

Awakening the Heart, Living the Love: A Summer of Universal Love

At the Washington Unitarian Universalist Church

Summer, 2013 E-News ~ August 6th Edition

Route 110, Washington, Vermont www.washingtonvtuu.org

Worship Service Sundays at 10 AM, followed by a potluck lunch.

All welcome. Childcare provided.

Adult Religious Exploration Group following the potluck on most Sundays.

Films, Singalongs, Adult Religious Education, Potlucks, Young Adult Group throughout the week.

PLEASE REFRAIN FROM WEARING SCENTS, HAIRSPRAY, PERFUMES, ETC. Thanks!

Dear Friends and Members of the Washington UU Church,

Last evening, I enjoyed meeting with the Church Board as we gathered to look at the big picture and keep the boat on course. We're fortunate to have such a dedicated group of lay leaders who contribute their talents, their support and their time to this collective endeavor of our beloved summer church community. Indeed they organized a **Painting Party this Friday from 10 to 2 to finish touching up the newly repaired ramp.** I'm sorry I'll miss the fun as I'll be officiating a memorial service in Burlington. You're certainly welcome to join the crew if You feel inclined and are available. If You have questions, please contact Board President, Sue Stukey at 223-4289 or satsukekey@aol.com or Board member, George Plumb at 883-2313 or plumb.george@gmail.com.

There's a lot happening at the church in addition to Sunday activities. We'll be starting our **Book Discussions tonight with a potluck at 6 and discussion to follow. The first book we'll explore is "Proof of Heaven" by Eben Alexander.** We'll have our **final Singalong on Next Monday, August 12.** And Laelia Tawnamaia's ordination is less than two weeks away! I hope You'll join us for some or all of these happy activities and occasions. The details on all of these upcoming events are below.

The Board is pleased at the vitality and growth that the Washington Congregation is experiencing. Our challenge this summer is learning to Love, becoming better people by embodying compassion in all that we do. It's a tall order and yet a necessary as we negotiate our way through these tumultuous times in which we live. And Learning to Love is ultimately a worthwhile and revitalizing endeavor. We're using loosely as a guide and prompt, Karen Armstrong's book "Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life." Living with compassion isn't a theory or a theological argument. We learn to live Love by gradually learning to shift our attention in loving ways.

For example, some of us are finding it useful to wear the bracelets from AComplaintFreeWorld.org. The idea is simple. One wears the bracelet and then when You catch Yourself complaining, You move the bracelet to the other wrist. In doing so, it helps You become more aware of what You're saying and think and opens the opportunity to be more compassionate. This matters because, when we're complaining, we're judging and we're not approaching the situation with an open or loving heart. Trying not to complain doesn't mean that we should deny things or situations that we don't like. It's an invitation to approach even difficult situations with Love. I handed out the bracelets on the first day this summer and some of us have been wearing them. You're welcome to pick one up from the basket at the back of the church if You want to give it a try. It's a hoot!. In the few months since I heard about it, I've realized that the bracelet doesn't have to be fancy to be a useful tool. Any old rubber band will do. And I also realize that complaining might not be the issue that would be beneficial for You personally to focus on (if You do want to take the challenge). So You're invited to participate, pick up one of the bracelets at the church (or any rubber band or any bracelet) and use it as a tool to help You notice what You're doing with your attention. Is it positive or negative, loving or not? Be gentle with Yourself as You notice. This simple practice may bring some surprises. Check out the testimonials and stories on the website, AComplaintFreeWorld.org. It is humbling and challenging to let ourselves be stretched as we learn to live more compassionately. One of the things that can truly help us in this challenge is having friends on the path. It's a gift to know other folks with whom we can authentically share without coercion or judgment and with whom we can learn as we traverse this new territory.

We'll be exploring this in more depth in this Sunday's worship service. Blessings on your journey. See You at church.

With love,

M'ellen

Rev. M'ellen Kennedy

Upcoming Worship Services 10 AM

August 11 "Friends on the Path" with Rev. M'ellen Kennedy. We'll explore together the surprising potency of friendship as we travel the spiritual path. With Helen Wilson, accompanist.

August 18 Ordination of Laelia Tawnamaia. 10 AM to 11:30 AM We're delighted to be ordaining Laelia on this grand day! A letter from Laelia and details on the event are in the Newsletter (copies are on the table at the back of the sanctuary). We hope You'll join us! Anna Weisenfeld, from the St. Johnsbury congregation, will be serving as our accompanist. If You'd like to help out, contact M'ellen, Laelia or Sue Stukey or add your name to the sign-up sheet at the back of the church. If You'd like to sing in the choir, speak with Steve Finner (rehearsal on Saturday, August 17 in St. Johnsbury).

August 25 "Who Are We Becoming? Learning to Live Love" Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy. With Helen Wilson, accompanist.

September 1, Labor Day Worship Service followed by Picnic at the church. Rev. M'ellen Kennedy leading the worship service.

Dear Friends,

It's been a wonderful summer at Washington UU and it's hard to believe it's already half over! The church is bustling with members and friends, old and new. Our beautiful sanctuary is filled with music, words of challenge and compassion, lots of discussions and good food! It's a good time to remind ourselves that it is our generous financial support that makes it all possible. If you have completed your pledge for the summer, thank you! If you haven't pledged, but already give as generously as you possibly can, thank you! If you can give our finances an extra boost right now, thank you as well!! Our financial picture is definitely improving, but...we still have a ways to go. Your contributions are essential to the continued life of this small church, and to our lives within it. With blessings, hope and gratitude, I'll also mention that a member of our congregation was featured in the on-line version of the UU World Magazine. Seth Frisbee, member of both that Barre Universalist and Washington UU has dedicated his life to saving millions of other lives. This article about him just came out in the uuworld (on-line) and is well worth reading. Glad to have you with us, Seth.

http://www.uuworld.org/news/articles/289495.shtml?utm_source=n

In community,

Sue Stukey, President, Washington UU

Summer Inspirational Reading:

Are You looking for some inspirational reading for the summer?

You're in luck! Check out the two shelves of free books at the back of the sanctuary.

New books arriving regularly. We're also reading and discussing some books together.

Painting Party This Friday. August 9, 10 to 2

We'll gather to finish touching up the newly repaired ramp. You're welcome to join the crew if You feel inclined and are available. If You have questions, please contact Board President, Sue Stukey at 223-4289, [sasukekey@aol.com](mailto:sasukey@aol.com) or Board member, George Plumb: 883-2313, plumb.george@gmail.com.

Rise Up Singing! Potluck and Sing-Along--Monday, August 12

Gather starting at 5:30, Potluck at 6, Sing-Along starting at 7. Come lift your voice in song! We will gather together to sing songs from the Rise Up Singing songbook. Bring your Rise Up Singing songbook if you have one, or there will be some extras to share. Erika Mitchell and friends will lead the singing.

SUMMER BOOK DISCUSSIONS

We're hosting some book discussions this summer on titles that some of us have been reading and are eager to talk with others about including the following titles.

Tuesday, August 6, Book Discussion of "Proof of Heaven: A Neurosurgeon's Journey into the Afterlife" by Eben Alexander Potluck at 6, Discussion to follow starting at

"When a neurosurgeon found himself in a coma, he experienced things he never thought possible—a journey to the afterlife." A true story and NY Times bestseller.

Monday, August 26, "Caleb's Crossing" A novel by Geraldine Brooks. "Set in the 17th century on Martha's Vineyard, a new novel from Geraldine Brooks tells the tale of a Puritan family — and one daughter's relationship with the son of a Wampanoag chieftain who would become the first Native American to graduate from Harvard." (review by Alan Cheuse)

Dates to be Announced for "Salt, Sugar, Fat: How the Food Giants Hooked Us" by Michael Moss

Date to be Announced for "Now Is the Time to Open Your Heart" A novel by Alice Walker The Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Color Purple*, *Possessing the Secret of Joy*, and *The Temple of My Familiar* now gives us a beautiful new novel that is at once a deeply moving personal story and a powerful spiritual journey. In *Now Is the Time to Open Your Heart*, Alice Walker has created a work that ranks among her best achievements: the story of a woman's spiritual adventure that becomes a passage through time, a quest for self, and a collision with love."

Potluck Poetry Night , Thursday, August 29 7:30 pm

The Washington Universalist Church and Calef Memorial Library invite you to a poetry reading and discussion as part of Vermont Reads. The book this year is *Poetry 180*, a selection of modern poems collected to beckon even nonreaders back to poetry with short, accessible poems that delight, inspire, and challenge expectations. Copies of the book are available free at the library and church - pick one up ahead of time, then join us Thursday, August 29 to share a dish, some poems, and your thoughts. All are welcome, so come even if you haven't read the book and hate poetry! These poems might just change your mind. Facilitated by Sarah Costa, Wash. Calef Library staff member & member of the UU Church.

The honor and joy of your presence is invited for

the ordination of 'Laelia' Tawnamaia, M.Div., currently ministering in community

Being co-ordained by the by the Universalist Church of Washington, VT

and the Universalist Unitarian Congregation of St. Johnsbury

at 10:00 AM, on Sunday, August 18, 2013 at the Universalist Church of Washington, VT

(sponsor of the Peace and Unity Bridge project: <http://www.peaceandunitybridge.org/>)
in our beautiful, historic, & lovingly preserved building (<http://www.washingtonvtuu.org/>).

Please be free of products with scents & chemical smells.

Service will likely run around 90 minutes. Outdoor potluck reception to follow.

If you wish to sing in the choir, please contact Steve Finner.

If you wish to help organize reception food, please contact M'ellen or Laelia.

Parking is on street, at Town Hall and the Washington Village School.

Soul & Cinema Documentary Series - Several Tuesday Evenings this summer

Start gathering at 5, Potluck at 5:30 Film starts at 6:30

August 20 "Mystic Iran: The Unseen World" This is a beautiful and intriguing film that is sure to make You think. The first known written declaration of freedom of faith was discovered on a stone scroll dating back to the time of Cyrus the Great, King of ancient Babylon. Persian filmmaker Aryana Farshad recently journeyed through Iran, which borders the ancient lands of Cyrus the Great, to film the great

variety of ancient religious rituals still practiced deep within her native country. Over a period of nine months, Farshad filmed spiritual rites hidden for centuries from the outside world and in 2002 she completed the documentary *Mystical Iran: The Unseen World*. Farshad's camera crew traveled into women's chambers in the great mosques, captured a spontaneous fire ritual in a cave occupied by followers of Zarathustra, and filmed dervishes in the Kurdistan mountains performing sacred dances to pulsating drumbeats. From the narrow alleyways of Qom to the stunning interior of the great mosque, *Mystic Iran: The Unseen World* takes the viewer on a breathtakingly beautiful spiritual journey. A discussion will follow led by Rev. M'ellen Kennedy.

Have You found a spiritual home here? Interested in Joining in the Church?

For more info speak with Rev. M'ellen Kennedy or president, Sue Stukey. We'll have an opportunity to join in a few weeks.

Universalist University: Our New Year Round Program

At the end of the summer, those who wish are invited to join our "Universalist University." We'll meet once a month – in person and/or electronically -- to continue our focus together on awakening our heart, learning to live love, and becoming more compassionate people. For a guide, we'll draw on the book "Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life" by Karen Armstrong. The year round program will be led by Revs. M'ellen Kennedy and Laelia Tawnamaia. If You're interested in participating speak with M'ellen, Laelia, or president, Sue Stukey, or add your name to the Sign Up Sheet at the back of the church. Before the end of the summer, we'll have an in person meeting of those who want to participate.

Newsletter& Church Mailing List

If You'd like to receive our Weekly Eblast with updates about church events or to be on our US mail mailing list, please add your name to the clipboard at the back of the church or email Sue Stukey at sastukey@aol.com. Copies of the latest Newsletter are at the back of the sanctuary.

Check out our updated web site! www.washingtonvtuu.org

You're invited to contribute photos, testimonials, history and other materials.

Thanks to Charles Ferry and Seth Frisbie for their photos recently added to the site.

Collaboration with the Washington Baptist Church?

Rev. M'ellen and Rev. Ross from the Baptist Church across the street have become friends and are exploring ways that our congregations can get to know each other, have fun, sing and serve the Washington community together. Stay tuned!

LOCAL TALENT NIGHT CONCERT?

Anyone interested in helping plan a local talent night with area artist? Sarah Costa is working on it. Please talk with Rev. M'ellen.

OUR CHILDREN, CLIMATE, FAITH – Strafford Symposium

This event, held in the Strafford Town House on Aug. 16 & 17, will be "an inclusive symposium on moral, ethical, spiritual, and religious consciousness addressing climate disruption, social justice, and the rightful future of all children." The churches of Strafford are co-hosting the symposium. A diverse roster of 16 speakers, including Bill McKibben, will participate. To find out more and to register, go to: <http://faithclimateconference.org>.

Dying Green

Green Burial, what is it? Is it new or old? Why do environmentalists talk about it so much? If you would like to learn more, you are invited to attend a short video presentation, *Dying Green*, at the Montpelier Senior Activity Center, 58 Barre Street, Montpelier on Fri., Aug. 23rd, 4:30-6:30 PM. Light refreshments. Free & open to the public. For more info: Mary Alice Bisbee--802 223-8140, mbisbee@myfairpoint.net