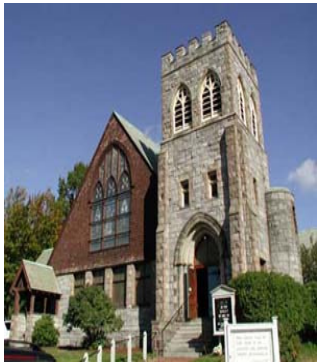


Highlights

www.uumedford.org

(781) 396-4549

February 2009



147 High Street

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

I found myself thinking of our congregation during President Obama's inauguration speech. It was when he said that our present financial problems were *"a consequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some, but also our collective failure to make hard choices."* When he said this I thought of our church, and how we have tried a number of different ways to begin to address our church's financial problems, to little success. This is not because of greed but our ability to make hard choices. I write this knowing that this year's pledge and gift income is the best I have ever seen here. Even on snowing Sundays when only half the usual number of people attend worship, the amount that is collected is really astounding, and still it is not enough.

In reading the financial report that Helen Silver has painstakingly put together, it is easy to see that we too have seen our investments shrink and the income from them also decrease. She honestly says that if something is not done the non-restricted funds will be gone by the end of 2011. That is not something that any of us want to deal with, it is a hard choice that we have ignored for too long. Ours is a church that talks about finances in fits and starts, so we vacillate between scaring ourselves and ignoring what is right in front of us, the fact that we are spending money that we can't afford to spend.

We need to understand that the solution to our church's financial issues lies with us, not lay in selling off property or getting someone from outside to bring us a solution and cash. Even if we were to do one of those things if we don't fix what is at the core of our church's money issues we will just be back at this point at some future time. We all need to own the church's money issue, we have to raise the money and we have to be willing to own the budget and make difficult decisions if that is what is needed. We have NO TREASURER, we have NO FINANCE COMMITTEE, Helen Silver who has taken on the Herculeaneum task of working with our money is the assistant treasurer. What I want to propose is that ALL OF US become the finance committee. I propose that we have some all church meetings to educate us and help us to own the stewardship of our congregation.

I write this letter to you to motivate you. I have seen time and again that when we have a clear vision of what we are doing we are able to rise to the occasion. This past winter holiday, while our nation as a whole and some of us in particular deal with a severe economic down turn, we were able to raise over \$3,100. for the *It's Not Your Birthday Project*. That is truly amazing. With that money we will be able to assist those in the Gulf region rebuild and aid Centro Presente in educating the immigrant community of Somerville. We raised that money because we had a clear vision of what it was for, we understood that if we did with a little less we could help others. This is a theology of abundance, this is a belief that the work of our hands can transform others and in doing so will transform us as well.

So my fellow stewards I look forward to your agitation and involvement. - Rev. Hank

Worship Services for February

FEB 1: St. Sid Day**- Rev. Hank Peirce**

What makes something a holiday? This weekend marks the half-way point between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, known here in the States as Ground Hog Day. And who is Sid? You'll have to come to find out.

FEB 8: Our Lincoln**- Rev. Hank Pierce**

This week marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of the 16th president, Abraham Lincoln. Universalist poet Carl Sandburg wrote one of the best biographies of Lincoln and made some interesting connections between Honest Abe and our faith.

FEB 15: Guest Minister Rev. John Burciaga

John recently retired after 51 years in the ministry. He is anything but old and retiring it is a pleasure to have him with us this day.

FEB 22: I Don't Believe in Atheists**- Rev. Hank Peirce**

Christopher Hitchens has written a number of books that address the religious impulses in our nation. In his newest book he takes a critical look at the neo-atheist movement and finds it lacking the depth of previous anti-clerical ones.

TUESDAY NIGHT EVENTS

A UUCM board of trustees project originating in the past year's strategic planning café conversations project. It is a response to requests for more community-building, spirituality-exploring, social action events at UUCM. Our goal is to provide a Tuesday night program every Tuesday night from September to June. Every Tuesday night 7pm in Benker Hall, doors open at 6:45pm. Any suggestions, questions, complaints, praise, etc., call Hank Driscoll.

2-03-09: Memoirs, a talk by Mary Stevenson.

2-10-09: Rise Up Singing Group, led by Paul Estin.

2-17-09: Meditation Study/Support Group, led by Steve Schmidt.

2-24-09: Social Justice Event, speaker TBA.

Communication Within the UUCM Community

A priority of the UUCM Board of Directors is the creation and fostering of reliable lines of communication among our community members. Communication and community both begin "c-o-m-m-u-n." That is not happenstance. They are flip sides of the same coin.

Here is a partial list of resources and procedures everyone should be aware of, with more to come.

Sunday's Order of Service: To get an announcement onto Sunday's list, email your announcement to the church office -- email address info@uumedford.org -- before 9:00 a.m. Friday. Friday is when the Order of Service gets composed and printed.

Church email distribution list: To get an announcement published on the list, email your announcement to uumedford-announce@lists.neighborhood.net. It will be sent out as soon as it gets approved by one of the list gatekeepers. To get on the email distribution list, email a request to the church office at the address above or to Miles Fidelman at mfidelman@meetinghouse.net. Newsletter: Recent issues of this newsletter are available online. Go to the UUCM home page at <http://uumedford.org> and click on the "Newsletter" link.

Thank You

Worship Service Volunteers Acknowledgement. Many thanks to the following people who helped make the **Christmas Eve Candle Light Service** such a big success:

Social Hour hosts: Rita Bamford, Eileen Dunne, Camilla Fox, Loren Gomez and Karen Heinze

Greeters: Liz Ammons, Clare Gallup, Maria Muller and Steve Schmidt

Bell ringer: Russell Tripp

Regular Sunday Service (Dec & Jan):

Social Hour hosts: Karen Johnston (twice!), Phil & Annette Bloom, Denice Sakakeeny-Smith, Linda Schwetz, Chris Fiorello

Greeters: Mark Koenig, Troy Liston, Bob Stockwell, Anne Stevenson, Susan Jhirad, Michael Glenn, Geoff Ward, Steve Schmidt

Bell Ringers: Jonah St. Clair

Flower contributors: Karen Johnston & Matt Haberstroh, Janice Dallas

Thank you to Russell Tripp for his ongoing help with making the coffee for Social Hour.

Newsletter Volunteer Acknowledgement: Thank you Brad Chapman for his ongoing contribution as editor in chief of this newsletter.

Worship volunteers will be acknowledged monthly in this newsletter. Please let us know if we missed anyone.

**BUILDING PARTNERSHIP PROJECT:
2nd QUARTERLY REPORT**

As part of our project to solicit partners for our buildings, we (the Board) are on the hook to report progress every three months. This is our 2nd report.

Since our first report, we've talked to several organizations about interest in sharing our buildings – notably the Medford Historical Society, the Medford Arts Council, and the Medford Revitalization Committee. So far, we've found only limited interest, and limited financial means. The current economic crisis is not helping.

In our previous report, we indicated that ALL of us need to be beating the bushes to find prospective partners – we need to get our message out to 1000s of people, in the hopes of finding a small number of viable potential partners (much like a job search – it's all about networking, networking, networking)

We asked for input, we asked for people to spread the word - unfortunately, we've heard practically nothing. So... we'd like to reiterate: for this to work, **WE NEED EVERY MEMBER OF OUR COMMUNITY TO GET THE MESSAGE OUT.**

The message is a simple one: We have a big, beautiful, historic, and recently restored building that's incredibly under-utilized; plus the Os-good House. The buildings offer work spaces, meeting spaces, classroom spaces, performance space, gallery space, event space, etc. - largely unused during the week and on Saturdays. We're looking for 1, 2, or 3 organizations to join forces with us, and buy into the buildings as partners - so we can use the buildings to their potential. We're not talking tiny organizations - we're looking for another Congregation, or an orchestra, or a theater group, or a school - folks with budgets and bank accounts similar to our own; and with their own membership bases; spending \$20,000 or more in rent every year, or maybe with a building that's eating them alive that they want to sell.

We need you to tell people that we're looking. If you know a City Councilor or other public official, tell him or her. If you're a member of the Chamber of Commerce, or on a City Commission, or a non-profit board; spread the word. If you know any reporters, tell them.

We don't need more theoretical ideas, we need to get the message out, and we need to make contact with real people and organizations. When you find someone who's interested, send them my way email:

mfidelman@meetinghouse.net or phone: 617-558-3698.

- Miles Fidelman, for the Board



COMMUNITY CUPBOARD FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry is very happy to report that we received a Tufts Neighborhood Service Fund Grant again this year. If you know anyone at Tufts, say thanks!

If you are interested in volunteering, there are two things the Food Pantry needs. First, we need one or two people to put in some time (whenever is convenient for you) sorting food. We have been receiving a lot of food donations, which is wonderful; but the regular volunteers don't have time to get it sorted. Second, we need a person to attend the once-a-month Hunger Network meeting at TriCap in Malden to represent the Food Pantry. The meeting takes place on the second Tuesday morning each month from 9:30-11:00 and is interesting and worthwhile. At it representatives from food pantries in Medford, Malden, and Everett share ideas and learn useful things to take back to the individual pantries. If you are interested in either of these opportunities, talk to Liz Ammons.

..--Liz Ammons, Co-Coordinator

UU Medford

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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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FROM THE TASK FORCE ON IMMIGRATION ISSUES

We are now working on a number of projects this month. Join us!

1. We are discussing whether to join a local "cluster" to support refugees and asylum seekers. Asylum seekers have left home because of war, famine, or religious, political or other kinds of persecution. Refugees, seeking a better life, come to this country through international agencies. A **cluster** offers these people group social support until they achieve a durable self-sufficiency and become productive members of our community. The cluster brings together persons from several different congregations. Their ministry includes helping clients find a place to live; rental assistance and help with medical and legal referrals; and aid with education, transportation, food and acculturation. Most clients become self-sufficient within six and eighteen months. Our work would be done in cooperation with Malden's Refugee Immigration Ministry (RIM), a group with nine years of experience. RIM currently administers seven different clusters in the state. Their staff interviews and vetts all clients; gives all cluster volunteers a basic training around issues such as setting boundaries; and stand ready to help at all times.

We are discussing whether to join the local interfaith Malden-Melrose cluster, as a first step to eventually developing a Medford-based group. You too are invited to become a part of this exciting ministry.

Our next Task Force meeting will be Monday night, February 2nd, at 7pm, at Michael Glenn's house, 26 Farragut Avenue, Medford. If you are interested in the discussion around clusters, you are welcome to attend.

2. We're co-sponsoring a film series at the Medford Public Library.

Thursday, February 19th at 6:30 pm: "The Joy Luck Club"

The Task Force has partnered with the Medford Library to present a monthly series of films on immigration. The films, all successful commercial movies, present the human side of immigrant experience, and can help people better grasp the reality of the issues around immigration.

February's movie is "The Joy Luck Club" (1993). Four older women, all Chinese immigrants living in San Francisco, meet regularly to play mah-jong, eat and tell stories. Each of these women has an adult Chinese-American daughter. The film, structured as a series of flashbacks, reveals the hidden pasts of the older women and explores the cultural conflict and relationships between mothers and daughters.

3. We continue to support the Equality in Education Act.

Members of the Task Force met in December with Representative Donato and won his backing and sponsorship for the Equality in Education Act. This bill would grant in-state tuition to Massachusetts high school graduates who are children of undocumented immigrants. We continue to work to make this bill into law.

4. We are planning two major public talks on immigration.

On Tuesday, March 24th, professor (Salem State) Aviva Chomsky, author of [They Take Our Jobs! and 20 other myths about immigration](#), will present a public talk at our church entitled, "Immigration and Human Rights." We will follow this up with a talk on May 26th about "The Future of Immigration reform."

If you are interested in working with us, please contact Michael Glenn at 781-396-6424 or michaelglenn01@comcast.net. And check out our bulletin board in Benker Hall.