

June 19, 2015

Cultivating the Art of Optimism: Responding Spiritually to Cultural Shifts and Climate Change Summer, 2015 At the Washington Unitarian Universalist Church

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

Sunday Morning Worship Services 10 AM

June 21 “How Much Love Can You Fit Into One Summer? Cultivating the Art of Optimism” with Rev. Dr. M’ellen Kennedy. How wonderful that our summer church begins on the Summer Solstice! As the season turns, let’s reflect on the larger picture of our dramatically turning and changing world: from racial, religious and socioeconomic disparities and tensions; to climate change; to technological innovations

and social media. The world swirls around us – so what grounds us? As the sun appears to stand still in the sky at Solstice, let us together find a place of stillness within. From this sacred groundedness, we can re-engage in the world with Love. Cultivating the spiritual tools necessary to thrive and to love at this point in human history, will be the theme for our summer. With accompanist, Joan Stepenske. We'll have a small group discussion after the potluck on the theme of the service.

June 28 “Dancing Across Difference: We Refuse To Be Enemies!” with Rev. M’ellen Kennedy

The demographics of the US are changing dramatically. We can respond in fear like the shooter in Charleston, SC. A myriad of other creative responses are arising in responses to our shifting demographics. We'll hear real-life stories of collaboration, hope and spunk. Some of the examples will be drawn from the work on countering Islamophobia which Rev. M’ellen does throughout the denomination and larger community ~ under the gracious auspices of this congregation. Join us in allowing your heart and mind be stretched in Love. With accompanist, Helen Wilson. We'll have a small group discussion after the potluck on the theme of the service.

July 5 “Mother of Us All: A New Look at Eve and the Serpent” with Rev. Richard Trudeau

A careful reading of the story shows that it is not about sin or the inferiority of women. It is, in fact, a very UU story, and Eve is the hero! Rev. Trudeau is author of “Universalism 1001” and was a very popular guest in the pulpit last summer. With accompanist Joan Stepenske. We'll have a small group discussion after the potluck on the theme of the service.

July 12 “Trauma, Resilience, Rebirth” with Rev. Dr. M’ellen Kennedy. “

If we live long enough, we will each experience traumas – if we haven't already. How we handle life's disappointments and challenges, makes all the difference. The natural reaction is to recoil in hurt and calcify into hate. Unresolved trauma is a deeply spiritual issue and the root of so much suffering. How can we --by grace? by mystery? -- find our way to healing, to affirming life and choosing Love? The film, “Rebirth”, which will be shown on Monday eve, July 13, will provide us a chance to delve deeper into the crucial human art of resolving trauma. Accompanist to be announced. We'll have a small group discussion after the potluck on the theme of the service.

July 19 “Many Singular Rooms” with Rev. Liz Benjamin.

As Unitarian Universalists, our free and responsible search for truth and meaning takes us in many directions. We come from different traditions and respond to different sources of our faith. While we are grateful for this religious pluralism, we can find it challenging to communicate with one another, to understand, and to work well together.

Rev. Liz has worked as a children's librarian, a kindergarten teacher, a Unitarian Universalist Minister of Religious Education, and a preschool music teacher. She moved to Adamant, Vermont a year ago and is happily immersed in the creative and cooperative Vermont culture. She even did pretty well in the Kellogg Hubbard Library spelling bee this winter. With accompanist Helen Wilson. We'll have a small group discussion after the potluck on the theme of the service.

July 26 Rev. Joan Javier Duval Topic to be announced.

Rev. Joan is the new called minister at the Montpelier Unitarian Church and we are delighted to have her as a guest in the pulpit. With accompanist, Helen Wilson and worship associate, Sue Stukey.

August 2 “Being Human: Being Humble” with Rev. Dr. M’ellen Kennedy .

With accompanist, Helen Wilson. We’ll have a small group discussion after the potluck on the theme of the service.

August 9 Rev. Deb Robinson Topic to be announced. Deb is a member of the Washington Unitarian Universalist Church and the Montpelier Unitarian Church. She is also an ordained Methodist minister. Wonderful that she will gift us with her spiritual insights this Sunday. Accompanist to be announced.

August 16 “Sakes Alive! Enamored with Animate Nature.” With Rev. Dr. M’ellen Kennedy

Guess what?! The Natural World is pulsing with life and not just an inanimate thing! Much of our modern environmental challenges are due to our disconnect from the natural world – and ourselves! Cultivating a sacred connection with Nature is an important spiritual art for modern living. Let’s explore practices encouraged by spiritual teachers and environmentalists such as biophilia and forest bathing (or restorative walking in the woods). If weather permits, perhaps we’ll do a short meditation outdoors. Indeed, it was under the bohi tree that the Buddha reached enlightenment. As this shift in our consciousness happens, we feel greater well-being and more alive! Accompanist to be announced. We’ll have a small group discussion after the potluck on the theme of the service.

August 23 “A Scientist’s Beliefs” Seth Frisbie Our guest speaker, Seth, is a member of the Washington UU Church and also a professor of chemistry. He will share the evolution of his own theology in the face of significant life experiences. He has worked on drinking water and public health in Bangladesh and other developing countries for the last 18 years. His team has helped improve the health of over 60,000,000 Bangladeshis and is helping to prevent hundreds of thousands of cancer deaths around the world. He will discuss his spiritual beliefs. Please read more at <http://www.uuworld.org/news/articles/289495.shtml>. Accompanist to be announced. We’ll have a small group discussion after the potluck on the theme of the service.

August 30 “Why Can We All Get Along?: The Art of Community” with Rev. M’ellen Kennedy

Across the globe, individuals are creating innovative answers to pressing problems: from food cooperatives to immigrant services to performance art. For any of these worthy endeavors to be successful, the participants need to learn how to get along! The art of living, walking and working well together is necessary for creating our new world harmony. In spiritual community we call this “covenanting.” How do we engage in the world from a place of artful community building? What have we learned this summer about the art of getting along? How much Love did we manage to fit into one summer? With accompanist, Helen Wilson

Info on our minister, guests in the pulpit, and accompanist:

Rev. Dr. M’ellen Kennedy serves as our half-time summer minister, preaching about half of the Sundays that we meet. She is a Unitarian Universalist minister and a Sufi minister. During the regular church year, she has the honor of serving our congregation in Springfield, Vt. She is co-founder of the UU Small Group Ministry network. She is also founder of Peace and Unity Bridge, a program dedicated to cultivating friendship and understanding among Muslims and non-Muslims, sponsored by this congregation.

Helen Wilson, one of our accompanists, lives in Vershire, Vermont part of the year. She is the Director of Music at UU Church of Brevard, Melbourne, FL, and a technical writer for a software firm.

Theme for the Summer: Cultivating the Art of Optimism: A Spiritual Response to Cultural Shifts and Climate Change: We live in interesting times! How do we respond individually and collectively to the opportunities and threats posed by climate change and cultural shifts? This summer, let's ground ourselves with love, hope, creativity, and courage!

Rise Up Singing! Potluck and Sing-Alongs

Mondays, July 27, and August 17

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. Each person will have a chance to choose a song or two, and the group will share the songs together. Bring your "Rise Up Singing" songbook if you have one, or there will be some extras to share. Erica Mitchell and friends will lead the singing.

Summer Films

"Rebirth" Monday, July 13, Potluck at 5:30 Film starts at 6:30, Discussion following the film.

REBIRTH is a riveting journey into living history, an act of personal witness to one of the most profound events in American history and the healing that has come in its wake. The result of a decade-long process by director Jim Whitaker, the inspirational story of REBIRTH follows the nearly ten-year transformation of five people whose lives were forever altered on September 11, 2001, and simultaneously tracks via unprecedented multi-camera time-lapse photography the minute-by-minute evolution of the space where the Twin Towers once rose. Both a singular cinematic and human experience, REBIRTH is deeply intimate and uplifting, providing a moving portrait of how trauma and grief metamorphose into hope and rebuilding as the human spirit transcends the unthinkable over time.

"Brujo" Saturday, August 1, 2015 Gather starting at 6:30, Film starts at 7, Reception to follow.

This film, presented by Glenn and Katharina Mack, Washington residents, is a dramatic feature film that revolves around the activity at a modern dance

workshop in beautiful rural Vermont. The story traces the arc of jealousy to its disastrous result and, at the same time, chronicles the creative intensity of artists coming together to collaborate on a project. Both of these dual narratives provide context for each other. *Brujeria* is the Spanish word for witchcraft. Both men and women can be witches, brujos and brujas, respectively.

OPPORTUNITIES TO PITCH IN

You can help make our dear Washington congregation function smoothly by pitching in. We need a few folks to arrive early on Sunday morning, greet folks, make coffee, etc... Please speak with Rev. M'ellen or Sue Stukey or sign up on the clip board at the back of the church. Thanks to all those who have already volunteered to get the church ready for the summer and to help out on Sunday mornings and for other activities.

Washington UU Church Staff & Board

Minister: Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy

President: Sue Stukey

Clerk: Art Stukey

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Board Member-at-Large: George Plumb

Board Member-at-Large: Roberta Carrier

From our nearby neighbors:

3rd Annual “Our Children, Climate, Faith” Symposium

Making and Being the Change We Need

***Faith-driven climate leadership from the boats, the banks,
and the grassroots***

**Saturday & Sunday, August 8 & 9, 2015,
at the Town House, Strafford, Vermont**

This year we bring together institutions and activists to build bridges and create positive changes: Jay O'Hara, Robert Jensen, Shelley Alpern, Tre Cates.

<http://faithclimateconference.org/>