

**September 26, 2015 Message from the
Washington Unitarian Universalist
Church**

Route 110, Washington, Vermont

www.washingtonvtuu.org

**Theme for the Year:
Passion for the Impossible!
Cultivating the Art of Optimism:
A Universalist Response to
Cultural Shifts and Climate Change**

*“ The biggest challenge we face is shifting human consciousness,
not saving the planet. The planet doesn't need saving. We do”
Xiuhtezcatl Martinez*

Equinox Gathering

**Sunday, September 27
2 PM Equinox Worship
Led by Rev. M'ellen**

As the sun arrives at its half way point between summer and winter, let's pause to notice, to reconnect with Nature and with each other. We'll have a time for meditation and reflection. Please bring your “Passion everyday” or “Care every day” journal if You have one, or your own journal. If You don't have one, You can pick one up there.

LOCATION:

Since it will be chilly in Washington, we'll meet at the home of Sue and Art Stukey,
120 College Street, Montpelier.
Kid friendly event (of course).

2:45 ish snacks and social time

3:30 ish Friends on the Path Small Group
will be offered by Rev. M'ellen Kennedy

**Rev. M'ellen Will Attend
Parliament of World Religions and
Be Guest in the Pulpit in Stowe,
4:30 PM, Sunday 10/25**

Sunday, October 25, 4:30PM

“Prayers from the Parliament: The Time Is Now for Interfaith Harmony”

The Parliament of the World's Religions was created in 1893 “to cultivate harmony among the world's religious and spiritual communities and foster their engagement with the world and its guiding institutions in order to achieve a just, peaceful and sustainable world.” The Parliament, which meets only every three to five years, will convene October 15-19 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Rev. M'ellen Kennedy is attending as part of a Sufi delegation. In this worship service, Rev. M'ellen will share stories, reflections and prayers from the Parliament. To learn more about the Parliament visit <http://www.parliamentofreligions.org//mission>
Location: UU Fellowship of Stowe, at St. John in the Mountains Chapel, 1994 Mountain Rd, Stowe, VT. Anyone want to carpool?

Dear Friends and Members of the Washington Congregation,

In the news today we're hearing of several stories of contentiousness involving religion. The flap over a presidential candidates opposing a Muslim sitting in the White House (when our country is founded on religious freedom), the clerk in Kentucky who will not file marriage licenses for gay couples, internationally the Syrian refugees crisis, and the rise of ISIS.

At the same time, a growing body of religious leaders are standing against interreligious fighting and contentiousness, and are standing in solidarity with each other, with justice, with respect for each other and the Earth. The harmonizing, peace-giving, restorative face of religion is a powerful and hopeful force in the world today. The Pope's declaration on the environment (<http://>

w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_encyclica-laudato-si.html) and on economic justice are examples. Interfaith groups of Christians, Jews and Muslims have launched a national campaign, “We Refuse to Be Enemies.” And internationally, the Parliament of World Religions is meeting this month in Salt Lake City “to cultivate harmony among the world's religious and spiritual communities and foster their engagement with the world and its guiding institutions in order to achieve a just, peaceful and sustainable world.”

I feel very fortunate because I will be attending the Parliament as part of a Sufi delegation. I first heard about the Parliament in Seminary when taking history classes. You see, the first Parliament took place in 1893 in Chicago, less than a mile from the UU seminary I attended. From its inception, the Parliament has been a beacon of hope in our world. If You want to learn more, please visit <http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/mission>

After the inaugural event in 1893, the Parliament did not convene for 100 years. It was started again in Chicago in 1993. Since then it is held every few years at various locations around the globe, recently in Australia and also Spain. So this year's gathering in Salt Lake City, though far away in some ways is relatively close by on a global scale. Some of this year's presenters in Salt Lake City will be the Indigenous Grandmothers, the Dalai Lama, Jane Goodall, Dr. Tariq Ramadan, Arun Ghandi, Krista Tippett, Eboo Patel, Oscar Arias Sanchez, Mairead Maguire, Dr. John L. Esposito, Marianne Williamson, and Dr. Rangimarie Turuki Arikirangi Rose Pere. I am grateful that I will have the opportunity to hear their wisdom, and be in their collective presences along with the other 10,000 or so attendees.

You are welcome to attend the worship at the UU Fellowship in Stowe on October 25, 4:30 PM, where I'll share stories and insights from the Parliament. In this year, as we explore how to cultivate optimism and be passionate about the impossible, I think that the hopeful example of interfaith cooperation, synergy and harmony are especially appropriate. I believe in the power of prayer because I have experienced it in my life. My greatest hope for the Parliament is that the collective prayers of all of these sincere hearts attuned to Love will create a ripple of Love which will encircle the planet and continue to help all of us awaken more to our greatest good. I look forward to sharing with You what I experience in Salt Lake City. See You at the Equinox, I hope.

With Love,

Rev. M'ellen

Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy, Consulting Minister,

Washington Unitarian Universalist Church, Washington, VT

Washington UU Congregation Quarterly Gatherings:

We'll have quarterly reunions to keep ourselves connected. Here are the upcoming events:

Fall Equinox Gathering – September 27 (see above)

Stories Are Us: Small Group Ministry Workshop – October 3 (see below)

“Prayers from the Parliament” with Rev. M'ellen in Stowe, VT (see above)

Winter Solstice Gathering -- around December 21

Spring Equinox Gathering - -around March 20th

Stories Are Us: Small Group Ministry Workshop

Facilitated by Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy

Saturday, October 3rd, 9:30 to 12:30

Montpelier Unitarian Church, 130 Main St., Montpelier, VT

Coffee and refreshments starting at 9:00

We humans are story tellers. And the stories we recount have the power to heal and transform us. A pressing need in our world is for expansive spaces where we can make friends and make meaning; for supportive circles where we can tell old stories and create new ones about ourselves, our lives, our hopes and our dreams. Small Group Ministry, Covenant Groups or Friends on the Path are such circles. This workshop is a wonderful opportunity to (re)experience and learn about how we create and facilitate these groups to optimize their inspirational and transformative qualities. It's a perfect refresher for current facilitators and a fine exposure for potential facilitators and other interested folks. We'll experience actual small groups together in the course of the morning. Fee: \$25. Register using the form below. Questions? Please contact Rev. M'ellen Kennedy at mellenken@aol.com or 802-453-5469.

Leader: Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy is passionate about the power of Small Groups to feed our souls and help heal our ills. Her doctoral dissertation at the University of Illinois was on worldview transformation in small groups. She has been involved with lay led small groups for over 30 years as a facilitator, trainer, organizer, researcher and writer. Participants come away from these workshops with fresh perspectives on their own lives and on the power of small groups. Facilitators find renewed enthusiasm about their sacred work. Rev. Kennedy is Unitarian Universalist and a Sufi Minister. She is co-founder of the UU Small Group Ministry Network and serves on the board of the Sufi Healing Order of the Sufi Order International. She is fortunate to be consulting minister to the Washington and Springfield Unitarian Universalist Churches.

Registration: Please fill out this part of the form and mail to Rev. M'ellen Kennedy, 1655 Lincoln Gap Road, Lincoln, VT 05443, with an enclosed check for \$25 made to Rev. M'ellen Kennedy. Thanks. Looking forward to seeing You there.

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Affiliation (church or organization):

Past experience with facilitation and/or small groups?

Thanks to All Who Made Our Summer Together Meaningful and Fun.

Washington UU Church Staff & Board

Minister: Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy
President: Sue Stukey
Clerk: Art Stukey
Treasurer: Robert Youngberg
Board Member-at-Large: George Plumb
Board Member-at-Large: Roberta Carrier

NEWS FROM AROUND THE AREA

George Plums' Article Published on Vtdigger.org

Our very own, Board Member-at-Large, George Plumb, has published an article in the relatively new on-line Vermont newspaper. George encourages us to relate to our land in a more environmentally sound way. Here's the link. Definitely worth reading.

GEORGE PLUMB: THE BENEFITS OF REDUCED LAWN SIZE

http://vtdigger.org/2015/09/17/george-plumb-the-benefits-of-reduced-lawn-size/?utm_source=VTDigger+Subscribers+and+Donors&utm_campaign=5e265fbf09-Weekly+Update&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_dc3c5486db-5e265fbf09-405575377

VT New Poet Laureate, Chard DiNiord: A Cry in the Wilderness

Chard DiNiord of Putney will be installed as Vermont Poet Laureate on November 2nd, 2015 in the State House. He said now, more than ever, society needs poetry. From vtdigger.org 9/13/15

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“We need poetry, he said, to hack away at the rush and din of modern life; to take the time to turn off the screen and work at something; to take a plunge into parts unknown with the very real expectation that the meaning of a poem might be just beyond reach.

‘Poetry is always a kind of cry in the wilderness, and the wilderness now is artificial. It is the wilderness of the Internet and texting,’ he said. “It is an informational wilderness that we have to still hear the poetry the poetry in. We are becoming slaves to this new obsession to technology, engineering and math in education. We need humanities and the arts. If we don’t have people reading poetry and writing poetry, then what meaning will they find in all that information.”

Here is one of his poems.

To Hear and Hear

The hermit thrush is set for six
to sing her song, as if it were
the end of the world and she was stirred
by dusk to sing the same sweet song
again and again in the understory,
as if to say, it's neither words
nor meaning that matter in the end
but the quality of sound, as if we
were deafened by the sun and needed
her song as a key to unlock our ears,
to hear and hear and understand,
to see and see, knowing that this
one day is the end for now,
which it is, it is, she claims, with a song
just loud enough to pierce the woods
until the night descends like a thousand

Day of Mindfulness Theme: THE PRACTICE OF PEACE IN DAILY LIFE A Day of Mindfulness Practice, Meditation and Community

A day long silent retreat on Mindfulness Practice, Meditation and Community is offered on Saturday, 17 October starting at 9:00 AM in Plainfield at the Friend's Meeting House. Suggested donation is \$20. Please bring a vegetarian potluck meal to share. More information for this retreat follows. Please feel free to contact Seth Frisbie at sfrisbie@norwich.edu or 456-7054 if you have any questions. Otherwise, see you there.

This day is a time for both inner reflection and spiritual nourishment, as well as a time of learning and togetherness held in the spirit of presence and joy. The practice of mindfulness is carried through each activity. We will weave together practices of sitting and walking meditation, Dharma teachings and discussion, singing, and a potluck vegetarian meal.

Michael Ciborski is a lineage holding Dharma teacher in the Buddhist tradition of [Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh](#). He lived as a monk for seven years in [Plum Village](#), France, and has worked intimately with Thich Nhat Hanh and the monastic community to organize, support and offer meditation retreats around the world. A skilled musician, he informally studied voice training and chanting of several European and Asian traditions and served for several years as an English language chant master in the monastery. Michael also studies and practices in the tradition of [Anthroposophy](#), begun by Rudolf Steiner. He finds great joy weaving together these two wonderful paths guided by two marvelous and awakened human beings.

After leaving the monastery in 2003, Michael returned to the US and along with his wife Fern Dorresteyn, has helped to establish an intentional [spiritual community and mindfulness center in Southern New Hampshire known as MorningSun](#).

Michael has been described as, "A very human and delightful teacher of profound presence", and as "An articulate teacher in both word and action".

New Rise Up Singing Songbook Makes Debut!

Editors Celebrate with Sing-Along in Middlebury

On Sunday afternoon, **Oct. 11**, the folks who compiled the **Rise Up Singing** songbook (full of wonderful folk, traditional, and popular songs from over the years) and have now come out with a new book called **Rise Again** will be in Middlebury to celebrate the new book and give a sing-along concert at the Methodist Church; proceeds will benefit the work of the Lake Champlain Committee. Anyone from the Montpelier area who wants to carpool?

REGISTER and COME to VTIPL CONFERENCE!

You can now register for VTIPL's 2015 conference, "Leading Action on Climate: Tools for Faith Communities." To either register online or print and fill out the registration form and mail it in, click here: <http://www.vtipl.org/node/299>

Tim DeChristopher, a climate activist who's attending Harvard Divinity School, is the Keynote speaker. The conference is on Saturday., Oct. 17, 9:30 - 3:30 at Christ Episcopal Church in Montpelier. In addition to the keynote, there will be four workshops, catered lunch, "bookstore", sponsors' exhibits, and music. There's more information on the flier (link below) – help us spread the word! http://www.vtipl.org/sites/default/files/Leading%20Action%20on%20Climate_0.pdf

POPE FRANCIS'S SEPTEMBER TRIP TO THE U.S.

The Pope will be in this country for six days at the end of this month. He will be in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 24 and will address a joint session of Congress before traveling on to NYC and Philadelphia. It's the Pope's first visit to this country. A coalition has put together a toolkit, "In This Together: Welcome Pope Francis Toolkit," with many activities related to the Pope's visit. Here's the link: www.faithinpubliclife.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/InThisTogetherToolkit.pdf

CLIMATE REVIVAL in MIDDLEBURY – October 3

The Addison County Interfaith Climate Action Network is having a "Climate Revival" on Saturday, Oct. 3, 12 - 3 pm; location: the Green and at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Middlebury. The Rev. Dr. Jim Antal, Conference Minister and President of Mass. Conference, United Church of Christ, is the keynote preacher.

The Rev. Daniel Cooperrider, pastor of the Congregational Church in Weybridge, says the event will have elements of a classic religious tent revival meeting, adapted to stir people to deepen their commitment to earth stewardship. It will include: music, singing, art, poetry, prayer, meditation, reflection, witness, testimony, and an alter (the future) call. Also, the Climate Revival will feature a sustainable foods potluck on the Town Green with activities for all ages. For more info, contact Rev. Cooperrider: pastor_veybridge@gmavt.net

THE POPE and the PLANET by Bill McKibben

In the August 13 issue of the "New York Review of Books," Bill McKibben writes about Pope Francis's wide-ranging critique of our times in his encyclical "Laudato Si'." www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2015/aug/13/pope-and-planet/

FINISH CARPENTER NEEDED ASAP

Howdy friends!! Does anyone know a finish carpenter who is available asap? Race against time has started and we need to finish our house (stairs, counters, floors, etc.). The house is located in Washington. If so, please call Glenn Mack at 802-883-2399.