



Universalist Society of Strafford

Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association

April 2019 Newsletter

"To love and be loved is to feel the sun from both sides." David Viscott

Worship Services

Sunday, April 7th, 10am - *Bread For Our Journey* led by Rev. Telos Whitfield. What is the "bread" we need for our journey? Taking time for personal reflection and the power of community solidarity and strength. An exploration of ancient and modern meanings of Lent and Passover, and what this time can offer for us.

Sunday, April 21st, 6am (approx.) - *Easter Sunrise Service* on Gove Hill hosted by the Upper Village Church and Universalist Society. We gather to welcome the new light, and celebrate with words and music, together!

Sunday, April 21st, 10am - *Following a Path of Light* led by Rev. Telos Whitfield. We embrace this new season of Spring, and we explore the path that Jesus walked on. Healer, teacher, revolutionary leader who embraced an all-inclusive kindness that is deeply needed, today. His friends and followers continued this radical legacy with courage. What is our path and who do we follow?

Message from our Minister

"Pack nothing. Bring only your determination to survive and your willingness to be free. Don't wait for the bread to rise. Take nourishment for the journey, but eat standing, be ready to move at a moment's notice."

Passover Remembered, our Singing the Living Tradition hymnal

Take nourishment for the journey, but eat standing.... We need bread, nourishment as we travel with our fellow companions on this journey of living we are on. What is the "bread" that will sustain us through the challenges and the unknowns; what will sustain us and give us strength to keep going? It might be expressing our creativity, following our passion, listening to the stories of a friend, or being able to share our own experiences with someone we know cares about us. It might be realizing the elements that are missing from our lives and finding ways, each day if we can, to bring those pieces back in. Perhaps it might take remembering back to when we were young, and what we loved to do, and it could be the simplest thing. It might be recognizing that we long to listen to music or watch birds come to our feeder; it might be realizing that we used to write in a journal every morning but we haven't picked up a pen in many months, even years. It might come as a feeling of longing to belong, to be part of a community that knows us. In the Jewish tradition, Passover is a time to remember the life-saving value and strength of a community of faith. It is a time to honor the courage it took for the Hebrew people to travel far away from their home and all that was familiar, out into unknown territory. They took very little and did not know if they would survive, much less find a place to call home again. But they had each other, their fellow companions who shared a deep faith and a commitment to freedom and survival. They had their stories to share, to tell or sing, again and again. They had and we have, each other. Is it enough? It needs to be. If you feel that you aren't an integral member of this, our UU community, then it might be that we haven't had a chance to hear your story. *"Sing songs as you go, and hold close together. You may at times grow confused and lose your way.... Touch each other and keep telling the stories...."*

ALL ARE

WELCOME!

Services

**1st and 3rd Sundays
at 10 am**

*Childcare and
spiritual exploration
offered for our
young ones.*

*Coffee &
Conversation
following services*

We hold our
Summer Services
in our Church at
2 Justin Morrill
Highway, Vt. Rte. 132
in South Strafford.

**Fall and Winter
Services** across the
street at Barrett Hall.

Contact Information

John Freitag
(802) 765-4003
P.O. Box 26
S. Strafford, VT
05070

www.strafforduu.org

Rev. Telos Whitfield
(802) 376-4977
telosw@gmail.com

2018-2019

Church Officers

Moderator – John Freitag
Assistant Moderator –
Marissa Mazzucco
Treasurer –
Suzanna Liepmann
Secretary – open
Trustees – Katy Botsford
Andrew Lane and
Lee Funston

Perhaps the “bread” that you can offer will be nourishment for us; perhaps you bring a valuable experience we *need* to hear. The community of faith was everything to the Hebrew people, and the sharing of the Passover Seder meal each year is a time when they re-tell the stories. They remember and re-commit to their faith tradition.

The dear ones who gathered around Jesus gave him strength, and they helped to sustain and comfort each other. In the final days when it was clear that he would not be able to continue healing and teaching, that he posed too deep a threat to the government, he asked, he implored his friends to continue the work. He called them to be courageous, to speak out, to offer their healing and compassion, especially toward those who were outcasts, forgotten, or misunderstood. And he reminded his friends, his followers that they had each other for support. And we have each other for support in times of struggle, sadness, and joy; times of facing the unknown, contemplating a new journey. Lent offers a time of reflection, and of remembering what is most important about one’s faith, and contemplating if there might be behaviors we want to look at more closely or change, people we might want or need to forgive. It can also be a time for re-committing to the values we hold dear. What is the bread you need for your journey and who might be your companions? We are on this journey of darkness and light, together.

with love, Rev. Telos

Holy Days, Days to Remember

April 3rd - Laylat al Miraj - Islam

April 9th - Mahavir Jayanti - Jain

April 14th - Baisakhi (Vaisakhi) - Sikh

April 14th - Palm Sunday - Christian

April 18th - Maundy Thursday - Christian

April 19th - 21st - Theravadin New Year - Buddhist

April 19th - Good Friday - Christian

April 20th - 27th - Pesach - Jewish

April 21st - Easter - Christian

April 21st - First Day of Ridvan - Baha’i

April 21st - Lailat al Bara’ah - Islam

* * *

February Business Meeting

The Board met for its February meeting at Lee Funston’s house. The minutes of the last meeting will be approved next month.

The Treasurer’s Report for the first half of the Church year was approved as presented. We have received 55% of our budgeted collections. The UUA and district dues and half of the building insurance still need to be paid. Fundraising revenue is at 24% of budget.

The Minister’s Report was accepted as circulated. Services are planned through March. Pastoral care continues to be a focus. Adults are stepping in to offer guidance for childcare. Tom Kinder from United Church has invited us to join in a discussion of Jim Antal’s book, *Climate Church, Climate World*. Telos will follow up with Tom.

We began to look at the long-term financial stability of our congregation. Our current model of using endowment income to pay for ministerial services in order to grow the population of the church has not been successful. Our goal is to become a self-sustaining organization and use the endowment funds to support the building. This is a long term process. We discussed opportunities for incremental changes and will continue this discussion in the coming months. We may seek assistance from the district office with this process.

March Business Meeting

The March 2019 Business Meeting was held on March 6 at Lee Funston's home, who provided not only a warm and lovely space but a tasty quiche. The Meeting started at 6:40 opening words that Telos offered.

Telos presented the ministers report which described recent worship services and looked ahead to March and April. She also talked about caring and outreach work, and upcoming Bill Coffin weekend March 22 -24th at the United Church of Strafford; we've been invited to participate in the Sunday worship service.

Building - The stand pipe roof tipped at an angle due to snow and ice. John will follow up to see about repairs. Conversation from the February meeting continued around financial sustainability.

Our budget, expenses and revenue were reviewed and discussed. Fundraising ideas were discussed and ways to bring more and new people to events and to the community. Reviewed recent presentations and speakers - Emerson Gale's lively program on music and spirituality and the creation of a UU band to support our music! Ginger Wallis and Valerie Miller sharing their experiences that brought people from outside the church community. One of the functions of our church community is that it can serve as a place where people come to explore ideas beyond our mortal existence in a setting that is truly open to ideas, without a set creed.

Our next meeting will be on **Wed. April 17th at 6:30pm**, most likely to be held at Lee Funston's home in Strafford to continue our conversation. For any questions or more details, please contact our Board Members - John Freitag, moderator, Marissa Mazzucco, Suzanna Liepmann or a Trustee - Andrew Lane, Katy Botsford or Lee Funston, or Rev. Telos. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to be involved in the work and business of our congregation!

* * *

Northern New England Spring Assembly and Annual Meeting ***NURTURING CONNECTIONS - THE POWER OF WE***

We invite you to join UUs from around the Northern New England District for powerful music, inspiring worship and a program led by UUA staff that will challenge you to think about how our collective talents can be used more effectively within our congregations and in outreach to and collaboration with the wider community.

We are truly stronger together. People of all ages are welcome to attend. Adults and youth are welcome to participate in the program. Childcare for children will be provided.

Fri, Apr 5, 2019, 7:00 pm – Sat, Apr 6, 2019, 4:00 pm

UU Church of Concord, 274 Pleasant St., Concord, NH 03301

Registration Deadline: Monday, April 1st. For more information and to register, go to www.uua.org/new-england/districts/northern-new-england-district