

The COMMON

Think of a minister;

Don't think of an elephant.



How are you doing with your imaging? Can you ignore that elephant, once he injects his way into your imagination?

elephant. And distinct images may have come to mind. In terms of a minister, what were those images? Was it a person of a particular gender, race, or age?

Chances are you thought of both a minister and that pesky

continues on page 3

CALENDAR

Pulpit

August 3
Rev. Charles Stephens

August 10
Rev. Charles Stephens

August 17
Donna Dolham

August 24
Rev. Charles Stephens

August 31
Colin Powell

Events

August 12
Trio Cleonice

August 16 - 17
Beyond
Categorical Thinking

FROM THE BOARD

DELACROIX DAVIS III, PRESIDENT

This column in the July issue of *The Common* reported the members of negotiating team in the ministerial search process are Peter Fairbank, Diana Bernard, and Standish Bourne. As suggested by the Unitarian Universalist Association, one is from the Search Committee, one is from the



Governing Board, and one is a greatly respected long-time member of the congregation. The role of the negotiating team is to determine a compensation package for the prospective minister. *continues on next page*

While that is true, it is a very incomplete description of the responsibilities of the negotiating team.

The material that follows is presented without change from the website of the Transitions Office of the UUA.

“The negotiating team’s purpose is to develop for board approval a draft ministry agreement that reflects the relationship the congregation hopes to have with the minister it calls, and then to negotiate it with the ministerial candidate. The team should meet with the board several times to achieve a clear understanding on the limits of the salary and housing amount set by the board and the plan for negotiating a final agreement.

Subsequent to a second consultation, the Ministerial Search Representative may wish to meet briefly with the negotiating team. To maintain the integrity of the search committee’s process, negotiating team members who are not also on the search committee should not attend the MSR’s consultation with the committee.

The draft agreement may be detailed or highly general, a multi-page, contract-like document or a two-page letter. A detailed discussion and examples can be found in Joint Recommendations on Agreements between Ministers and Congregations.

The board, for its part, should be prepared to support any ministry agreement negotiated within its understanding with the negotiating team. The draft agreement should be included in the informational packet prepared by the search committee and discussed with each pre-candidate, with notes made of the response of each. It is not necessary at this point to resolve any differences, only to acknowledge that they exist and will need to be resolved if this person is chosen as the candidate. Members of the negotiating team who are not on the search committee should not meet with the pre-candidates.”

So it is easy to grasp that the negotiating team plays a critical role in the process of selecting a new minister. The terms of the draft agreement will affect the covenantal relationship between the congregation and minister for the duration of the minister’s service.

Finally, it is encouraging to note that attendance and involvement in the Cottage Meetings referenced in earlier columns have been tremendous to date. Anyone friend or member of the congregation who has not yet attended a meeting is strongly encouraged to contact the Search Committee and sign up.

DON'T THINK OF AN ELEPHANT

It's natural for people to assume that their ideal minister appears a certain way. Often ministers who are not white or male or heterosexual or able-bodied or of a particular age or class are discounted and seen as "less than". These credentialed ministers still face discrimination as part of the ministerial search process.

As Anne Parsons explains below, In our effort to find the best match, our congregation will host a Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop and worship service the weekend of August 16 & 17. This is yet another way for us to improve the odds that regardless of identity, we will find the minister who is the best match for us.



Anne Parsons, for the Search Committee:

Following the UUA search guidelines accepted by the congregation, Search Committee members selected by the congregation: Peter Fairbank, Elaine Gerard-Climo, Debby Neve, Anne Parsons, Anne Price, Emma Sweet and Brooke Tenney, initiated two strategies to gather information from the congregation to define ourselves and to describe the skills and attributes we are looking for in our next minister.

The first step was a series of "cottage meetings" -- gatherings in several homes of approximately ten members and friends each to develop insights

about ourselves. These meetings produced a surprising divergence of opinion as well as eliciting common themes about who we are.

The second part of our information gathering effort is the survey that you will receive either in person at a Sunday service or via US mail. The Search Committee put in a lot of effort developing it and we urge you to take the time to respond. We hope that in addition to gathering necessary information, you will be stimulated by some of the questions asked. Please return your completed survey in person or via the US postal service as soon as possible. The double envelope guarantees anonymity.

Our findings will be compiled and shared with the congregation as well as being a very important part of our presentation to potential candidates. The information will also be useful as the Negotiating Team consisting of Diana Bernard, Stan Bourne and Peter Fairbank develop a job description and ministerial agreement.

The Unitarian Universalist Association, under whose guidelines we operate, strongly suggests that we take advantage of an exploratory workshop offered to congregations in transition. We have scheduled a "Beyond Categorical Thinking" weekend August 16 & 17. Donna Dolham, a UUA-trained leader, will work with the Search Team and Board on Saturday and deliver the Sunday sermon, followed by a lunch and a workshop for the congregation. We have scheduled this in August to allow as many of our seasonal members and friends to participate.

Two of our goals that we try never to lose sight of are eliciting the full participation of our members and friends and being as transparent as possible regarding the search process. There is a Search Committee Bulletin Board in the Parish House with a question box on the table below it. Search Committee members wearing green name tags are available during coffee hour to answer process questions -- Just Ask!

CHARLES' COGITATIONS



This is a significant time in the life of your congregation. This is your congregation if you have been a member for many years, or for less than a year. This is also your congregation if you are a regular friend of UUCC or even an occasional visitor and supporter. Please don't assume that you don't have anything to add to the process. This is an open and welcoming congregation in many ways and you are invited, encouraged, and exhorted to participate in this formative and transitional period in the 224 year life of Unitarian Universalism in Castine.

Think about it! The mission of UUCC is, "To establish and promote an open and welcoming congregation that supports and sustains the spiritual, ethical, intellectual, and overall well being of our members while serving our broader communities." The question before those attending the Ministerial Search Committee's Cottage Meetings and filling out the congregational survey will help inform your Search Committee as to how the congregation wants to go about fulfilling that mission.

If you have any opinions about this, now is the time to invest in the process. The Search Committee members have intentionally focused on this now to better include the valuable ideas of those who are here only during the summer. The Cottage Meetings are designed to better gather valuable comments shared in a small group discussion. The survey is designed to reach out to people in a written way that may spark comments that people have not already made in the small gatherings. And the members of the Search Committee are trying to be as open and available as possible to receive your ideas and suggestions.

All the comments and ideas from all who participate will then be studied and analyzed so that the best possible match can be made with your newly settled minister. She or he will be searching their own mind and heart to express what kind of ministry they feel they are best suited for and what kind of ministry they want to develop with a congregation over the coming years.

It is an exciting time in the life of your congregation and your Search Committee doesn't want to take on this significant challenge without your input and support. The goal is to settle your new minister in the 225th year of your congregation's presence here in Castine. Be a part of the process by being a part of its future.

Charles J. Stephens, your Interim Minister

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Kay Hansen, Religious Educator

Most of you are aware by now that we have started to reorganize the Parish House to provide more space for religious education and as more private space for the minister. The room we have been using for all ages will be the minister's office during the week and space for the youngest children on Sundays. The corner where the piano had been will be a space for older children and youth. We hope you will bear with us as we experiment with different ways to provide adequate space for our programs at UUC.

During August we will continue with our program of "Getting to Know Each Other." At the time of this writing, we have been choosing photos to share of our visit to Timberwyck Farm. Here are some favorites, along with captions the children have added.



Everyone watches Colin milk a goat



Samantha, Silas, Jane, and Gabe eat lunch



Erik feeds Meriweather, the pig, while Cameron watches



Jane & Cameron water veggies



Erik, Morgan, and Chad watch Nubian goats



Gabe, Eli, Samantha, Cameron, & Jane:

UU CASTINE HONORED, AGAIN

Kent Price

At its annual meeting, held June 27 at the Providence General Assembly, the UU Partner Church Council recognized your editor as one of five national Stewards of Partnership.

Other winners were:

- Tom Darner, St. John's UU Church, Cincinnati
- Bill Lauman, East Shore Unitarian, in Bellevue, Washington
- Patricia Leiby, First Parish, Bedford, Mass.
- Roger Mattlage, First Parish, Concord Mass.



I am flanked here by Tom Darner and Roger Mattlage

This award was especially meaningful in that Elaine Gerard-Climo was named a Steward in 2013! It must be rare indeed for one small congregation to be so honored on two successive years.

On the certificate I received, along with a handsome plaque that was hand-crafted in Transylvania, the Board noted:



.....Steward of Partnership awards are given annually by the Board of Directors to recognize "exceptional care for partnerships." "We know," wrote the Board, "that long-term partnerships do not automatically sustain themselves. It takes attention, time, and loving care to maintain long distance connections and nurture friendships. Often this work is not publicly recognized even though it is what keeps partnerships thriving and congregations involved."

"We honor and treasure all our winners have done and continue to do for Unitarians and UUs around the world."

It was a special treat to chat a bit with the Rev. Jennifer Emrich, our student intern several years ago and a recent addition to the Partner Church Council Board of Directors. She brought along about a dozen of her congregation's middle-school kids, including her daughter, Maddy, once a toddler on our Parish House carpet. As many of you know, Jennifer now is minister at the Yarmouth ME Universalist Church. I spoke to her after the event and we'll try to have her as a guest in our pulpit sometime during the coming year.



TRIO CLEONICE RETURNS

Perhaps the only classical music ensemble to be named after a restaurant, Trio Cleonice makes a triumphant return to our Meeting House not once, but twice--on Tuesday, August 12, and again on Wednesday, September 3, both at 7 pm. The programs will differ, so you may attend both evenings and be inspired all over again.

Tuesday, August 12th's program includes works by Haydn, Davidovsky, and Schumann.

On Wednesday, September 3, the Trio will interpret Beethoven, Ravel, and Dvorak.

Given that the Trio annually has graced our performance nook for several years now, one might be tempted to take them for granted. *Au contraire*, these are very special musicians, professionally polished well beyond their years. They are in high demand across the nation and in Europe, and we are fortunate indeed that they love to play for us.



Trio Cleonice is made up of three outstanding young musicians: Ari Isaacman-Beck, violin; Gwen Krosnick, cello; and Emely Phelps, piano. Together they are the Graduate Piano Trio in Residence at the New England Conservatory, and they are quite remarkable. A donation of \$10 or more is suggested.

HOSPITALITY

Hospitality Chair Pam Person writes, "Many thanks to all who ushered and prepared coffee hour in July and have signed up for August!"

Here are the ushers for July 27 and for August:

July 27, Sanford and Jean Warren
 August 3, Deane and Sandra Richardson
 August 10, Fran Bos
 August 17, Del Davis
 August 24, Mary Ellen Hunt
 August 31, Kent Price and Lynn Parsons

Coffee hour hosts for July 27, August, and September 7

July 27, Sally Chadbourne
 August 3, Carolyn and David Mathisasen
 August 10, Barbara Fleck
 August 17, [Lunch and workshop]
 August 24, Elaine Gerard-Climo and Becky St. John
 August 31, Sandra Richardson



Questions? Want to volunteer?
 Here are Pam's phone and email:
 telephone: 469-6770



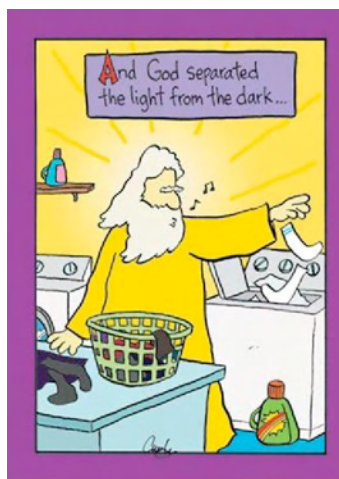
CROP WALK SEPTEMBER 21

Lynn Parsons

Mark your calendars for this year's CROP Walk, scheduled for Sunday, September 21, starting at 1pm. "CROP" is an acronym for "Citizens Responding to Overcome Poverty" and is sponsored nationally by Church World Service (CWS), an interfaith agency that includes Unitarian Universalists.

In the past, all four Castine congregations have participated, as well as members of the Castine Women's Club, Men's Club, and students from the Maine Maritime Academy. Various "teams" will be organized (including the UGCC) to raise funds for the Walk, which in turn are sent to CWS. One-fourth of the total funds are returned to the local community.

More detail in the next *Common*.



SERMON CALENDAR

Rev. Charles J. Stephens

August 3 "The Common"

The UU Meeting House is located on Castine's Town Common. And this newsletter is *The Common*. My sermon will explore what meanings we associate with being the congregation on the Town Common.

August 10 "Compassion"

I have found it helpful to me and to the congregations I have served to organize a group of sermons into a series. On August 10 I will begin a series on "compassion."

August 24 "Reaching Toward the Other"

The theme of this year's General Assembly was "Love Reaches Out. This week I will focus on what reaching out toward "the other" might mean for us, as individuals and as a congregation.

THE SANCTUARY BOSTON

What We Believe

...We don't feel spiritual community is about "what we believe to be true" but about how we believe we should live and love and share the gift of our lives. We believe that there are many ways to express the miracle of autumn's falling leaves, a new life, the intimacy of friendship, the wonder of this big blue ball floating in glittering vastness and all the awe of this world. We support each other on this spiritual adventure, each of us seeking our own spiritual path in the context of community.

We believe in love beyond boundaries.

PRINCIPLES OF CREATION SPIRITUALITY (MORE NEXT EDITION)

Honoring all of creation as Original Blessing, Creation Spirituality integrates the wisdom of Eastern and Western spirituality and global indigenous cultures, with the emerging scientific understanding of the universe, and the passion of creativity.

1. The universe is fundamentally a blessing.

Our relationship with the Universe fills us with awe.

2. In Creation, God is both immanent and transcendent. This is panentheism, which is not theism (God out there) and not atheism (no God anywhere).

We experience that the Divine is in all things and all things are in the Divine.

3. God is as much Mother as Father, as much Child as Parent, as much God in mystery as the God in history, as much beyond all words and images as in all forms and beings.

We are liberated from the need to cling to God in one form or one literal name.

4. In our lives, it is through the work of spiritual practice that we find our deep and true selves.

Through the arts of meditation and silence we cultivate a clarity of mind and move beyond fear into compassion and community.

5. Our inner work can be understood as a four-fold journey involving:

Awe, delight, amazement

Uncertainty, darkness, suffering, letting go

birthing, creativity, passion

justice, healing, celebration

We weave through these paths like a spiral danced, not a ladder climbed.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Del Davis, President
Gil Tenney, Vice President
Diana Bernard, Treasurer
Anne Romans, Clerk
Nancy Guy
Tom Mason
Leslie Fairbank
Kent Price, 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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