



# Spectacles

## May 2015

As I write this in mid-April I have great hopes for the possibility of flowers and abundant sunshine (with the right mix of rain for our gardens) in May.

Our time together is drawing to a close.

My consulting contract ends on August 31, 2015.

I will be available for emergency pastoral care needs through the summer.

Regular Sunday services end on June 14 with your Annual Church Picnic on June 28th



If you would like to say goodbye in person, or kindly and respectfully offer some feedback on your experience of this consulting ministry, I will continue to be here Wednesday afternoon's and Thursday mornings for the first three weeks in May.

Please don't hesitate to be in touch so we could schedule a mutually convenient time together.

This time of year marks the close of your leadership and financial year on May 31.

Congregational governance in our covenantal, free church tradition has no hierarchy. There is no Pope, no Episcopate, no Presbytery, no Supervisory Office, that govern over or finances our congregations.

We do have our national Unitarian Universalist Association and our local New England Regional (formerly District) organizations that support the member congregations through centralizing faith-based materials, connections, and communications. But these are not governing bodies with any authority or power over the member congregations. They do help hold us (individual congregations) accountable to one another as stated in our mutual covenant.

We are not free to do anything we like. We are free within a framework of our liberal religious tradition, within a framework of best and healthy practices for strengthening faith community, to find our own pathway.

By the same token, you, the members and participants in this congregation are the ones responsible for its governance as a faith community. This includes its financial well-being. Members, friends of the congregation, and active participants are all called upon to contribute time, talent, and "treasure" to the best of your abilities.

You, along with many different faith communities in New England, have this odd situation...once long ago, some of the early members and founders of this Franklin congregation were people who understood themselves as "pillars" of the wider Franklin community and believed it fitting to build for their faith community a large and substantial building.

Like all humans, they could not see far beyond the world as they knew it and assumed life and church would continue in the same manner. Some of them left funds toward this end.

Life has changed considerably since the 1870's and the 1920's. A future, not "the" future, is here.

In our current cultural context this large building is not particularly sustainable given the changing nature of faith community and environmentalism of today's reality.

And yet, this is the building you have inherited.

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Over the last decade you have increasingly felt the impact of cultural changes. Seeking to keep faith with these “ancestors” you have maintained the trust funds borrowing when necessary but always with integrity, paying yourselves back. You have been faithful in your efforts to maintain congregational life - programs, community, and building.

When I arrived two years ago your Parish Committee acknowledged some despair while also hoping to revitalize congregational life. So we committed ourselves to this goal: revitalizing congregational life, acknowledging that it will not look like the past. When I look around these days I see new life blossoming.

You have been courageous giving of your time, talents, and treasure.

Increased pledging last year and increased donations of time and talent have shined a light on your meaning of revitalizing.

From the basement repairs to the monthly hymn sing vitality is arising.

Some folks are writing grants that help with costs of repairs and rebuilding.

Families and leaders involved with religious education met and discussed some innovative ways to move forward; the Caring Committee conversed about their role in congregational life; Parish Committee is informally discussing the meaning of membership; several congregants attended three different Regional UUA workshops on leadership, change, and growth. And you are intentionally exploring, with some socialization, a connection between yourselves and the Kearsarge UU Congregation.

Easter Sunday here saw almost 50 people in the pews including several new faces and families. Your monthly hymn-sing regulars sang for the Maple Syrup Communion. I hope you all experienced this sense of vitality on Easter.

Like spring blossoming up, my hope is that you too will continue to blossom.

This is financial pledge time in your congregation.

Another way to express your renewing sense of vitality, to keep blossoming.

Whether you are a friend or a member, when you are invited to make a financial pledge in this month - as they say on public radio: *be as generous as you are able*. Don't hesitate to offer what you can, even if you don't think it is very much. If no one asks and you would like to make a financial contribution, please speak with a Parish Committee member: Joel Anderson, Howard Amsden, Cindy Clarenbach, Kim Donovan, Colleen Jacques, Beth Robinson, and Stephanie Van Horn.

Getting right with our personal finances is a spiritual practice.

Taking time to reflect on how we spend our individual or family time, talent, and treasure and how it represents what we value is a useful, ongoing practice.

Sometimes we are able to, or need to, make changes.

Like all changes evolution toward a new goal tends to be more enduring than revolutionary reactions.

Growing in habits of self-awareness, reflection, and truth-telling about how we use our resources are practices of love for self, family, this congregation, and the world. Practices such as these increase gratitude for what we have and can increase congruence between living and speaking our principles.

May your vitality for Unitarian Universalism continue to grow, deepen, and blossom in the new ways of twenty-first century faith life.

In gratitude and with faith,

Rev. Abigail



# A Month of Sundays

(Services Begin at 10 am)

May 3 - Rev. David Robins will lead our service. Rev. Robins is a retired UU Minister who served this congregation in the late 1970's and early 1980's before serving our congregation's in Normal, IL and Peterborough, NH.

May 10 - Rev. Abigail Stockman will present a sermon.

May 17 - Rev. Bevan Tulk, Director Pastoral & Spiritual Care at Havenwood-Heritage Heights in Concord, will join us in the pulpit. Soup and Bread Sunday. Spring Clean -up Following the service and lunch.

May 24 - Rev. Abigail Stockman will lead or service.

May 31 - Rev. Joan Javier-Duval will present "A Living Religion." More and more people identify as "spiritual but not religious." What would it mean to embrace both characteristics of our faith? Can ours be a church of the spiritual AND religious?

The Rev. Joan Javier-Duval is a Unitarian Universalist minister living in Montpelier, VT. Joan recently served the Unitarian Society of Germantown in Philadelphia, PA as a Consulting Minister where she focused on social justice ministry, adult spiritual development, and young adult ministry. In the past year, Joan has embraced the life of part-time itinerant preacher and full-time mother of a curious and active toddler.

## Canvass Pancake Breakfast Sunday May 3 8:30 am

The Canvass Committee invites you to the kickoff for the 2015-2016 Canvass with a pancake breakfast prior to the service. There will be a little entertainment and an explanation of the 2015-2016 budget.



## Spring Clean Up Sunday, May 17

Following the Service and Soup & Bread

Bring your rakes and gloves and let's get our outside looking good after a long winter!



Hymn Sing.  
Wednesday, May 6

Singing will begin right at 6:45  
(There will not be dinner beforehand) t

Suggestions for hymns/ songs are welcome.

Yard Sale  
Saturday, May 30  
8 AM to 2 PM

Bring your "good" items in  
and store them either in the  
Poolroom or in the far corner  
of the big room at the bottom  
of the stairs. Please do not  
bring any electronics such as  
old computers or printers.  
They don't sell and we have  
to pay to dispose of them.



**POETIC OFFERING: MIRACLE FAIR**

The commonplace miracle:  
that so many common miracles take place.

The usual miracles:  
invisible dogs barking  
in the dead of night.

One of many miracles:  
a small and airy cloud  
is able to upstage the massive moon.

Several miracles in one:  
an alder is reflected in the water  
and is reversed from left to right  
and grows from crown to root  
and never hits bottom  
though the water isn't deep.

A run-of-the-mill miracle:  
winds mild to moderate  
turning gusty in storms.

A miracle in the first place:  
cows will be cows.

Next but not least:  
just this cherry orchard  
from just this cherry pit.

A miracle minus top hat and tails:  
fluttering white doves.

A miracle (what else can you call it):  
the sun rose today at three fourteen a.m.  
and will set tonight at one past eight.

A miracle that's lost on us:  
the hand actually has fewer than six fingers  
but still it's got more than four.

A miracle, just take a look around:  
the inescapable earth.

An extra miracle, extra and ordinary:  
the unthinkable  
can be thought.

~ Wislawa Szymborska ~

(View With a Grain of Sand, translated by  
Stanislaw Baranczak and Clare Cavanagh)

| Sun   | Mon                                     | Tue                     | Wed                       | Thu                     | Fri                      | Sat                   |
|---|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 26<br>10am - Worship                                      | 27<br>4pm - Bread&Roses                 | 28<br>6:30pm - basement | 29                        | 30<br>4pm - Bread&Roses | 1                        | 2                     |
| 3<br>8:30am - Canvass<br>10am - Worship                   | 4<br>4pm - Bread&Roses                  | 5<br>6:30pm - basement  | 6<br>6:45pm - Hymn Sing   | 7<br>4pm - Bread&Roses  | 8                        | 9                     |
| 10<br>Mothers' Day<br>10am - Worship                      | 11<br>4pm - Bread&Roses                 | 12<br>6:30pm - basement | 13<br>6pm - Music&Worship | 14<br>4pm - Bread&Roses | 15                       | 16                    |
| 17<br>Soup and Bread<br>Spring Clean-Up<br>10am - Worship | 18<br>4pm - Bread&Roses                 | 19<br>6:30pm - basement | 20<br>7pm - Parish        | 21<br>4pm - Bread&Roses | 22                       | 23                    |
| 24<br>10am - Worship                                      | 25<br>Memorial Day<br>4pm - Bread&Roses | 26<br>6:30pm - basement | 27                        | 28<br>4pm - Bread&Roses | 29<br>Uno's Dough Raiser | 30<br>8am - Yard Sale |
| 31<br>10am - Worship                                      | 1<br>4pm - Bread&Roses                  | 2<br>6:30pm - basement  | 3                         | 4<br>4pm - Bread&Roses  | 5                        | 6                     |

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[www.uucfranklin.org](http://www.uucfranklin.org)

## May Birthdays in our Congregation

When is your birthday?

To add a birthday to our list please  
contact Beth Robinson

Paul D.

Seth W.

Toby W.

Paul H.

Gail M.

Brian C.



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