



Universalist Society of Strafford

Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association

June 2018 Newsletter

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

Worship Services held at the Church!

Sunday, June 3rd at 10am *Never Give Up - Following Our Vision*

led by Rev. Telos Whitfield. *"No matter what is happening, no matter what is going on around you, never give up."* Wisdom from Tenzin Gyatso, XIV, Dalai Lama that we can take to heart. There is much to be discouraged and overwhelmed by, so nurturing our courage, hope, and good humor together is vital! We are on this journey together...

Our Annual Meeting and Potluck at 11:30am. We will hold our annual meeting and share in a potluck lunch with reports from the past year, decisions to be made and ideas to share. We hope you can stay for the conversations. Everyone is welcome!

Sunday, June 17th at 10am *Loss and Wonder in the Fuegian Archipelago*

In this talk, Laura Ogden will use examples from her research in Tierra del Fuego, Chile to explore themes of loss and wonder for Indigenous communities transformed by ongoing processes of colonialism and environmental change in the southernmost village in the world.

Message from our Minister

"I went to school to learn how to help people get better. Instead it is often the very people I have spent my career trying to help who remind me how to care for myself. I keep a catalog of them in my head, and I try to use this list as a road map, an inspiration, and a reminder of what human resilience can achieve."

[words of Joel Schmidt, from This I Believe II.]

There are plenty of days and moments when we can feel like we are having to face a crisis or decision alone; when we believe that it is up to us as individuals to find the solution or next step forward. At times, we might feel like we don't want to burden others with our struggles, or that they have enough to deal with already. But we need to reach out, to ask for support, to recognize that it is through connecting with another person, that we can become stronger and more resilient. It is in taking that courageous step of sharing our own story and opening the doorway to conversation, that the idea of giving up can fade away and be replaced with hope. There is a solution; there is a step I can take; there are others who have faced a similar challenge and here is how they handled it. Being part of a small community has its benefits and challenges. We are known to each other perhaps even when we might want to just disappear and be one of a large crowd. Our small circle is intimate and caring. *We are* involved in each others lives. We need to be. And it is up to us to care for our building, make decisions, and find creative solutions, together. Never giving up means recognizing that caring and community are stronger forces than fear and isolation. What are we asked to do in the face of seemingly insurmountable problems we are facing as individuals and as a society? Search and claim what reassures us, gives us hope and brings us alive!

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

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2016-2017

Church Officers

Moderator – John Freitag
Assistant Moderator –
Marissa Mazzucco
Treasurer –
Suzanna Liepmann
Secretary – open
Trustees – Dick Josler,
Katy Botsford,
and Andrew Lane

We are invited to become more deeply involved, to move towards each other, to find out who is sitting beside us and what they're afraid of, what they love? I receive many e-mail messages each day from a host of organizations supporting social change, from gun control to early childhood education to immigrant justice. I yearn to do more, and would love to be able to attend rallies and be part of that larger movement, but then I remind myself that yes, I am serving a small community that has a vision to nurture, and good work to do together. There are many other small UU congregations that most likely have similar fears and hopes. Can we find ways to come together and support each other? Again, it will take courage even to reach across the aisle toward people we don't know and envision work we might accomplish and lives we might change. Every one of us has faced a time when we felt alone. We have had to develop our resilience in order to recover, make changes, reclaim our own life and feel a part of something larger. Eric Grietens offers: "We all need resilience to live a fulfilling life. With resilience, you'll be more prepared to take on challenges, to develop your talents, skills, and abilities so that you can live with more purpose and more joy." These qualities are needed for us as individuals and as a congregation. Let us feel the care and possibility within our circle and come together to nurture and live into our vision for what and who our community can be.

Blessings, Rev. Telos

Holy Days, Days to Remember
June 2nd All Saints - Orthodox Christian
June 9th St. Columba of Iona - Celtic Christian
June 11th Laylat al Kadr - Islam*
June 15th - June 17th Eid El Fitr - Ramadan Ends*
June 17th Father's Day
Waqf al Arafa - Hajj Day - Islam*
June 21st First Nations Day [Canadian Native peoples]
June 21st Litha - Yule, Summer Solstice - Wicca/Pagan*

From the Dedication Ceremony for our accessible ramp: We are a small, loving congregation; our future and past are with us; we are hopeful and resilient; we are leading by example. To be more caring and compassionate; to share our lives and loves; to communicate with all members of the community when someone needs assistance; to feel gratitude for the earth; to know each other and welcome new ones into our circle; to have more people in the congregation and more kids at church! More chances for deeper connection with peers; more laughter and inspiration. To have inner peace.... May our ramp be an invitation welcoming everyone to join us!

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Learning More, Joining Our Community... If you have been joining us for worship and discussions, and are exploring ways to deepen your commitment to our congregation, we would welcome you! Becoming a member of the Universalist Society of Strafford offers a path that allows you to participate and vote on decisions that impact our community, to play a deeper role in our work and future. (you would also receive a subscription the UU World Magazine and other benefits!) If membership in our congregation is something you are contemplating, please contact Rev. Telos to learn more. We are glad you are part of our circle!

Universalist Society of Stafford
May Board Meeting
May 2nd, 2018 at John Freitag's house

Members Present: John, Andrew, Dick J, Telos, Marissa, Suzanna
John Presiding, Andrew recording

Meeting started at 7:36

Agenda:

1. Call to order - time for brief reflection of how we are doing
2. Minutes of last business meeting (April) --- accepted as read
3. Treasurer's Report: Approved as shared
 - a. Proposing a level funded budget
 - b. Reduce the revenue expectation
 - c. Repairs and maintenance for window sills
 - d. Will not doing painting this coming year
 - i. Window repair plans - grant and expenses; article in Strafford News?
4. Ministers Report
 - a. Highlights:
 - i. Attended UU minister's meeting; workshops and conversation among ministers of small congregations - supporting each other and strengthening our work.
 - ii. Guest speakers for 3rd Sundays - promote their writing; work in the community
 - iii. 3rd Sunday worship update - Dick Whitfield in May; Laura Ogden in June; John Freitag in July; UU Community worship in Barnard on 4th Sunday in August.
 - iv. Dick Holbrook is settled in at his new home in Hanover.
 - v. Summer Fundraising - July 7th pretzels and whoopee pies; silent/live auction or yard sale? Summer movie night at end of August?
5. Old Business
 - a. Wayside pulpit - repair or replacement options
 - i. Suzanna and Tara to attend VT Quebec Univ. Convention [Suzanna shared that we received a grant for around \$800 to support wayside pulpit/ outreach.]
 - b. Received a \$6,000 grant from generous donor in Upper Valley for window restoration
 - i. Motion to approve repairing two smaller windows
 - c. Summer repair work - shed sill, board replacement, and painting
 - d. Outreach/Fellowship Ideas
 - i. Sharing of poems and writings from UU hymnal to e-mail list has been going well; thanks John for offering this daily sharing!
 - ii. Telos to continue posting welcoming announcements about upcoming services to the lists
6. New business
 - a. May Newsletter served as warning to members for Annual Meeting
 - i. Maintaining Church lawns
 - b. Annual meeting in June
 - i. Proposed slate of officers
 1. Moderator: John Freitag
 2. Assistant Moderator: Marissa Mazzucco
 3. Secretary: open
 4. Treasurer: Suzanna Liepmann
 5. Trustee: open - Thank you to Dick Josler for serving!

Adjourned: 8:35 pm