

The First Universalist Society of Hartland Universalist

APRIL 2014

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Sunday Services & Religious Education Classes 10 am in the Church

Sunday Services

April 6 Paul Sawyer Wholeness and Salvation—Are You Saved?

Introducing and exploring our April "Engaging the Spirit" theme of Wholeness and Salvation for our times and for a liberal faith. *The collection will benefit Turning Points Network*

April 13 Chuck Fenton, Michael Denmeade, and Friends Earth Day Celebration

The collection benefit TBA.

April 17 Paul Sawyer 7:00 pm—Maundy Thursday Communion Service

A 30-minute special evening service, honoring our liberal Christian roots, Holy Week, and the community spirit inspired by the ancient rite of communion. All are welcome. See further information concerning this service on page 5 of this newsletter.

April 20 Easter Sunday Paul Sawyer

Come celebrate Easter, the joy of new life, and the miracle of resurrection.

The collection will benefit The Hand to Heart Project.

April 27 Paul Sawyer Annual Intergenerational May Day Celebration

Come dance around the May Pole and celebrate this energetic Earth-centered ritual of Spring.

Bring your rakes and gloves and we'll celebrate the earth even more by cleaning up the church yard after the service!

The collection will benefit Hartland Rescue Squad

OFFERING RECIPIENTS APRIL

We rely on the planned, committed, pledge support of our members and friends to support the needs of our church. We dedicate our collections during Sunday morning worship to organizations doing good work in our local communities or in society as a whole. Checks for the collection can be made out to "FUSH" and we will consolidate donations to pass on to the organization.

For those wishing to make a pledge payment, or a donation specifically to support our congregation's budget, there is a box on the welcoming table at the back of the sanctuary.

Please contact Paul if you have nominations for organizations you feel would be good choices for our support.

April 6— Turning Points Net-

Based in Claremont, NH, Turning Points Network strives to end all forms of domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking. Founded in 1977, Turning Points Network serves Sullivan County and surrounding areas and offers emergency shelters, education, support services, advocacy programs for children and victims of abuse. More information is available at www.free-to-soar.org

April 13—TBA

April 20 — The Hand to Heart Project

The Hand to Heart Project, founded in Cornish, NH by massage therapist Steve Gordon, is a non-profit organization that provides free, in-home massage therapy and compassionate touch

continued on pg. 4

From Your Minister

Engaging the Spirit Wholeness and Salvation

If you're like most modern religious liberals, you probably don't spend much time thinking about salvation, at least not in the way that many of our more orthodox friends and neighbors of many faiths do. That wasn't the case for our Universalist ancestors. In fact, it would be pretty hard to overstate just how much of a role the idea of salvation played in their everyday lives, practices, and thought.

Surrounded by Calvinists who were convinced that every human soul was predetermined by God to be either saved or condemned (with many more of us destined for the latter path), the Universalists found in the words of the Bible a very different kind of faith.

The understanding that the Universalists found in the Gospels wasn't one of a distant angry being that so perpetually disappointed in humanity that God spent endless time devising elaborate systems of testing and torture for human souls. They saw God, and all that was holy, as boundless, and everywhere, and filled only with unconditional divine love.

That's not to say that they didn't think about where the idea of Hell, or of an angry God came from, or what it really meant for them to seek wholeness as people who often do not live as well or as truly as they wish. In 1803, when Hosea Ballou was serving as the minister of our Society, he wrote his famous book, A Treatise on Atonement, which was a systematic Biblical deconstruction of the Calvinist understanding of sin, redemption, and punishment. In it he offered a story to explain how his neighbors came to be so obsessed with punishment and Hell.

Imagine, he said, an astronomer looking through his telescope, up at the sun. And imagine a fly has landed on the lens at the end of the telescope. Seeing the fly from the eyepiece, it doesn't look to the astronomer like simply a small bug, instead it appears to him that a giant monster has taken over most of the sun.

Rather than seeing the sun as it truly is, bright and clear, the image of the monster would take over his thoughts. He'd stress and fret about the monster causing havoc on the sun, and he'd worry about what might happen to the sun, but he would have no way at all of being able to do anything about the situation. He'd quickly lose sight of any sense of reality, becoming fixed on nothing but the monster—which didn't exist, which never existed, but was nothing but a simple fly, enlarged by human error, and human fear.

Engaging the Spirit continued from pg. 2

This is where our ideas of Hell come from, Hosea Ballou said—instead of seeing the perfection of a limitless God, humanity's eyes had become clouded by our own shortcomings, our own fears, and by the obvious ways we fall short of perfection ourselves. In reality, he said, we don't need to live in fear about God's judgment. We certainly don't have to worry about "changing God's mind" about us and our worthiness, to achieve salvation. We have to wipe the fly off the lens—setting aside the fear, seeing God as full of love—and wake up to the sacred wholeness that surrounds us no matter what. Divine love is already present and assured, he said. It's human love in our own lives that we need to transform to live out the promise of wholeness that is the world as it should be.

In our own times there are still those from many different faith traditions who remain convinced that we should live in fear of an angry and judgmental God, and that we should adjust our behavior out of fear to appease that angry God. Whether or not you hold an image of holiness that you call "God" yourself, maybe you can reach out with the spirit of our Universalist ancestors, and feel the divine wholeness that surely surrounds us, in its own limitless and perfect form.

continued on pg,. 4

re: RE

Wow, the weeks are moving right along and we are into Spring already!

We had a busy March with five Sundays. The children were treated to Guest Author Jane Kelley, reading about important UU authors and literary founders, and making ice cream with Bruce and Leah for the Ham and Bean Supper. Many children took part in the community prom (helping as well as dancing up a storm), and some went to cheer at the Special Olympics with their families. Thank you to Coral, Heather, Katy, Leah and Bruce for sharing their time with our children in March.

We look forward to warm weather, signs of Spring, and very active RE programs in April. Back by popular demand, Jaxon will lead the children in a drum circle. Once again, the congregation will probably be able to hear the beats coming from the Yurt. We'll be getting outside for Green Up around the Four Corners area. I wonder if the children will find Easter eggs? At the end of the month we'll be dancing around the Maypole and lending hands to the all church clean-up.

Sara

DRE

April RE Calendar

6	9:30 am	Children's Choir Practice and Sing
	10:00	Spirit Play
13	10:00 am	Guest Artist: Jaxon Morgan, drumming
20	10:00 am	Faith in Action: Green Up
27	9:30 am	Children's Choir Practice
	10:00	Intergenerational Service: May Day



Engaging the Spirit continued from pg. 3

Maybe you can understand that, though we do live with our own limitations and imperfections, those are simple human problems, and not divine ones—that they are ours to hold, ours to transform, ours to heal.

Maybe you can feel the divine promise of the beloved community, and understand that though we are far from realizing that promise of wholeness in our midst, it's our love, shared in hope and in assurance, and not our fear, that will help us make our way, ever slowly, but ever tenaciously, along that path.

As our Universalist ancestors would proclaim loudly from the hills, our cosmic salvation is assured. So now we can get on the task of increasing the reality of ever more perfect love in this life, in this place, in all we know.

Offering Recipients continued from pg. 2

to people who are living with advanced cancer, or actively dying from cancer. Their services are provided by volunteer professional massage therapists in nearly two dozen towns around our region, and provide deeply needed comfort and healing to people facing the pain and fear of disease. More information, including information about referring people to the Project for services, can be found at www.handtoheartproject.org

Youth - Be the Change

Join us for youth group this spring!

For Junior High youth, our OWL program continues in the coming months, and please notice that we've added a special game night for all Junior High youth, whether you're in the OWL program or not, on April 13!

For Senior youth, Paul Sawyer and Heather Findlay will continue to offer three sessions of a Unitarian Universalist Affirmations program, while the junior high youth are involved in OWL. The Affirmations class will explore UU values, history and ideas, and will encourage high school youth to explore and clarify their own sense of faith. It will take place at the UCC Church on youth group Sundays from 5:00 to just before our regular senior youth meetings on April 6, April 27, and May 4.

For further information about our youth groups and youth events, please contact Paul or Lucia. To stay in touch with youth group happenings, make sure that Paul and Lucia have your e-mail address, follow the youth group Facebook page, keep an eye on the newsletters and weekly e-mail updates of both churches, or better yet, come to church and read the bulletin!

Youth Group Schedule April 2014

April 6

4:15-6:15 pm, Gr. 7&8 OWL at FCCH 5:00-6:30 pm, Sr. High Affirmations at FCCH 6:30-8:00 pm, Sr. Youth Group Meeting at FCCH

April 13

4:15-6:15 pm, Gr. 7&8 OWL at FCCH 6:15-8:30 pm, Jr. High Game Night at FCCH! Pizza! Games! Make-your-own-sundaes! All 7th & 8th graders welcome!

April 27

4:15-6:15 pm, Grade 7&8 OWL at FCCH 5:00-6:30 pm—Sr. High Affirmations at FCCH 6:30-8:00 pm—Sr. Youth Group Meeting at FCCH

May 4

4:15-6:15 pm, Grade 7&8 OWL at FCCH 5:00-6:15 pm—Sr. High Affirmations at FCCH 6:15-7:00 pm—Mission Trip Logistics Meeting for All Mission Trip Participants at FCCH 7:00-8:00 pm-- Sr. Youth Group Meeting at FCCH

Save the Dates: This year's Mission Trip will take place July 27-August 2 and we will lead worship for both churches in a joint service on August 3.

April 27 — Hartland Rescue Squad

The Hartland Rescue Squad is an all-volunteer organization that provides emergency treatment and support for many of our friends, members, and neighbors in Hartland. This is the next in a series of offerings to our local rescue squads, in an effort to connect with and support those doing effective and important work in our member communities. This idea was suggested by our own governing board member, Dan Poor, who served for several years on the Cornish Rescue Squad. You can speak with Dan or with Paul (who is also a former volunteer rescue squad member) for more information.

Maundy Thursday Communion Service

Thursday April 17 7:00 pm

Maundy Thursday is the date in the Christian calendar when tradition holds that Jesus ate his last supper (a Passover meal) with his followers, and gave to them the practice of holy communion. Some elements of this ritual and memorial meal are even older than the Jesus tradition, and communion remains a beautiful and faithful practice for many people across all the lines and disputes of Christianity.

The founders of our church would have practiced a simple form of communion, appropriate for a close-knit society, with homemade bread and a cup of wine, blessed and shared by all.

This Maundy Thursday, we will hold a similar service, grounded in the liberal Christian tradition of our forebears. We will share a brief service of readings, reflection, prayer, and a communion ritual with bread and grape juice, using our congregation's own historic communion silver.

In accordance with our liberal religious tradition, we practice open communion, meaning that there are no restrictions on participation. Though the rite itself is Christian, you do not have to hold a particular belief to partake in our ritual. We also welcome participants of any age.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Paul.

The Board's Broadcast

The Governing Board held its monthly meeting on March 10, 2014. In attendance were: Mary Erdei, Paul Sawyer, John Osborne, Sara Morin, and Colleen Spence. In Becky Howe's absence, Mary Erdei volunteered to take minutes. With a very small attendance, it was difficult to cover the fairly large agenda in detail.

The February Board minutes were reviewed and accepted with minor corrections.

The Minister's report was reviewed. The Northern New England District meeting will be held in Concord, NH on April 12, and registration is open for this meeting. Registration for the General Assembly in Providence, RI began on March 3. The Board discussed how many members of the congregation have indicated they might be going. We will need to determine who will serve as our official voting delegates to GA; we are allowed three delegates and one alternative. The Minister's report was accepted.

In the absence of Tamara Ross, Sara Morin read the treasurer's report from an email from Tamara.

The Board briefly discussed sending a delegate to the Vermont and Quebec Universalist-Unitarian Convention in Barre, Vermont. This organization provides annual grants to the various member churches from its endowment. John Osborne has volunteered to attend the convention and prepare the grant request as required, as well as being the contact person for communications with the Vermont and Quebec UU Convention.

The board discussed if there is any progress on recruiting the much-needed Nomination Circle. So far, no members of the church have been recruited for this important job. Some names were discussed, and John and Colleen volunteered to do some calling to possible recruits. The absence of a Nominating Circle threatens to cause the Board to regress to having too few members and missing officers after June.

The upcoming changes to the UUA Retirement Plan have not been finalized. The Finance Circle did not meet to review these changes and make a recommendation to the Board. This will need to be done by June. John will follow up with the Finance Circle.

Shared Ministry Day, led by the UUA, took place in Woodstock on March 15. Sara Doolan, Paul Sawyer, Mary Erdei, John Osborne, and Colleen Spence attended. The topic of "Adaptive Leadership" was very appropriate for the current state of the Board and the ongoing changes in the church.

Sara Morin provided a detailed report of fundraising activities, as always. The Prom was a great event, and attracted the community outside of the church. This is going to become an annual event. The chocolate auction also did well. John Bartholomew is championing the next event, a concert with Becky Tracy and Keith Murphy on March 22. Bruce Locke and

UUA General Assembly June 25-29 Providence, RI

The General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend.

The theme for General Assembly 2014 is Love Reaches Out. As stated on the UUA website (www.uua.org/ga/index.shtml) "Religious life in America is changing dramatically and rapidly. Fewer people are identifying with specific denominations and most mainline religions are losing members in droves. People now find many outlets and places of engagement for their spiritual lives. ... there is a movement toward a liberal, fluid kind of faith." This GA is all about sharing our faith both within and beyond our congregations' walls.

People from FUSH have indicated interest in attending one day, therefore, we are looking into perhaps renting a mini van to drive to Providence. For others who would like to stay multiple days, the UUA website will post lodging options both at local hotels and at several nearby colleges in the dormitories. Rooms fill up quickly! Todd Lloyd has also reserved some blocks of rooms at nearby hotels. There are also opportunities to sign up to volunteer at GA to defray the registration fees.

Contact Jill Lloyd for more information.

The Boards Broadcast continued from pg. 5

Clyde Jenne are championing a Ham and Bean Supper on March 29. We continue to have monthly SoUUper sales. So far fundraising has raised \$1527.

Mary Erdei has sent out 15 notes of thanks, and Sara Morin will be thanking the volunteers for the Prom.

The next Board meeting will be April 14 at 7:00 pm in the parsonage. As always, members of the church are invited to attend. If you have items that you believe the Board should be addressing, please speak to or email any Board member.

Have You Seen the New UUA Logo?

The new logo of the Unitarian Universalist Association was recently unveiled as the first step of a new initiative to help UUs improve the way we share our faith and values with a wider audience and one of the tools in an ongoing process of

improved communication strategies.

You will be seeing this new logo, and more components of our brand identity, being implemented across all UUA communication channels over the next few months. And many of these changes will be featured at our General Assembly in Providence, RI,

Calling All Circles

Welcoming Congregation

The Welcoming Committee met in February and March for workshops exploring our beliefs and knowledge around the subject of gender and sexuality. As we work our way through the UUA's Welcoming Congregation curriculum, we deepen our understanding and alignment with our UU principles.

Don't forget to check out the bulletin board downstairs!

Stay tuned for more workshops and when the Welcoming Committee takes the Pulpit in May.

Calling All Circles

Connections Circle

Our next meeting will be on April 4 at 4:00 pm in the parsonage.

Coffee Hour

We thank Bruce Locke and Clyde Jenne, the Youth Group, and Chris Husmann and Colleen Spence who provided delicious snacks for us in March. Bruce and Clyde were very busy this past month when, with the help of Jill Lloyd, they presented us with a sweet "Sugar on Snow Party" and a "Soup Bowl Luncheon" to raise money for the Food Shelf. We are very blessed that they are such an important part of our community.

The following people are in charge of Coffee Hour in the weeks ahead: March 30 - Chris Husmann and Colleen Spence; April 6 - Deb Hart and Dianne Rochford; and April 13 Jill and Todd Lloyd. We still need two people to make coffee for April 20. We will send directions to each team the week before and the directions are on the coffee pots and on the wall by the coffee pots.

Pictures of Our Members and Friends

We want to have a bulletin board of all the members and friends who are connected to FUSH! Please bring a 3x5 picture of yourself or a 4x6 picture of your family with names written on the back of the picture. Place the pictures in the marked box in front of the bulletin board. Nancy Walker and Paul Sawyer have graciously offered to make labels for the pictures.



memoration;

The Nuts and Bolts of the FUSH

Sunday, April 6 12:00-2:00 pm

This workshop will be led by Paul Sawyer, our minister, and members of the Connection Circle. The gathering will be an opportunity to have your questions answered and to explore the workings of our Society, the activities available, and the privileges and responsibilities of membership. This workshop is appropriate for anyone who just wants to know more about the First Universalist Society of Hartland and/ or those who might be interested in exploring membership.

Lunch and childcare provided.

Please RSVP to Sue and David Taylor at dstaylor342@gmail.com and/or at 603-675-6566. (We especially need to know if childcare is needed so we can hire a child care person.)

Filling Our Church with Flowers

Too often we take for granted the beautiful flowers which fill our church. We are blessed to have Patty Talbot provide the beautiful arrangements from her garden for the front of the Sanctuary most every regular Sunday. Then on special holidays such as Christmas, Easter, Fourth of July, and Thanksgiving Bruce and Clyde have filled FUSH with beautiful bouquets. After the service they have given these flowers away to people who were in need.

This coming Easter Bruce and Clyde will be providing the main arrangement for the front of the Church. But we want to share the task of providing the six arrangements for the windows. We hope individuals will volunteer to bring an Easter lily or an arrangement of their choosing in honor of a loved one. They could then take the bouquet home or give away after the service.

If you would like to provide one of the six bouquets please contact Sue Taylor at 603-675-6566 or at dstaylor342@gmail.com. The arrangements should be brought to FUSH on Saturday, April 19 and placed in one of the windows. We would like to know ahead so that we can honor your loved ones in the program and so that Bruce and Clyde can plan the decorating of the Sanctuary.

Calling All Circles

Fundraising

Spring Rummage Sale Friday, April 4, 8:00 am - 6:00 pm Saturday, April 5, 8:00 am - 2:00 pm (Bag Sale)

It's Spring! It's Rummage Sale Time Again! Letting Go!



Clean out your closets and bureaus. You may leave your treasures at the church starting Sunday, March 30. If the church is not open you may leave them on the porch at the parsonage.

We need help with sorting, set up and during the sale on the following dates and times:

Tuesday, April 1 - 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Wednesday, April 2 - 2:00 - 6:00 pm

Thursday, April 3 - 10:00 am - 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Friday, April 4 - 8:00 am - 6:00 pm

Saturday, April 5 - 8:00 am - 2:00 pm and clean up after 2:00 pm.

Many hands will be needed to box up and truck items away after the sale.

Any dishes left in the Fellowship Hall pie area after March 30 will be sold at the Rummage Sale.



SoUUper Second Sunday Sale April 13

Look for us during Coffee Hour downstairs in the Fellowship Hall.

Delicious homemade soups, mac 'n cheese, chili and similar foods are available for purchase. Take them home and have a hearty meal ready to heat up during the week.

Thank you to all who have made or bought food at our past sales!!

If you are interested in making items for this monthly fundraiser, please contact Sara Morin at saradmorin@gmail.com and she will get you information and containers.

Open Mic and Coffee House April 19 6:30-9:00 pm

Join us for an evening of live music, coffee and desserts. Come to play or come to listen. Bring a dessert to share.

See Dave Morin or Leah Gartner if you are interested in performing or for more information.

Bulletin Board

Adult Choir - Rehearsal at 9:00 am on Sunday, April 13 & 20 to sing in the Easter service on the 20th. All singers are welcome!

Children's Choir - Rehearsal at 9:30 am on Sunday, April 6 & 27 to sing in the service on the 6th.

House for Lease - A 3 bdm 3 bath house for lease just 1.5 miles from FUSH. Oil/wood heat, decks, views, surrounded by miles of woods, fields, trails. Pet friendly, horse boarding option, garden space, great neighbors. Contact me at 802-436-7671 for more info.

Jandra Oliver

Home to Share - I am looking for a wonderful person to share my home with me. I live in the village of Reading, half way between Springfield and Woodstock. The house is big and I'm the only one living here at the moment, so I have lots of space to share. I have a big back yard with chickens and a garden, and right over the stone wall are fields and a mountain that are great for cross country skiing and hiking. There are also beautiful swimming holes nearby.

If are interested in knowing more, please call me at 802-484-0027, or email libbetdowns@gmail.com.

Libbet Downs



In GRATITUDE

Our congregation runs on the energy of its members and participants – your gifts of time, of skills, of resources of every kind. Without these, without your commitment and contribution, the engine of our spirit falters.

We cannot always recognize and appreciate the many contributions large and small that together weave the sustenance of our congregation, but the Governance Board would like to thank, every month, some of these contributors, knowing there are many we may unintentionally overlook.

Our thanks go to **Helen Dicke** for sharing her story and ideas in worship in February. Helen's reflection was lovely and deeply meaningful, and a beautiful connection to our theme of Prayer.

It's hard to explain just how much work it is to teach a Junior High OWL program. It's a commitment of a minimum of 12 two-hour sessions with the youth, as well as all of the preparation and organization it takes to make the class happen—not to mention the previous time and commitment to the weekend-long training course required of all OWL leaders. The Board is very grateful to **David Morin** and **Kim Aakre** for offering their time and energy to our youth in this very important program.

The excitement around the first annual Hartland Community Prom has been amazing, and **Katy Sawyer** and **Sara Morin** as co-coordinators gave a great deal of time and heart and energy to make it

happen. The Prom was Katy's idea from the start, and her vision and hard work made it the success it was. Jaxon Morgan's fantastic music created the soundtrack for this delightful night. Thank you to Emma Sawyer and Keegan **Erskine** who spent much of their day Saturday helping with set-up, and to Leah Gartner for her creativity and set-up help. Thank you to everyone who helped with food donations and staffing the tables, with much gratitude to Nada Pierce and Joan Fariel who took extended shifts welcoming people and accepting their money at the front table, and Dave Morin who staffed the refreshment table for many shifts and took many photos in our photo booth. Also much thanks to Chris and Sara Doolan, Laura Bergstresser, Jill and Todd Lloyd, and Coral and Patrick Ovitt for their quick, amazing work doing clean up.

We are deeply grateful to **Heather** Findlay for volunteering to colead the high school "Affirmation" class with Paul Sawyer. Heather's own children are too young for the program, so this is purely a labor of love and commitment to our faith.

Our thanks to **Jo Knowles** and **Laura Bergstresser** for leading the Welcoming Congregation workshop last month, and to **Todd Lloyd**, who has been overseeing the group and moving it forward.

Calendar - April 2014

2/	25	20	19	18	1 12				13							6	S		4		3	2	<u> </u>
Sun.	Fri.	Sun.	Sat.	Fri.	Mon.				Sun.	Fri.						Sun.	Sat.		Fri.		Thurs.	Weds.	Tues.
9:30am 10 After service 4:15-6:15pm 5-6:30 6:30-8	8-10am	6:30-9pm 9am	Morning	7рш 8-10am	7pm	6:15-8:30	4:15-6:15pm	After service	9am 10	8-10am	6:30-8	5-6:30	4:15-6:15	Noon-2pm	10	9:30am	8am-2pm	4	8am-6pm	6-8	10am-4pm	2-6pm	10am-4pm
Children's Choir renearsal Intergenerational May Day Service All church clean-up 7&8 OWL, FCCH St. High Affirmations, FCCH Sr. Youth Grp., FCCH	Easter Service & RE Food Shelf	Open Mic & Coffee House Adult Choir rehearsal to sing	Deadline for May newsletter Easter flowers to church deadline	Food Shelf	Governing Board meeting	Jr. High Game Night, FCCHt	7&8 OWL, FCCH	SoUUper Second Sunday Sale	Adult Choir rehearsal Worshin Service & RF	Food Shelf	Sr. Youth Grp., FCCH	St. High Affirmations, FCCH	7&8 OWL, FCCH	Nuts & Bolts of FUSH	Worship Service & RE	Children's Choir rehearsal to sing	Rummage Sale (bag sale) & clean up	Connections Circle, parsonage	Rummage Sale	Rummage Sale set up			

sent through your e-mail. next and subsequent newsletters will be sage. If we do not hear from your office, 802-436-2592, and leave a mesreceiving the it by mail, call the church this manner. If you would like to continue letter will be the last one you receive in pink dot next to your address, this newsthrough email, therefore, if you have a and would like to send more newsletters We are trying to cut back on postage



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