

The COMMON

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day *Congregation to Mark King Day January 18*



As evidenced below, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, jr., had close ties to Unitarian Universalism. Indeed, some would argue that had cultural and sociopolitical circumstances been different, MLK might well

have been UU, rather than Baptist. Speculation aside, we feel a special relationship with Dr. King, one to which we invite to share not only members and friends but also the wider community.

CALENDAR

Pulpit

Jan 4

Rev. Charles J. Stephens

Jan. 11

Robert Shetterly

Jan 18.

Rev. Charles J. Stephens

Jan 25

Rev. Charles J. Stephens

Events

Jan. 15, Board Meeting

Jan. 18, Pot Luck
Lunch

INTRODUCTION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING AS 1966 WARE LECTURER

Goethe observed that "great men create circumstances even more than circumstances create great men." Is this man more the product of his times or the architect of his age? In either case, the god of history is with him. Preacher, reformer, citizen, man of peace, lover of justice, in any history

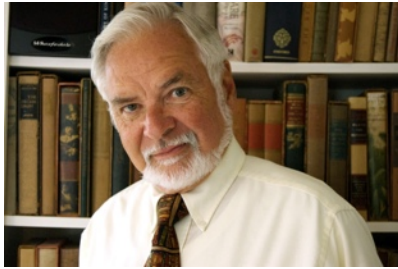


he will be appraised as one of the truly great men of this century. We offer him not only our respect, but our love and our loyal support.

Dana McLean Greeley, UUA President,
1966 General Assembly

PRESIDENT'S DESK

Lynn Parsons



Colin Powell photo

There is no denying that our Congregation is faced with extraordinary challenges in the New Year, one of which is the completion of the search for a new minister. I know we can count on the Ministerial Search Committee to keep us informed of their progress (see below).

But the search is only one of the challenges. Equally important is the need to grow our Congregation, which means overcoming the demographic challenges that face many congregations in New England. The ministerial search process requires the incumbent lay leader to compose a "welcoming" letter to potential candidates. Here, in part, is what I wrote:

Our Meeting House actually rests on land owned by the town of Castine. This is a testament to its former status not only as a place of worship but as a "meeting house" for the town's secular affairs, including town meetings and criminal trials. Those days are long past, but the historic nature of our Meeting House still lingers, as nearly all who enter our doors immediately sense.

The challenges facing our new minister do not lie in revering our past, however. Rather they lie in

using it to appeal to a newer, younger, more diverse group of members, without losing track of where we came from.

In the coming weeks we need to develop strategies for meeting that challenge and making that appeal. I have a few ideas on that subject, which I shall be sharing with the Governing Board. But in the meantime, let me remind all of you that Board meetings (currently 8:30am every third Thursday) are open to the public. Those unable to attend are welcome to communicate with me or any Board member. I'm sure that I speak for them when I say that we are eager for suggestions from both member and friends of the UUC.

New Board Elected

A new Governing Board was elected at the Congregation's Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 14 but, with the prominent exception of the Presidency, it looks a lot like its predecessor.

Lynn Parsons is our new President, succeeding Del Davis, and Kent Price was replaced by Colin Powell as Alternate Member, but all other six members and officers remain in their positions.

In addition to Parsons and Powell, elected to new terms were Vice President Gil Tenney, Clerk Anne Romans, and Member Nancy Guy. Continuing in existing terms are Members Tom Mason and Leslie Fairbank. A full list is on the back page of every issue of *The Common*.

COGITATIONS

Rev. Charles J. Stephens



As your minister, I see the many cards and letters of appreciation that come to our Congregation. It is moving to know what a major impact UUCC has locally here in Castine and also in a far greater area. You may know, but not realize fully the impact your congregation is having for the common good.

As we enter the new year, I want to remind you of how important you and your congregation are to literally thousands of people. Our congregation is an arm of social justice and social service that joins with others and multiplies the good we could never do alone.

As individuals and as a congregation you support the UU Service Committee to advance human rights and social justice around the world. You do this through being a member of the UU Service Committee, through gifts during the Guest at your Table efforts now going on and through UUSC being in the congregation's budget. UUCC was awarded the James Luther Adams 2014 Award in honor of the generous congregational support given this year.

As individuals and as a congregation you add to the strength and vitality of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines, and more specifically your sister congregation there in Aquino, on the Island of Negros and the 34 students supported by your individual gifts to the Dollars for Scholars Program. Your congregation has been so supportive that for the last two years members of UUCC have received national recognition as Stewards of Partnership for the work being done by UUCC.

Both Bucksport Community Concerns and the Blue Hill Tree of Life food pantries are supported by special gifts of food and money on the first Sunday of each month. Those who volunteer at these pantries are always moved by the appreciation shown by those who need to come to the food pantry for the food that helps them feed their hungry families.

To help assure adequate support of our denomination's social justice work, we have line items in the annual budget for the UU Service Committee, UU United Nations Office, and UU Women's Federation.

And then there are our very own Pulliam Grants, made possible by the late Deborah Pulliam and awarded on review of requests from local organizations. Pulliam Grants in 2014 were made to:

Ellsworth Free Medical Clinic	\$4000
Birdsacre (Stanwood Wildlife Sanctuary)	\$2500
Eastern ME Peace and Justice Center	\$3600
Habitat for Humanity	\$1900

SOCIAL JUSTICE SUPPORT, *CONTINUED*

Wait, there's more!

Every year we award to three matriculating high school graduates Hilton Scholarships, in honor and memory of Rev. Hilton, who served as minister here many years ago. We also support:

- Emmaus Homeless Shelter in Ellsworth.
- The Next Step Domestic Violence Project, also in Ellsworth, serving Washington and Hancock Counties.
- Healthy Peninsula – working in the areas of Early Childhood, Healthy Aging & Healthy Eating.
- Maine Council of Churches – seeking common ground, working for the common good.
- The Castine Fuel Fund that helps with fuel when people run short of funds.

And as your minister, I have access to a Minister's Discretionary fund

What I see displayed in the actions of the individual members of UUC and the congregation as a whole speaks clearly about the meaning, the mission and the heart of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Castine. Well done!

**MEMBERSHIP? UUSC?**

Rev. Charles J. Stephens

Interested in Membership? If you have been attending UUC and might want to sign our membership book, I invite you to talk with me at church or call or email me at minister@uucastine.org. The normal process of formally joining our congregation is for a person to contact me indicating interest. Then we make an appointment to talk about what "membership" means and I can address any questions you might have. Know that the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Castine with a full heart welcomes those who identify with our principles and purposes to join us in our quest to create a caring and welcoming liberal religious congregation.

What to do with the "Guest at Your Table" envelopes

This annual campaign supports our UU human rights organization, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, which teaches people of all ages about human needs, human rights, and sharing. We provide this opportunity as an invitation for us to be aware of people from around the world who need our support in their struggle for basic human rights. The gifts we give to UUSC multiply the power of each one of us as individuals in protecting human rights! We have extra envelopes if you did not receive one. Or you can just write a check to "UUSC" and put it in the offering plate. Thank you!

JANUARY PULPIT PREVIEW

Charles J. Stephens

4 “Why become A Green Sanctuary?”

The Green Sanctuary Program of the UUA provides a structure for congregations to examine their current environmental impacts and move toward more sustainable practices in ways grounded in Unitarian Universalism. Green Sanctuary is a path for congregations who want to walk their talk when it comes to protecting our Mother Earth.

11 Charles OFF

Robert Shetterly will be our guest speaker and display the latest in his portraits of “Americans Who Tell the Truth.”

18 “The Compassion of Martin Luther King, Jr.”

MLK, Jr. advised that “...working together we can move beyond some of our old racial wounds, and that in fact we have no choice if we are to continue on the path of a more perfect union.” When faced with hostility, King and his followers’ nonviolent response required a great deal of mindfulness and commitment to nonviolence in the face of violence and repression.

25 “Question the Minister Sunday”

Each year I like to do a Sunday where I invite those in the congregation to write down a question they would like to ask me about theology, Unitarian Universalism, my approach to ministry, our UU Principles or something else about which you would like me to respond .

MAMA CASS ELLIOT: COMING IN LOVE

There's a new world coming
And it's just around the bend
There's a new world coming
This one's coming to an end

There's a new voice calling
You can hear it if you try
And it's growing stronger
With each day that passes by

There's a brand new morning
Rising clear and sweet and free
There's a new day dawning
That belongs to you and me

Yes, a new world's coming
The one we've had visions of
Coming in peace, coming in joy
Coming in love Mama Cass

Brought to *The Common* by Gena Churchill.
Happy New Year!



Mama Cass Elliot (top) in 1966, with Mamas and Papas Denny Doherty and John & Michelle Philips

MINISTERIAL SEARCH

The beginning – a learning process

Following UUA guidelines as voted by the congregation, the Board proposed a seven-member Ministerial Search Committee. After being charged by the congregation at its **May 4th** meeting, the committee began its work on **June 13th**. A two-day retreat was facilitated by our Ministerial Settlement Representative, assigned to us by the UUA. The purpose was to familiarize the committee with the schedule and suggested steps involved in a ministerial search and to assign individual responsibilities for various tasks. The Search Committee has met weekly since then.

Information gathering – you tell us

July and **August** were spent gathering in-depth information. Six “cottage meetings” held in members’ homes provided the initial opportunity to find out what attributes we were looking for in our new minister and how to honestly describe our congregation to potential candidates. Forty-nine members and friends participated. A detailed survey tailored to our congregation was then distributed by hand and by mail. By the August 31st deadline, fifty-three responses were collected. Forty-one of our sixty members and twelve friends responded. Both of these efforts were essential to provide the foundation for the search.

What if – exploring possibilities

Following UUA guidelines, the Search Committee sponsored a “Beyond Categorical Thinking” weekend **August 16th** and **17th**. A UUA trained facilitator worked with the Search Committee and delivered the Sunday sermon followed by a three-hour workshop attended by twenty-five congregants exploring situations and issues that might arise during a ministerial search.

Launching the search – going live

During **September**, **October** and **November**, the Search Committee focused on compiling and refining the information gathered. The first official kickoff of the search was the launching online of

our Congregational Record that announced our search and invited the interest of potential candidates. Our search went live on **December 1st**. The backbone of the CR is made up of the information gathered throughout July and August. In addition to describing Castine and the surrounding area, we were asked to provide an honest description of our congregation and to list the attributes in a minister most valued by us. The other piece of the information that will be made available to potential candidates is the Packet, a password protected interactive website that goes into much more detail about us and includes video, interviews, photos, documents, and local information in an effort to convey a complete and attractive presentation. After the resignation of a committee member in mid-November, the remaining members consulted with the Ministerial Search Representative and then asked for and received the support of the Board to continue the search with six members. The Congregation indicated its support by voting to continue the search at the Annual Meeting in December 2014.



What happens next

The Search Committee will receive applications during **January** and will narrow the field to the three candidates who most closely match the needs and attributes set forth by the congregation. Vetting of candidates will take place during **February** and **March** and the selected final candidate will be invited to visit Castine in **April**. This will be an in-depth opportunity for the candidate to get to know us and for us to get to know the candidate. Following the visit, the congregation will vote whether or not to call the candidate to be our settled minister. If called, the minister would begin in August or September.

IF THERE IS A WILL, THERE IS A WAY

Gil Tenney

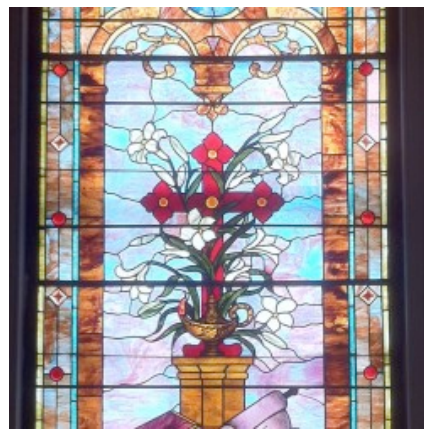
I find it easy to fall into a trap of assigning a simple sounding solution to very complex, perplexing problems. I feel safe in suggesting, however, that it takes a strong will and encouragement for a parent struggling with poverty to make a better life for the children; enabling a child to seek higher education, for example, when the parent did not complete high school. I can imagine that, after many years or multiple generations of struggling to find an affordable home or a healthy meal or fighting a system that appears not to care, it must be all too easy to just give up.

Please meet Tammy*, mother of three (ages 10 to mid-teens), living on a small disability pension and part-time employment income of her husband. Tammy has a “will”, which is an understatement; “passionate dedication” is more suitable. She has a calling to make life better for her children and others experiencing the stresses of poverty she has been facing for years. Tammy is known by some as a “Neighborhood Navigator.”

Tammy moved to a low-income housing development in Sedgwick a few years ago. She and her family occupy one of ten houses down a dirt road off the Sedgwick Ridge Road. Soon after she and her family moved in, she became aware of a lack of trust among each of the neighboring families. Instinctively she knew if she could reach the neighboring children, she would eventually reach the parents and could build sufficient trust that would enable her to help wherever, however she could.

Tammy opened her home to the children. She organized Easter egg hunts,

Halloween parties, Christmas events and generally turned her modest home into a mini-neighborhood center. She also is available all day every Monday at the Sedgwick Elementary School’s Parent Resource Center, which she started and maintains with the support of Principal Don Buckingham. But that was not enough. She knew hunger and availability of healthy food was a problem. She was determined to find a location to prepare and serve free healthy meals.



Stained Glass, North Sedgwick Baptist Church

At the other end of the Ridge Road is the lovely 1845 North Sedgwick Baptist Church with a basement kitchen and dining area. If only she could turn this space into a neighborhood center where meals could be served, families could gather and new friendships made. Unfortunately, the church has been closed in the winter for lack of funds for heating oil.

Well, there appeared to be a simple solution. Get some money. Within a few weeks and without hesitation, Castine’s Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Trinitarian Congregational Parish, Trinity Episcopal Church, the Blue Hill Baptist Church, and Washington Hancock-County Agency provided necessary funding to make Tammy’s dream a reality. *go to p 8*

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Soon thereafter, food support came in from Blue Hill's St. Francis by the Sea, Stonington's St. Brendan the Navigator, the Sedgwick Elementary School and the Tree of Life Food Pantry. December 12th was set for the first community free dinner. No one knew if anyone would come, whether there would be enough food or sufficient volunteer help. But Tammy had faith. If there is a will, there is a way.

Walking into the church mid-afternoon before the dinner, I was greeted by happy children's voices and Tammy's welcoming smile, in spite of her chronic back pain. She had been hard at work all day.

So how did the first neighborhood supper end up? Sixty-two meals were served, of which 24 were delivered to home-bound neighbors. Was it a miracle or a strong will? It happened, and that is what is important.

Caroling and a second community meal a few days before Christmas were next on the calendar. Many toys, books, and special gifts were donated to further brighten the children's Christmas.

What can we learn? Take one Neighborhood Navigator with a will to make things happen, link with a network of community support and miracles can happen.

Thank you, Tammy and all who support your efforts. Also, I would not be complete in my expression of thanks without a pat on the back for the newly formed Community Resource Collaborative (CRC) in Blue Hill. CRC with its small but growing volunteer force has been instrumental in coordinating this and other initiatives.

Suggested reading – *The Crossing* by Todd Schwartz on the early life's struggle of Donna Beegle, mother of two, homeless, hungry and no high school diploma and now a Ph.D and dedicated to breaking the bonds of poverty. Go to http://www.combarriers.com/pdf/the_crossing.pdf

Please contact me if you would like to meet Dr. Beegle and hear her story. Donna is one of my inspirations to get involved and the originator of the Neighborhood Navigator concept.

*note – Tammy reviewed and approved this text and requested the use of her name.

Gil Tenney
326-4372

Remember from the related article in The Common in December that Gil would be on the lookout for a bike for a 5-year old boy? Where there's a will, there's a way, and smiles tell the story.

Gavin, age 5, in Sedgwick, receives his first two wheeler and helmet, donated by our own Erik Davis.



ALVION KIMBALL HONORED



The Maine Innkeepers Association presented Alvion Kimball of the Orland House B&B with the coveted Innkeeper of the Year Award at their annual meeting in November. Connie Russell of the Samoset Resort presented the prestigious award, given annually to an active Innkeeper who has significantly contributed to the development of the Maine Innkeepers Association.

The inscription reads: "To an Innkeeper who has been instrumental in growing the tourism industry in Maine, specifically in his beloved Downeast Acadia region. Alvion is blessed with a quiet leadership style that has served him well. He has been a true leader in our Association."

Warmest congratulations, Alvion & Cindi!



MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Lynn Parsons, President
 Gil Tenney, Vice President
 Diana Bernard, Treasurer
 Anne Romans, Clerk
 Nancy Guy
 Tom Mason
 Leslie Fairbank
 Colin Powell, Alternate

The Governing Board meets in the Parish House at 8:30 am on the third Thursday of each month. Observers always are welcome.

THE COMMON

The Common is published monthly and distributed in both electronic and photocopy forms. All members and friends are invited to submit items for consideration. Send submissions or comments to editor Kent Price at kapricorn75@gmail.com. Deadline is the 15th of the month preceding publication.

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