lives all year long, and to what extent we are able to support Old Ship financially during the coming fiscal year (July-June).

I would invite you to keep this in mind as you reflect: Our pledge and gifts to Old Ship are somewhat different from other charitable contributions. Whereas our gifts to other worthy organizations are just that - to an organization out there or over there that has a mission we'd like to support - by contrast, as members and friends of our congregation we are with our pledges making a commitment to pool our wealth to support the programs that nourish our spiritual lives and that enable us to reach out to serve in the wider world. This mutual financial sharing mirrors all the other ways we

share with one another to create together the vibrant spiritual community we call Old Ship.

Thank you in advance for your serious pre-pledge reflection.

All this said, like you I have other organizations and causes I support to the degree I am able, including, near the top of the list for me, the Alzheimer's Association, which I now support through my running.

On Patriots Day 1970 I ran my first Boston Marathon with a mere thousand or so others. My brothers with their wives and our parents cheered me along at various points from Hopkinton to Boston. It was a memorable day in many ways. Yet though I've run many marathons since, none have been as meaningful as the Boston Marathons I've run in memory of my mother, who died in 2012 just before Christmas at the end of a long Alzheimer's journey. I'll be running again this April, and I run not just in my mother's memory and in memory and honor of others (Old Shippers among them) touched by this disease. I run to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Association to support their mission of finding a cure and meanwhile supporting families in the midst of the Alzheimer's journey - often it's own sort of marathon, a marathon far more challenging than any mere road race. (If this is a mission close to your heart too, you can give through my fundraising site. Just click on [this link](#). If you'd prefer, you can send a check made out to the Alzheimer's Association to me at the church, 107 Main Street, Hingham, MA 02043, and I'll pass it along to the Association.)

Thanks very much for all the ways you give: To Old Ship above all, as well as to whatever additional causes and organizations are closest to your heart. It all adds up to making the world a better place than it would be without our collective efforts.

Peace and blessings,
Ken oldshipkreb@gmail.com

Religious Education Notes

This month, I thought I'd share some words about religious education from our Unitarian Universalist Association... Their website is a wealth of information and inspiration... Here's the link, in case you'd like to dive in further: <http://www.uua.org/re/children>

CHILDREN'S FAITH DEVELOPMENT

"We are Unitarian Universalists: a people of the open mind, the loving heart, and the helping hands." Words like these are commonly recited when a chalice is lit, at the start of a children's religious education session.

Parents and caregivers are attracted to Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations for the partnership we offer in raising children who will become kind, respectful, fair-minded, caring, and strong enough to stand up for what is right. Through religious education programs and the inclusion of children in worship, social justice work, and multigenerational gatherings, our communities reinforce what parents teach at home. We nurture truth-seeking, spirituality, and progressive moral values that will continue to shape and support our children as they grow.

Children's programming usually occurs on Sunday mornings. Most congregations have a nursery for babies and toddlers during worship and offer age-specific programs from preschool on up. It is common for a UU religious education program to combine story, song, art, movement, discussion, and play in order to engage children with many learning styles and activity levels. Program content varies from congregation to congregation.

On Children's Faith Development

- *Nurturing Children and Youth: A Developmental Guidebook*, by Tracey L. Hurd (Toolkit Book), describes the faith journey from early childhood in terms of developmental stages. What sorts of questions do we ask, and what depth of

answer do we seek, at different stages? What activities work at different stages to engage children or youth in faith exploration?

- *Full Circle: Fifteen Ways to Grow Lifelong UUs*, by religious educator and lifelong UU Kate Covey, reports on her interviews with 82 men and women ages 25 to 87 who were raised as UUs. She identifies approaches UU congregations can use to meet the needs of their children and youth for a faith they can keep.
- *The Gift of Faith: Tending the Spiritual Lives of Children*, by Jeanne Harrison Nieuwejaar, shows that religious community is vital to addressing a child's natural need for spiritual growth and religious grounding. It points to the crucial role of parents as their children's primary religious educators and explores ways to foster spiritual life in the home. An accessible, inspiring book.

Welcoming Children in Our UU Congregations

- *Come Into the Circle: Worshiping With Children* by Michelle Richards (Skinner House) offers readings, song suggestions, and ways to worship with children in your congregation.
- *A Child's Book of Blessings and Prayers*, collected and introduced by Eliza Blanchard, draws material from around the world to encourage giving, service, and gratitude. It includes words to bless the morning, share at bedtime, honor a birthday, even give thanks for a friend.
- *Welcoming Children with Special Needs: A Guidebook for Faith Communities*, by Sally Patton, advocates and offers specific ideas for congregations to welcome and meaningfully engage children with special needs and to support their families.
- *What If Nobody Forgave?* collected and edited by Colleen M. McDonald brings the seven UU Principles to life in 19 tales with basic messages about truth and right living. Buddha, Jesus, and the Sufi masters of Islam are among the spiritual teachers represented. Each story provides discussion questions, activities and a reading list.
- *A Lamp in Every Corner*, by Janeen K. Grohsmeyer brings UU-inspired stories to children, including stories about historical UUs, UU symbols and rituals, and our Principles.

Thanks and blessings...

Beverly Tricco
Director of Religious Education
beverlytricco@gmail.com

Educating Hearts and Minds Life Learning Programs

For a complete listing of this year's classes and ongoing programs, go to the "learning" page on our web site: www.oldshipchurch.org

A Chosen Faith - Note change in schedule from February to March:
five sessions, 7:30- 8:30, Wed., March 2 - March 30
led by Ken Read-Brown and Diane Elliott

We will explore in depth some of the roots and branches of Unitarian Universalism using as our primary resource the book, *A Chosen Faith*, by UU ministers John Buehrens and Forrest Church. For any of us - newcomers or old-timers - who wish to deepen our understanding of Unitarian Universalism.

For more information and to sign up, please contact Ken or Diane:
oldshipkreb@gmail.com; dianeabbeyelliott@gmail.com.

Membership Musings

The snow has fallen, and we survived another January in New England! Now that February is here some of us will turn our attention to Valentine's Day. There are many ways to celebrate love: giving and receiving cards, flowers and gifts a very small number of them.

Someone said to me recently that she was once told going to church was to "learn how to love better". We all know how to love, but can't we all improve upon it? Can't we all use that reminder to love others, even the newest people we meet?

I'd like to remind you that loving others can be done in many ways: you can say hello to a new face at Coffee Hour, or check in with a friend you haven't heard from in a while. Because there are so many newcomers, new members and friends at Old Ship, I encourage you to broaden your circle of love to include them as well. They could turn out to be that friend you check in with some day.

Kindly,
Erin
Membership Coordinator
membership@oldshipchurch.org

Among Us

Warm Hearts, Hot Potatoes Fundraiser on February 7

It's that time of year when we warm each other with love, and the Youth Group warms the tummies of the congregation with hot potatoes! During coffee hour on February 7, the Youth Group will be dishing up baked potatoes with all the fixings, chili and salad. This fundraiser has become an annual tradition so please come join us!

Lincoln Day at Old Ship

The Hingham Historical Society hosts this annual event, which includes a program at our Old Ship Meeting House: Hingham's annual Lincoln Day celebrates Hingham's Revolutionary War hero, General Benjamin Lincoln, and President Abraham Lincoln, whose ancestors hailed from Hingham. At 10:15 on Saturday, February 13, the Hingham Militia will muster behind Old Ship Church and march to Benjamin Lincoln's grave in Hingham Cemetery. Inside Old Ship church, the ceremony begins at 11:00 a.m.. This year's keynote speaker is Patrick Browne, Civil War historian (and, closer to home, former Executive Director of the Duxbury Rural and Historical Society and Pilgrim Hall Museum). Mr. Brown will deliver a talk about Abraham Lincoln's sometimes thorny relationship with Massachusetts Governor John Albion Andrew. The ceremony is followed by a march to Fountain Square, where a wreath is laid at the foot of Abraham Lincoln's statue. Because Old Derby Academy is being renovated this winter, light refreshments will be hosted by the Historical Society at the Hingham Cemetery's Ames Chapel.

A Belated Merrie Market Thank You!

The Merrie Market is a big fund raising event and an event which helps to build and nourish our Old Ship Community. I want to thank those of who contributed your Treasures, your Soups, Chilis and Casseroles for the Jingle Bell Cafe, decorated Wreaths, baked pies, cookies and gingerbread houses for the Bake Goods Table,

donated your goods and services to the Silent Auction table, created Baskets and Crafts, and gave your Toys and Books. I also want to thank those of you who carried everything down from the third floor and who came when I need some heavy lifting. I know time is a precious commodity these days and there were those of you who gave minutes and hours of your time working for this event. There were so many moments from my position that your contributions felt like blessings.

The good news is we raised \$ \$14,679!

With Gratitude,
Diane Elliott

Save the Dates! Old Ship Summer Retreat, July 29-31 on beautiful Cape Cod

This July will be our 3rd annual Summer Retreat at Craigville. This event is enjoyed by diverse members from our Old Ship Community (seniors, youngsters, families and singles!) Please join us for two days of community in a relax and fun environment. For those of you who didn't make it last year (but heard all the positive buzz!) now is your chance to join in! More details and an opportunity to sign up coming in March.

Christmas Eve Offering and other good news

This Christmas Eve offering was up 20% over the prior year! We were able to give the UU Urban Ministry, Father Bill's and the UU Service Committee each a check for \$1656.67. Thanks to all who donated on Christmas Eve. Also, the November Renewal House fundraiser collected \$1700. Many thanks to the donors listed below for their generosity:

Dorothy Anderson
Janet Blampied
Nestor & Cynthia Camino
Donna Ekstrand
Judi Flaherty
Lisa Florenzano
John & Elaine Gomez
Allan Greenberg
Jack & Nancy LaPann
Edith & Cal Larson
Sherry Penney Livingston
Long Family
Eva Marx
Los Mercurios
Virginia Pomeroy
Thomas & Betty Potter
Ken & Susan Read-Brown
Richard Harvey & Katherine Morrison
Vance Richardson
Robert and Peggy Rizzotto
Tricia & Craig Russ
Gail Slater

Harold & Mary Thomas
Elizabeth Torrey
May Vuilleumier
Barbara Wells
Tom & Diane Willson

Upcoming Pledge Drive

Dear Friends,

As you are probably aware, it is time for us to conduct Old Ship's annual pledge drive. One of the important features of this process is to be in touch with the members of our church community. Last year we sought to do this through a series of dinners; this year we are seeking to be in touch with each member either by means of a visit to their home, or through a personal phone conversation. Such visits or conversations will be conducted by stewards whom we have asked to join us for this purpose, and you will be contacted by one of them during the coming weeks.

The object of these contacts is NOT to discuss the amounts you have pledged before, NOR the amount you are going to pledge this year. These are private matters between you and your church.

Rather, the object for these one-on-one contacts is for us to share with you the overall financial details of Old Ship's situation in 2016, in whatever detail you might wish, and to seek your input on ways by which we might make the overall pledge drive more successful. We will also ask you to share with us the things that you like best about Old Ship, and to thank you in person for your participation and membership.

With warmest thanks,

Pam Harty, Nigel Harvey, Florence Noonan,
Pledge Campaign.

Parish House plan - update

With the vote of the parish to enable the Board to hold deeper discussions with people who might want to develop all or a portion of the Parish House property, we are now deep in the weeds of gathering information about zoning regulations, appraisals, potential uses and potential partners. Any news will be shared in the private Parish House Plans page of the Old Ship web site, and publicly with you as we move forward. Always feel free to contact Nina Price or Tom Willson directly for an update. Stay tuned!

Social Justice Committee

Hingham Food Pantry

The date of the next food pantry collection during coffee hour will be Sunday, February 21. The Council is urging everyone to make additional donations if possible as the food pantry is very low on food this time of year!

Please consider bringing a donation any Sunday for the food baskets in the front entry of the Parish House or in the entranceway in the Meeting House.

Volunteers Needed

The annual food drive at Stop and Shop has been rescheduled for Sunday, February 28. The Council is looking for volunteers for either 12-2 or 2-4 on the scheduled Sunday afternoon.

Lunch and Film

The Social Justice Council and the Youth of Old Ship are joining together to host the film "Homeless: the Motel Kids of Orange County." This is a 2010 documentary about children who are homeless living in motels and hotels. The SJC will show the film on Sunday, February 7 at 12:15p.m. in Fellowship Hall, with discussion to follow at 1:15 p.m. The youth will be serving their famous Hot Potatoes! A portion of the proceeds will be donated to an organization that supports individuals who are homeless.

Mark your Calendars!

Cupcakes for a Cause will be held on Sunday, March 6. Once again, the funds raised will go to School on Wheels, an organization that provides tutoring to children who are homeless.

ACTION ITEMS

- Meals on Wheels has a critical need for Volunteer Drivers in Hingham. Willingness to drive in inclement weather is a plus. Any day Mon-Fri 10-noon. Contact South Shore Elder Services: Jody 781-848-3910 ext. 430 or jhodgdon@sselder.org.
- EMPTY BOWLS South Shore 2016 will be held at the Hingham Public Library on Thursday, March 31, 5-7 p.m. Adults \$20 pp, Students and Children \$10 each. The ticket price includes a light meal of soup and bread and a handcrafted bowl. The money raised will benefit organizations that fight hunger locally. The recipients will be Hingham Food Pantry, Wellspring Food Pantry and the Braintree Community Food Pantry
- Horizons for Homeless Children needs volunteers to play with young homeless children in a shelter-based playspace in Weymouth. Upcoming volunteer training is Wednesday, February 3, 6-9:30 p.m. in Taunton. For more information visit www.horizonschildren.org or call 508-510-3250.

If you would like to join the SJC listserv to be notified of upcoming action item, please email Davalene Cooper: davalenecooper@verizon.net.

The next meeting of the Social Justice Council will be held on Saturday, February 27 at 9:30 a.m. in the Parish House. All are welcome.

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