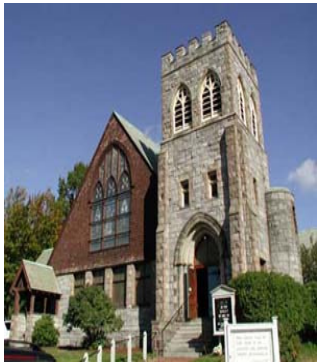


Highlights

www.uumedford.org

(781) 396-4549

Sept 2008



147 High Street

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Moxie *The ability to face difficulty with spirit and courage.*

So how was your summer? I spent this summer building an Ark, and collecting animals. OK, it rained a lot we all know that, but it didn't just rain it poured almost every day. My cousin and family who just moved to Boston from Ireland were amazed at the volume of rain this summer, let me say that again my cousin from IRELAND was AMAZED at the volume of rain, when the Irish make statements about the rain you pay attention. First she and her family called it *movie rain*, you know like you would see in the movies, though lately it's been referred to as Biblical rain. It's true, I had never seen hail until I was in my 20s but this summer we've had hail three times! I suppose we should get used to having summer weather be different than what it was when we were kids, but it will take a while for it to sink in.

Getting used to doing things differently because the larger environment has changed is something that all of us will need to do around the church. Like the problem of global warming is easy, too easy, to feel hopeless when thinking about all that faces our religious community. Issues that seem daunting but which if we learn to do things differently we can do more than just survive, we can thrive. As religious liberals we must remember that we have always embraced the new and rejected the idea that things can't change.

As we return from our summers away you will find that the church leadership is already embracing new ways of doing things. You will see that people have already begun to do this and in doing so have offered up tangible examples of people's faith in our church. There is a new bike rack behind the Osgood House, new carpets in the sanctuary from an anonymous donor, wonderful new landscaping all around the church. Two of the most exciting things going on at the church are the work that the newly formed Immigration Task Force is doing as well as the Tuesday Night Forums, or New Medford Lyceum or what ever it is we are going to call these programs that begin on the 23rd. There are so many exciting things going on and I know that you will greet them and each other with open arms.

Lastly, I am sure that you will join me in congratulating Anne and Steve Elliot on the birth of their daughter Zoe, and Sarah and Kelly Weisman (Apsworth-Jackson) on the birth of their daughter Miriam. We also wish Sarah, Kelly and Miriam all the best as they head to Rochester, NY so Kelly can work as a hospital chaplain for the next year. - Rev. Hank

Upcoming Services & Events

Worship Services for September

August 31: Labor Day Hymn Sing

Is there a hymn that you miss singing? Or one that you have seen but don't know how it goes? This is your chance to sing, so come with a full voice as we sing from our living tradition.

Sept 7: Homecoming Sunday & Water Communion 11:00 - Rev. Hank Peirce

Join us at 11 today as we celebrate our first Sunday of the church year, welcoming old friends and greeting new ones. Don't forget to bring the water you collected over the summer for the communion.

Sept 14: The Two James - Rev. Hank Peirce

Henry James, or James Brown whose life can better inspire us?

Sept 21: Salvation by Character - Rev. Hank Peirce

A cornerstone of 19th century Unitarianism this idea that we are saved by who we are. As the Jewish High Holidays approach, we see that there are similar themes running in and between our faith and Judaism.

Sept 28: Lines on a Map - Rev. Hank Peirce

What are our religious opinions of immigration? How do we as Unitarian Universalists balance our belief in justice with our beliefs about laws and economic realities?

New School Supplies Drive

Each year the Community Cupboard Food Pantry located in our church collects new school supplies during August to distribute to Food Pantry families in early September. In this economic recession when it is hard for poor families to put food on the table, it can be difficult or impossible to have new school supplies for children as they start the school year--and that is very hard for children when they see their peers with fresh new things to begin the year.

If you can donate new school supplies for distribution at the Pantry, that would be wonderful. Everything is welcome as long as it is new: notebooks, tablets, pens, pencils, backpacks, rulers, markers, etc. You can leave your donation on the stage in Benker Hall.

Distribution will take place soon after Labor Day so please leave your contribution before then. Also, if you would like to help organize the donations (children are welcome to participate in this) or help distribute the supplies on the first Thursday evening after Labor Day (adults only), please get in touch with Liz Ammons. Thanks so much.

Report from the Task Force on Immigration Issues

The Task Force on Immigration Issues held our first meeting August 5th, with eight people in attendance. The group will operate under the umbrella of the Eco - Social Justice Committee. Our goals are (1) to educate church members about the complex issues surrounding immigration (and immigration reform) today, and (2) to organize and sponsor events around these issues, in harmony with the positions of our church. We are currently planning a series of fall fund-raisers and educational events.

Our initial program will take place Tuesday night, September 23rd, at 7pm, at Benker Hall. The event will inaugurate our church's participation in the Welcoming Massachusetts Campaign, which the UUA has already endorsed. The campaign aims at having the State Legislature declare the Commonwealth a "welcoming state" for immigrants, and it plans to do this by obtaining tens of thousands of individual signature cards and petitions, as well as organizational and community support. Mayors of several towns in the Commonwealth have already declared their towns' support for this campaign. The WMC can be a concrete way of affecting public attitudes towards immigrants and immigration.

The first part of the event will include a description of the Welcoming Massachusetts Campaign and small-group discussions about immigration. The second part of the evening will be an informational slide show by Anthony Zuba, of the Interfaith Workers Alliance, who will explain the reasons--historical, political, economic, and social--that people, especially from Central America, are currently coming to the United States. We're hoping many church members (and their invited friends and families) will attend. The Task Force is planning further programs for both October and November. If you are interested in working with us, please contact Michael Glenn at 781-396-6424 or michaelglenn01@comcast.net

On September 23, 2008, the Immigration Task Force of UUCM will sponsor Anthony Zuba of the lead organizer for The Mass Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice to offer a presentation about immigrant workers in the US as a matter of concern for Social Justice. Following the presentation there will be study and discussion groups to increase our understanding and awareness of the role and social justice needs of immigrant workers in our communities. This event will also kick off a campaign to formally declare Massachusetts as an immigrant friendly state.

On September 9, 2008, one week before the State Primary Elections, the Immigration Task Force of UUCM will sponsor a "Meet the Candidates" event at the Church. We have invited the five candidates who are running in the Democratic Primary in the 34th and 35th Middlesex Districts (which cover Medford and parts of Somerville and Malden) for State Representative to come and share the views and positions on various issues of public interest. The event will run from 7:15PM to 9PM. We hope that all five candidates for the two state representative spots will be there. We will briefly introduce all five candidates. Then each candidate will have two minutes to introduce themselves. We will then ask a series of questions and each candidate will have two minutes to speak to each question. We will ask the audience to write questions on cards, and we will ask those questions at the end until 9PM. Then there will be a social time with coffee and cookies, so people can mingle until 9:30. The Candidates invited are: Carl Sciortino (Incumbent) and Robert Tane (Challenger) in the 34th district and Paul Donato (Incumbent) and Patrick McCabe and Jim Caralis (Challengers) in the 35th district. All members of the church are invited to attend and participate.

UUCM members Michael Glenn, Steve Schmidt, Hank Driscoll, Heather Gomez, Nancy Kurtz, Eileen Dunne, Michael Sandberg, and R.E. Directory Esther Rosado have joined together to form an Immigration Task Force. Over the next three months the task force aims to undertake some specific social action initiatives which address the social justice issue of immigrants in America. Please see our announcements elsewhere in this month's newsletter about two events this September: September 9: Meet the Candidates and September 23 there we will invite a guest speaker to kick off the Welcoming Massachusetts Campaign aimed at making Massachusetts an immigrant friendly state.

UU Medford

147 High Street
Medford, MA 02155
(781) 396-4549
Fax: (781) 396-2965
info@uumedford.org
www.uumedford.org

Church Office Hours

Tues-Wed-Friday: 9 am–2 pm
Thurs: 9 am–12 noon

Rev. Hank Peirce, Minister

revhank@uumedford.org
(781) 643-2523
Office: (781) 396-7309

Esther Rosado

Director of Religious Education
dre@uumedford.org
(781)396-4549

Lynn Battinelli

Church Administrator
(781) 396-4549
info@uumedford.org

Thom Lissey

Music Director
(617) 966-1526
music@uumedford.org



Ongoing Events

Please check calendar section on web-site for an updated listing.

Thursdays Community Cupboard Food Pantry

6:00 –7:30 pm, Sanctuary

Saturday Buddhist Meditation

8:30-11:30 am, Moore Room

Keep in Touch — Announcements E-mail List

To join the announcements e-mail list, contact Miles Fidelman at mfidelman@fidelman.net. You will receive an e-mail confirming that you have been added to the list.

Newsletter Submissions

All articles for the newsletter are due the 15th of each month, for the following month's issue. Please send submissions to Brad Chapman at: newsletter@uumedford.org

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford is a diverse, welcoming community striving to provide a nurturing environment for the spiritual journeys of people at all stages of life. We foster social engagement among ourselves and seek to make a difference in our community and in the world at large.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford

147 High Street Medford, MA 02155

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COMMUNITY CUPBOARD FOOD PANTRY

Because the bad economy has produced even greater need than usual, the Food Pantry in our church was very busy all summer. But the Pantry ran smoothly thanks to the loyal hard work of the many volunteers from the church and from the community who each week buy and deliver outlet bread, transport donated food from Whole Foods, buy and bring in dried beans, drop off donated produce, sort the produce and stock the shelves, sort food in the storage room, staff the Pantry every Thursday, pay the bills, and on a monthly basis rent a truck and bring in a ton of food from the Greater Boston Food Bank. MANY thanks to: Dave Pinckney, Chris Fiorello, Dal Coger, Jim Calorio, Anna Seleny, Karen Abrams, Joan Parker, Geoff Ward, Liz Ammons, Naomi Wilson, David Grayson, Steve Schmidt, Moira Tumbleson, Julia Alvarez, Marilyn McGrath, Michael Glenn, Clare Gallup, Hank Driscoll, Mary Werowinski, Sue Gerould, Susan Jhirad, and Byron Alvarez.

Each Sunday, food donations to the Food Pantry are collected in the wicker basket at the back of the sanctuary, which is carried forward with the offering. Also, we can always use paper and plastic grocery bags. Just leave them in the Food Pantry area at the back of the sanctuary.

-- Liz Ammons, Co-Coordinator

Immigration Task Force Raffle New England Revolution Soccer Tickets

One of the goals of the newly formed Immigration Task Force is to provide support for the Welcoming Massachusetts organization. One of this organization's objectives is to improve access to English education for immigrants. A 2005 report from the think tank MASS Inc. found that being able to speak English as a Second Language is "the new fault line" dividing "those who succeed from those who struggle in the labor market." This same report found that in the year 2000, 137,000 of Massachusetts' adult immigrants had poor English skills. Right down the street from the UU Church of Medford is the organization English at Large, which provides free English literacy instruction to Boston-area adults with one to one tutoring and conversation group programs. The Immigration Task Force will raise money, in a series of fundraising events throughout the year, to help the English at Large organization purchase English as a Second Language textbooks and resource books for its learning library. The first fundraising event, starting 8/17/08, will be a raffle of 4 General Admission New England Revolution Soccer tickets which are good for only one of the following games: Sat. 9/27 Columbus Crew, Sat. 10/4 Real Salt Lake and Sat. 10/25 Kansas City Wizards. Note: These tickets are not good for Playoff games or the 8/30 Beckham game. The tickets will be \$5.00 each and the drawing will be on 9/14/08. Also all soccer games will play rain or shine at Gillette stadium in Foxboro, MA. There is an opportunity to tailgate before the game so bring a cooler with some sandwiches, sodas, munchies and your soccer ball. Contact: Heather Gomez at: h_gomez1@hotmail.com

Clerk's Report - Notes from the Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting was held on June 8, 2008. The principal actions taken were as follows:

The Congregation voted in favor of the Board's recommendation to explore the feasibility of forming a nonprofit organization to purchase the UUCM building and grounds. The Board will over the next year seek appropriate and willing partners to join this cooperative effort as well as look into all aspects of such an effort, including legal, financial and UUA issues. The Board will give a status report to the Congregation every three months. Any decision to sell the church property, either to a nonprofit organization or to another purchaser, will require a separate two-thirds vote of the Congregation at a later date.

The proposed budget was adopted with an amendment to include a cost of living increase for staff.

The following Trustees and Officers were elected:

Board of Trustees:

Miles Fidelman (1 year term)

Mary Stevenson (2 year term)

Karen Johnston, Geoff Ward and Jessie Jaeger (3 year terms)

Clerk: Nancy Kurtz.

Assistant Treasurer: Helen Silver.

Collector: Russell Tripp.

Nominating Committee: Colleen Squires and Sue **Error! Reference source not found..**

Notes from July 8, 2008 Board Meeting:

Geoff Ward was elected Chair and Jesse Jaeger elected vice-chair.

As outgoing chair, Miles Fidelman will fill the position of Past Chair. Miles will devote his attention during the coming year to outreach in the community to seek partners for the building project, as directed by the Congregation at the annual meeting. Periodic reports will be provided to the Congregation throughout the year. Karen Johnston will assist Miles in this endeavor and other members will be recruited.

The Board of Trustees consists of the following members and may be reached by email at:

uumboard@lists.neighborhood.net

Geoff Ward, Karen Johnston, Mary Stevenson, Jesse Jaeger, Miles Fidelman, Phil Bloom, Tom Innis, Denice Sakakeeny-Smith, Hank Driscoll

Space Use Committee

Steve Schmidt and Phil Bloom have volunteered to serve on this committee. They will coordinate requests for short term and longer term use of space in the Church and in Osgood House.