



UUFB Notes

A monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bennington, VT

President's Letter

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President's Letter

Greetings, all!

Since I last wrote, we have had some wonderful times together, both at the annual picnic and hearing Rev. Kathy speak. It was a delight to read the wonderful article about her in the Bennington Banner.

The preparations for the tag sale are well under way, with a special thanks to Linda Putney for spearheading the effort and also all of the volunteers and donations that are making it possible. The tag sale is Friday, August 4 and Saturday August 5. Reach out to Linda if you'd like to volunteer, and we hope to see you at the sale!

Extra gratitude to Jerry Byrd and Bill Christian for all of their efforts with the building and the lights, which have arrived and will soon be up! Also to Wendy Lyons for helping prepare for the picnic, and to all who helped with set up and clean up. What a wonderful group we have. And apologies to anyone I may have missed in my appreciations.

August Calendar

6: Sunday service

13: Reverend Kathy Duhon

20: Service - "Summer Listening"

27: Reverend Kathy Duhon

***Items in bold are Services**

To correct some previously distributed information, Rev. Kathy Duhon will lead services on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, with adjustments for holidays as necessary.

The next board meeting is Wednesday, August 2nd at 7 pm. Normally, we meet in the big room but because of the tag sale we'll be in the back RE room. If you have something you'd like discussed, please contact me so that I may add it to our agenda. I warmly welcome anyone who would like to be involved in the process to attend board meetings.

See you at the meetinghouse!

Maggie Montovan
Board President

Kathy's Corner

"On Weeding and Pruning"

I don't like weeding. Folks have told me it's a form of meditation because the mind is open yet not very occupied. Simple repetitive tasks are great for the spiritual life. For Gandhi, spinning became his practice in later years.

When I must weed, I can become reflective. Sometimes simple questions, 'Is this a weed or a flower?' can turn into a clarifying thought - 'Ah, there's so much I don't know!' Or, 'Why are these pretty small blue flowers weeds?' becomes 'What seemingly attractive stuff in my life takes over too much?' 'What if I weed out an actual flower that I didn't recognize?' reminds me of when I've stopped doing something that I think takes up too much of my precious time, only to find that it was a key to blossoming? I think the prodigious unplanted mint crop in the flower bed is a weed, but my daughter says it's tea and a keeper, so I reflect upon acceptance.

I live on a farm now, but I don't do much with the vegetables except pick them. I used to pull the suckers off the tomatoes (little branches that

grow between two main stems) as I'd been told they won't produce tomatoes, but I noticed one year that tomatoes did grow on a sucker branch. To me, it is a reminder that decisions to cut off anything in our lives are fraught. While we do need to prune in order to put our fuller efforts into certain areas and not to frazzle ourselves with overdoing and crazy fragmentation, we need to consider carefully what we are letting go. Do we ever cut out of our lives what we think is non-productive, but would actually bring us joy? Do we treat some people as "suckers", not worth enough of our attention because they do not seem useful? Are there good surprises for us after we consider eliminating something, but then stick with it out of faithfulness? On the other hand, are we too afraid to cut out some branches of our being that are unwieldy and demanding of our energies, without giving back to us anything renewing? What sucks up the vitality in our lives? What is not growing as fully because something else is choking us like weeds do?

How to make decisions? The variety of choices, combined with the realization that choices are made with inadequate knowledge and always involve some loss, can stop some folks from ever deciding. We need to weed and prune our lives, in order to grow well, even if we don't like weeding. We are choice-making beings. In choices are our freedom. A passage in the book of Exodus says that we can either choose life and blessing or death and curse. Choose life; choose the blessing.

NEW OFFICE HOURS

Rev. Kathy Duhon will hold office hours on Mondays from 3-5 p.m. She is also available by phone or email and can make other appointments as

needed. Contact Kathy at: 518-794-0021 or 518-821-2891 or kathyduhon2@gmail.com.

Religious Education Updates

In the fall, we are experimenting with a new approach to religious education/exploration. It is called Spirit Play and provides opportunities for participants to discover the spirit of love and mystery in our world through powerful stories, wondering questions, and self-chosen work on the stories. We will be focusing on stories related to our UU principals and key stories from the world's religions with a focus on Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Native American, African and Earth-based religions. We are hoping that this will deepen the experiences of all involved in RE and allow us to move toward a classroom which is better integrated across age groups.

On August 7 we will have an experienced Spirit Play leader demonstrate the method. Join us for a brown bag dinner (bring your own) at 5:30 pm with informal questions and discussion and a more formal presentation from 6 - 8 pm. It should be a fun night of story telling and to figure out how to make the program work at UUFB. All are welcome! Please join us to learn more, to hear some good deep stories, or to prepare for assisting or teaching in the Spirit Play classroom. Childcare and drinks and dessert will be provided.

We have also been thinking about the story for all ages. We recognize that this time should be something that both children and adults can get something meaningful from and that, currently, that is not always the case.

We are hoping to create a group of storytellers to experiment with some different approaches over the coming year to hopefully find an approach that might be appreciated more widely by both adults and children. Please have patience with these experiments and let us know if you like something that we try!

If you would like to join us on this story-telling adventure, please contact Katie Montovan! We will have a planning/brainstorming/storytelling session on September 23

or 24 (more details will come soon!). If you would like to participate but have a conflict with either of these dates please get in contact ASAP.

Dates to add to your calendar (All are welcome at any of these events):

August 7: 5:30-8 pm --- Spirit Play Demo/Training (replaces our August RE meeting)

September 4: 6:30-8 pm --- RE meeting

September 23 or 24: time TBD --- Story Teller Meeting

Meetinghouse Café Update

This year the Meetinghouse Café will operate a bit differently. Most concerts will have \$10 tickets. Concerts will include a wider range of music and storytelling. We will not be scheduling too far in advance to allow us to take advantage of performers coming through the area.

Watch this space for more news!



August 2017

- US Holidays
- Non-fellowship events
- Fellowship events

July 2017	August 2017	September 2017
S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S
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2 3 4 5 6 7 8	1 2 3 4 5	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
9 10 11 12 13 14 15	6 7 8 9 10 11 12	10 11 12 13 14 15 16
16 17 18 19 20 21 22	13 14 15 16 17 18 19	17 18 19 20 21 22 23
23 24 25 26 27 28 29	20 21 22 23 24 25 26	24 25 26 27 28 29 30
30 31	27 28 29 30 31	

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Services & Coffee	31	1 3:30 PM Mighty Food Farm CSA Pick up	2	3	4	5 Tag sale!
6 Tag sale! 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Services & Coffee	7 3:00 PM Rev. Kathy Duhon Office hours	8 3:30 PM Mighty Food Farm CSA Pick up 6:30 PM Facing Death with Dignity	9 1:00 PM Yoga for Every Body (VCIL workshop)	10 3:30 PM Spirit of Bennington	11	12 1:00 PM Storytelling & listening workshop
13 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Services & Coffee	14 3:00 PM Rev. Kathy Duhon Office hours	15 3:30 PM Mighty Food Farm CSA Pick up 6:30 PM Facing Death with Dignity	16	17 7:00 PM WHIPS Board Meeting	18	19
20 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Services & Coffee	21 3:00 PM Rev. Kathy Duhon Office hours	22 3:30 PM Mighty Food Farm CSA Pick up 6:30 PM Facing Death with Dignity	23	24 3:30 PM Spirit of Bennington	25	26
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