

September 16, 2015 Message
from the
Washington Unitarian Universalist Church

Route 110, Washington, Vermont

www.washingtonvtuu.org

Theme for the Year:
A Passion for the (Im)Possible!
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”*
Xiuhtecatl 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: If it's nice weather, we'll meet at the church.

If it's inclement, we'll meet at the home of Sue and Art Stukey, 120 College Street, Montpelier. We'll decide on Saturday night if we need to move it from the church and send an email. Kid friendly event (of course).

2:45 ish snacks and social time

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

Dear Friends and Members of the Washington Congregation,

My heart feels full with gratitude that we have the opportunity to gather together in Washington in the summer and remind ourselves and each other of what really matters in life. The beauty of the building lifts us. The warmth of community enlivens us. Our communal worship strengthens us. We are so blessed.

I shared with You at the last worship service, a quote from Vermont's own Rev. William Sloane Coffin (formerly of Strafford):

*“Hope arouses as nothing else can arouse,
a passion for the possible.”*

I invited You in the coming year to explore what You are passionate about, what You really care about. I believe that each of us is here for a reason, each of us has a purpose, a piece of the bigger puzzle. As we each wake up to and devote ourselves to what we're really passionate about, the world is healed and enlivened by our sincere, inspired effort. As Jesus says in the Gospel of Thomas #70:

*“If You bring forth what is within you, what you have will save you.
If you do not have that within you, what you do not have will destroy You’*

So What about You? To what and to whom do You dedicate “your one wild and precious life?”

At the closing worship service, You were invited to take a blank journal as a tool for your spiritual reflection in the coming year. The blank book was embossed with either “Passion every day” or “Care every day.” If You didn't get one, don't worry. Some will be available at the Fall Equinox Gathering. I invite You to pause sometime in the next day or two and take a few minutes to write or draw about what You're really passionate about – and if You don't know yet, just draw or write about that not-knowing. And if putting pen to paper is not your way, then do whatever is –

meditate, think, ponder, go for a walk –whatever works for You to delve into these questions:.

What are You passionate about? What do You really care about?

How are You living this passion into your life now?

How do You feel called to live it?

How can You connect up more in your daily life with what You really care about?

Wishing You a time of fruitful pondering. I'll write again next month or so and give You another little nudge. And please bring your journal with You to the Equinox Gathering if You remember.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this Summer so fun, lovely and uplifting: the kitchen helpers, the flower bringers, the worship leaders, the sermon givers, the movie goers and showers, the song singers and leaders, the music makers, the bouncing bell ringers, the kid carers, the potluck preparers, the lawn loppers, the porch painters, the paint peelers, the bright Board members, the great greeters and each of us who brought our smiles, our tears and loving presence. See You next summer but hopefully sooner. 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)

Winter Solstice Gathering -- around December 21

Spring Equinox Gathering - -around March 20th

Stay tuned for details. See You soon, I hope.

With love and a passion for the “impossible”,

M'ellen

Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy, Consulting Minister,
Washington Unitarian Universalist Church, Washington, VT

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. Suggested 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 Our Musicians and Childcare Worker!

We were so gifted this summer by the presence of a number of talented musicians. Thanks to Helen Wilson, Joan Stepsenke, Lindsay Wade, Ron Cameron, Numa Haase, and did I miss anyone? If I did, a special thanks to You. Deep gratitude for how you lifted our hearts with your music!

Thanks so much for Susan Vanderhoof for her warm, loving presence with the children this summer – and to her kids who also helped out.

Washington UU Church Staff & Board

Minister: Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy
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NEWS FROM AROUND THE AREA

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 are want 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/