



# UUFB Notes

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

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## Kathy's Corner

**Me Too - What about you?**

I read a UU minister's recent sermon that grappled with what we do as a congregation in light of the revelations of sexual harassment and assault, and the "Me Too" movement. She mentioned a survey that said that 1 in 4 women had experienced some form of sexual harassment or assault, but as far as she could tell, it was 4 in 4. My colleague has a point. And if you consider the broader issue - who has been harassed, demeaned, disrespected by someone seeking an unfair power advantage, then could we include everyone? Me too is really "we too". We have been hurt by abuses of power.

Does it help to understand that unequal power dynamics affect everyone? Yet some people are much more likely to be the victims of power plays; groups that are disproportionately hurt include women, children, people of color, the impoverished, the disabled, the elderly, LGBTQ folks, and some ethnic and religious minorities, which is pretty intense to think of all the harassment and assault that has gone down in so many

## January Calendar

Month's Theme: Dreams

- 7 - Chuck Putney - "Why are we here? Happiness, meaning or therapy"**
- 14 - Rev. Kathy Duhon - "We All Need to Go to Prison: Inspirations of Martin Luther King, Jr."**
- 21 - Rev. Bruce Lee-Clark**
- 28 - Rev. Kathy Duhon - "Hopeful Hullabaloo"**

**\*Items in bold are Services**

lives. Why? Why do people seek power by hurting others?

If so many have been hurt, then so many others must have done the hurting. Being the harasser or assaulter is both hurtful to others and to oneself. We may have to wrestle a little with our inner selves - when have we been the ones seeking power to the detriment of someone else? When have our loved ones abused power without us holding them accountable?

I believe the women. I also believe that power can corrupt. We are at a strange, strong time in history when women who reveal the abuses of the powerful have power, which is good, for the most part. Women abused by the not very powerful are not having the same moment of truth, to speak of, which is not good, and some women may be abusing this new power, which is terrible. At least one woman, employed by a conservative group, attempted to falsely accuse a powerful man of sexual assault, but was thwarted through the diligence of the press. I believe the women, mostly, but I also believe a few of the men, maybe. What was a misunderstanding, or a cluelessness about what is hurtful? What has become a chance for a woman, or a group using a woman, to punish someone or an organization with this newfound power? I don't know. Power corrupts, and women have a little more power in this area at this particular time - may it not be used to hurt.

So what can congregations do? We listen, we tell the truth, we break silences that are harmful, we defy shame, we hold people accountable, we protect, we keep safe spaces open, we forgive, we seek to undo structures of power that lead to abuse, and more. We are a place of healing and hope, a beloved

community that stretches for justice and peace for all. We too are the ones who stand together to use this powerful moment for doing the most good possible. So may it be.

*January 14th - "We All Need to Go to Prison: Inspirations of Martin Luther King, Jr." As a society, we lock people up - it is done in our name and with our funding. Sometimes we lock up innocent folks; sometimes we jail activists for truth and justice. Because King had a dream, he ended up behind bars. Have you ever been to a jail or a prison, or read the words of someone who has? This is a critical part of our civic education as Americans, and of our common religious lives - we all need to go to prison - so come take this journey with us.*

*January 28th - "Hopeful Hullabaloo" We will explore some of our Universalist tradition that exalted hope and also have a chance to play with wisdom from world religions and from leaders of our world. Be prepared to hear a hullabaloo of hope.*

## Social Action notes

The UUF B Social Action committee chaired by Julie Haupt and Tom Haley has been working on a variety of projects. Our goal is to connect the fellowship community with tangible ways to **put our faith into action**. Please read on for a sampling of what we are up to.

**Holiday Cards for incarcerated UU's.** Members and friends of all ages wrote over 100 personal holiday cards to be forwarded by the UU Church of Larger Fellowship to CLF members currently in prison.

**Community Dinners** at Second Congregational. The next date is **Sunday January 21st**. Volunteers are needed to cook and/or help set up and serve dinner. Food donations can be brought to UU Sunday morning or directly to Second Congo at 4:30 pm. (Set up - 4:30 pm; dinner served at 5pm). A sign-up sheet is on the

Welcome table. For details speak to Bruce Squiers.

**Bennington Coalition for the Homeless** welcomes donations to support the shelters and their residents. Used (good condition): towels, washcloths, twin sheets, pillowcases, winter hats, gloves, mittens, jackets, wool socks, fleece pullovers, hoodies. New: liquid laundry detergent, toilet paper, paper towels, cleaning/sanitizing wipes, 13 and 30-gallon garbage bags.

**Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Services - Volunteer Opportunities- Food Distribution:** Tuesdays: 5:30 – 7:30; Thursdays: 10 to noon; Saturdays: 2 – 4 pm. Phone receptionist: from 9-1pm once a week. Food Fit Bennington: 12-week sessions cover nutrition, cooking and fitness while building community. Contact Sue Andrews for details.

**Book Discussion** – This winter we will host a 3-session discussion of The Third Reconstruction: How a Moral Movement Is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear by Rev. William J. Barber - the 2016-17 UUA Common Read. We plan to meet on Thursdays beginning in late January or early Feb. Please let Julie H know if you are interested. Details to come.

Sneak Preview: In Spring we will read and discuss Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in without Going Crazy by Joanna Macy & Chris Johnstone.

**Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration** – On Monday January 15<sup>th</sup> there will be a vigil at the four corners followed by a program at Oldcastle Theater on "Walking the Walk." This is co-sponsored by the Greater Bennington Interfaith Council, Rights and Democracy and the Peace and Justice Center. Stay tuned for details.

# Treasurer's Notes

January 2017 - Ed Connelly

As of November 30th, at 41.7% of the year, we have received 44.3% of our budgeted revenue and have spent 36.8% of our budgeted expenses.

Please continue to make your pledge payments on a timely basis. For those of you who have not pledged, please

continue to make your occasional donations.

The Fellowship has received a \$2,000 donation from the estate of Dora Polatsek. The Board has decided to use it to establish a "Memorial Fund". All donations received as bequests, "in memory of", "in honor of", "in lieu of flowers" or similar intents will be added to this fund. Payments from the fund are limited to board approved major projects or purchases.

Three monthly reports (Budget, Balance Sheet and Revenue & Expense) are distributed to board members every month. They are available to any member upon request. Let me know ([ejc456@comcast.net](mailto:ejc456@comcast.net)) and I will e-mail them to you every month at the same time I send them to the board members. If you have any questions about the finances or books, ask me. Our by-laws declare pledge commitments and payments to be confidential; all other financial information is unrestricted and available.

## Game Night

Our annual Cabin Fever Game Night will be on Friday, Feb. 2. We'll have pizza and drinks available at cost at 5:30pm and play games from 6 to 8 pm or so. It's free and open to you and all your friends of all ages. Put it on your calendar now!

### Sunday Morning Offering, Split Plate Results

12/03	Membership Emergency Fund	\$62.50 + \$10.00 direct
12/10	Habitat for Humanity	\$23.50 + \$3.00 direct
12/17	Thatcher House	\$29.50
12/24	GBICS (100%)	107.00 + \$250.00 direct
12/31	Schoerke Foundation/Ghana school	45.50 + \$50.00 direct

Notes:

1. There has been an increase in checks written directly to the charity, the report now shows the detail.
2. The original arrangement with Thatcher House wherein we "adopted" a room has been suspended. All donations are now sent directly to the Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless ([www.facebook.com/benningtoncoalitionfor.thehomeless/](http://www.facebook.com/benningtoncoalitionfor.thehomeless/)) for their Thatcher House operations. A check for the accumulated funds, \$186.00, was delivered on 12/21.

# January 2018

- US Holidays
- Non- fellowship events
- Fellowship events

December 2017							January 2018							February 2018							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6							1	2	3
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31	25	26	27	28							
31																					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 New Year's Eve 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Services & Coffee	1 6:30 PM RE Meeting	2 3:00 PM MFF Winter CSA Pickup	3 3:00 PM Rev. Kathy Duhon Office hours	4 6:00 PM Greater Bennington Peace and Justice Committee Meeting	5	6
7 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Services & Coffee	8 1:00 PM Soul Space Meeting	9	10 3:00 PM Rev. Kathy Duhon Office hours 7:00 PM UUFB Board Meeting	11	12	13
14 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Services & Coffee 11:30 AM Board Chat	15	16 3:00 PM MFF Winter CSA Pickup	17 3:00 PM Rev. Kathy Duhon Office hours	18	19	20
21 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Services & Coffee	22 1:00 PM Soul Space Meeting	23	24 3:00 PM Rev. Kathy Duhon Office hours	25	26	27
28 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Services & Coffee	29	30 3:00 PM MFF Winter CSA Pickup	31 3:00 PM Rev. Kathy Duhon Office hours	1 6:00 PM Greater Bennington Peace and Justice Committee Meeting	2	3 5:00 PM A Midwinter Night's All-genre Open Mic