



Universalist Society of Strafford

Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association

May 2012 Newsletter

“Let us go forth with fear and courage and rage to save the world.” – Grace Paley

Services

10 am

1st and 3rd Sundays of each month

Summer at the UU Church in South Strafford

Winter at Barrett Hall

Minister

Rev. Dr. M’ellen Kennedy

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Contact Information

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Website

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2010-2011

Church Officers

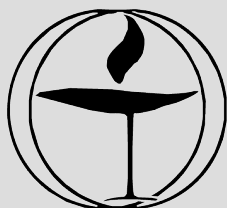
Moderator - Dick Josler

Assistant Moderator - John Freitag

Treasurer - Suzanna Leipman

Secretary - Open

Trustees - Lee Funston, Andrew Lane, Jane Phelps



Dear Friends,

As I look out my window, I see birch and maple and all manner of trees beginning to burst. In Spring we are surrounded by potential. So much is yet to unfold around us. It can set our heart to imagining what might yet be. Many great thinkers and spiritual teachers, including Stephen Covey, tell us quite clearly that those who succeed start with the end in mind. As Spring unfolds around us, I invite You to pause and imagine what You would like to see flower in your life, your family, your community, this community and the world. Perhaps this poem by Denise Levertov, (#648 in the hymnal, Singing the Living Tradition) will offer inspiration.

*But we have only begun
To love the earth.
We have only begun
To imagine the fullness of life.
How could we tire of hope?
-- so much is in bud.
How can desire fail?
-- we have only begun
to imagine justice and mercy,
only begun to envision
how it might be
to live as siblings with beast and flower;
not as oppressors.
Surely our river
cannot already be hastening
into the sea of nonbeing?
Surely it cannot
drag, in the silt,
all that is innocent?
Not yet, not yet--
there is too much broken
that must be mended,
too much hurt we have done to each other
that cannot yet be forgiven.
We have only begun to know
the power that is in us if we would join
our solitudes in the communion of struggle.
So much is unfolding that must
complete its gesture,
so much is in bud.*

What is in the bud in You? What would You like to see come to fruition? Let’s use the creative power of our imagination to bring wonderful possibilities into existence. May Spring be a season of hope and creativity for

*You. See You at Church,
With Love, M’ellen*

Worship Services @ 10 AM in the Church, followed by Coffee Hour:

May 6: "Roots hold me close. Wings set me free." With Rev. Gregory Wilson. To know and nurture our roots helps us produce fruit that is appropriate for today. Unitarian Universalists have a history of responding to the context in which they find themselves. We will look to some of our UU forebears, and consider our current context to begin to answer the question, "What is our response to be today?"

Gregory V. Wilson has been Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Brevard, in Melbourne, FL since 2004. Gregory lives in Port Saint Lucie, FL, and Vershire, Vt (spending part of each summer with Step-son Jeremy and Sandy Thorne) and is married to Helen, who is the Director of Music at UUCB, and a technical writer for a software firm. Their “blending family” includes four grown children, Matthew, Jeremy, Ian, and Amanda, two daughters-in-law, Sandy and Tanesha, and a granddaughter, Aenea. They all enjoy outdoor activities including kayaking, snorkeling, bicycling, hiking, and camping. Gregory and Helen co-authored a book, “Blessed, Known, Good and Loved: Belief Systems Therapy,” and work together offering workshops on Codependency and Spirituality, Anxiety and Depression, Calming Anger and Resentment, Blending Families, Belief Systems in the Workplace, Enhancing Intimacy, Boundaries, and Lay Leadership Training.

May 20: Change Alone is Unchanging. Rev. M’ellen Kennedy. Change is often stressful and yet it is the essence of life as we know it. How do we navigate change? What gives us strength and clarity as we negotiate transitions? Let’s look to the wisdom of the world’s religions for inspiration and direction.

June 3: Dick Whitfield will lead the worship service. His topic will be “A Bird in the Hand,”

June 17: “Father’s Day Celebration”

Rev. M'ellen Kennedy will lead the worship service. This will be her last Sunday with us.

July 1: Rev. Gregory Wilson will lead the worship service. Topic TBA.

RECOGNIZING OUR GRADUATES

In June we will honor our graduates during a worship service. If You have a graduate in your family, let M'ellen know so we can include You in the planning. This promises to be a fun opportunity to celebrate our grads.

BOARD MEETING: The Monthly Business Meeting will be held Thursday, May 17th at the church from 6-8pm.

FRIENDS ON THE PATH ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION GROUP

Many of us are seeking an opportunity to explore authentically our own spiritually and do so with support and friendship and without coercion. This group is just such an opportunity. We will draw on the teachings and wisdom of the world's religions in our exploration. Each session we will use guidance from the worlds' major religions, as we delve into spiritual topics and practices such as meditation, prayer, breathe, cultivating wisdom and listening to one's

conscience. We will have relational agreements to create a safe and fair environment in the group. Please join us. We'll meet at the Morrill Memorial Library in Strafford on Thursday evenings 6 to 8 PM on May 3, 10, 24, 31, and June 7. If You're interested, please add your name to the sign-up sheet at church or contact Rev. M'ellen n at 802-453-5469. Hope to see You then. Rev. M'ellen.

GROUP FOR CAREGIVERS

Are You in a situation of being a caregiver for an aging parent or other adult and are interested in participating in an ongoing group for support? If so, contact Rebecca Seidel at the library at 765-4037.

PASTORAL VISIT?

As You probably have read in the letter that went out to the congregation last month, I will be leaving in June. If You'd like an opportunity to get together before my departure, please let me know.

I will be in Strafford on some Thursday evenings from 6 to 8 for the Friends on the Path Class. If You'd like to visit on Thursday before the class, let me know and we'll set a time. If

Thursday doesn't work for You, we'll find a time that does. Looking forward to visiting.

M'ellen
802-435-5469 or mellenken@aol.com

MAY DAY CELEBRATION OF OLDER TRADITIONS AND NEW IDEAS FOR CHANGE!

Where: The Lebanon Green

When: 3:00 to 7:00, May First

Why: To celebrate the arrival of Spring and to highlight all we are doing and all we can do to bring about a more sustainable, peaceful and just world.

A village festival including music, speeches, a Maypole dance, educational booths from a wide range of local organizations.

Special Attractions include music by musicians from Green Room, and a keynote address by author and social commentator, Gus Speth. We will blow Winter with it's old ways away and bring in the new with Spring!

Free soup, fresh baked bread and Pizza!

This event will be brought to you by Occupy the Upper Valley, Transition Town White River Junction and Cedar Circle Farm.

Carol Langstaff