

# **The Point**

Universalist Unitarian Church of Waterville 69 Silver Street Waterville, ME 04901 0

Office Phone: 207-873-4006

Services start at 10:00 a.m.

Dennis Perkins, President Rurik Spence, Vice President julep1027@yahoo.com rurik.spence@gmail.com

Beth Schiller, Administrative Director Connie Winship, Point Editor <a href="mailto:cwinship@roadrunner.com">cwinship@roadrunner.com</a>

Church website: <a href="http://uucwaterville.com">http://uucwaterville.com</a>
Follow us on Facebook; <a href="https://www.facebook.com/uucwtvl">https://www.facebook.com/uucwtvl</a>

During the corona virus pandemic online worship services will be held at 10:00 a.m. and will be followed by a virtual Coffee Hour. For more information, go to uucwaterville.com All are welcomed

#### To the Point

As I write this final message to The Point, having completed two years as president of the Board of Trustees of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Waterville, Maine, I think of The Grateful Dead album cover from 1977: "What a long, strange (and wonderful!) trip it's been." Just two years ago, the church had begun planning on the installation of a lift to replace the wooden ramp (removed this last week!) on the east side of the church.

Finished in the fall of 2019, the lift brought this nearly 200-year-old building fully into the present century without sacrificing its architectural integrity or historical presence. A couple of months of technological tinkering by the lift company and we were on our way into a carefree enjoyment of 2020. . .until March, 2020, that is.

When the coronavirus hit, we, like every other institution across the globe, had to adapt immediately to this alien environment. And adapt we did. For three months, services were pre-recorded and made available via our website. In July of 2020, our services became live and virtual. Committees, the Board and other church groups met virtually, relying on technology of which previously almost none of us were aware. We continued the work of the church.

## **Committee Members, Officers and Trustees**

#### **Board of Trustees and Officers**

#### Officers

Pres: Dennis Perkins 2021 VP: Rurik Spence 2021 Treasurer: Allane Ball 2021 Clerk: Sarah Seder 2021 Collector: Marilyn Wheeler

#### **Trustees**

Elyse Apantaku 2022 Katie Clifford 2022 Trip Gander 2021 Sally Harwood 2022 Jon Rogers 2022 Beth Schiller 2021

#### **Committees and Teams**

#### Bookkeeper

Katrina Bouchard katrinagoodrich@gmail.com

#### By Laws

Bill Lee: Chair Dave Wynne

#### **Caring Committee**

Allane Ball
Ellie Duhamel
Marcel Duhamel
Carolyn MacRae: Chair
Sue Morrill
Ann Paradis
Rurik Spence
Linda Woods

#### Collector

Ray Winship

Mark Jose Marilyn Wheeler

#### **Communications Team**

Peter Burgher Photographer Beth Schiller: Administrative Director Wayside Pulpit Mark Jose Karen Kusiak Community Liaison Facebook Carolyn MacRae Photographer Charlie Morrill Outside Bulletin Board Sue Morrill Interfaith Council Beth Schiller Webmaster Rurik Spence IT Administrator Sarah Webster The Point newsletter Connie Winship Community Liaison The Point newsletter Co-Chair Comm Team

Facebook

### **Evening Sandwich Program ESP Board**

Maili Bailey: Director Larry Dickey Charlie Morrill: Treasurer Sue Morrill: President Ray & Connie Winship

#### **Facebook**

Karen Kusiak Ray Winship

### Fellowship/Membership Committee

Bill Barrnett
Joy Barrnett
Jan Fichuk
Rachel Marsh Sachs: co-chair
Kathy McKay: co-chair
Dennis Perkins
Ray Winship

#### **Finance Committee**

Peter Burgher Mark Jose Margrit Thomas Dave Wynne

#### **History and Archives**

Kit Alexander John Wilder

#### Housekeeping

Lisa Lichterfeld: Housekeeper Maili Bailey: Director

#### **Interfaith Council**

Sue Morrill

#### **Investment Management**

Peter Burgher: Chair Mark Jose Jon Rogers

#### MUUSAN

[Maine Universalist Unitarian State Advocacy Network] Karen Kusiak Dick Thomas

#### **Nominating Committee**

Peter Burgher Karen Kusiak Margrit Thomas: Chair

#### **Organists**

Annabeth Rynders: Lead Organist Beth Schiller Anne Marie Thibodeau

#### **Planned Giving**

Jon Rogers

#### Point Newsletter

Connie Winship: Editor Sarah Webster: Proofreader Marilyn Wheeler: Postal Clerk

#### **Property & Grounds**

Trip Gander: Chair Dennis Perkins Jerry Saint Amand Ed Spear

#### Religious Exploration Margrit Thomas: DRE

So, what lessons have we learned? Although small and still lay-led, we — as William Faulkner said in his Nobel acceptance speech — "we endured." And not just endured. We learned. We defended our principles. We laughed. We stumbled at times, but we always got up again.

And perhaps the greatest lesson of all: we relied upon one another. So it's been a pleasure to serve you these last two years and to know that, with Rurik and the newly elected board members, you'll be in good hands for the years to come. *Dennis Perkins*, President, Board of Trustees

#### From the Editor

"Thanks for all those years 'Pointing' the UU Waterville Church in the right direction", said the thank you card from the Board. I chuckled, appreciating the pun and the sentiment.

This is the last issue of *The Point* newsletter with the familiar masthead to which we have become accustomed. The newsletter goes on hiatus over the summer, but come August something new will be in effect. Literally and figuratively, the church will turn a page.

I thank each of you for your ongoing encouragement and support through the years. I've valued your notes, learned from your suggestions. Special thanks to Sarah Webster who faithfully edited the newsletter each month for all these years. Her endearing forthrightness, patience, good humor and flexibility carried the day many a time and I am grateful to have had her in my corner! *Connie Winship* 

#### **Property & Grounds**

In the absence of traffic through the church during this chaotic year, a small number of improvements were undertaken. Two donated heat pump air conditioning units were installed in Averill Parlors to reduce humidity and increase the comfort of church members. A renovation of the bathroom near the stairs, including a replacement commode and new sink with on-demand hot water heater, is ongoing.

The demolition and replacement of the exterior ramp with a set of stairs is planned. A workday for painting and other opportunities for volunteering will be scheduled later in the summer. *Trip Gander* 

#### **Interfaith Council**

The Interfaith Council met by Zoom on the second Wednesday in May. Our guest speaker was Chief of the Waterville Police Department, Joe Massey. He spoke highly of the substance abuse program called Operation Hope. This program was funded and has proved to be a wonderful link between those who need help with substance use and the police department. Realizing the police could "not arrest their way out," Operation Hope was the answer. However, the initial funding has run out and the police department is now in the process of fund raising to keep it operational. This program uses no taxpayer money. The police department is sponsoring a golf tournament in late summer. Please see information here in *The Point* or the *Mid-Week Update*.

Chief Massey also spoke about the Committee on Social Justice and Minorities. Topics include use of force policies.

The Interfaith Council has taken a larger role in helping community members with housing needs. Chief Massey calls this group "The Quick Swat Team." This team can access many resources and help with especially difficult cases of homelessness and housing insecurity. The majority of those seeking help are single women with children who cannot navigate the web of systems and resources.

#### **Small Group Ministry**

Peter Burgher. Mark Jose

#### **Stewardship Committee**

Allane Ball Peter Burgher Sarah Michaud Dennis Perkins

#### **UU Singers and Musicians**

Maili Bailey Bill Barrnett Nancy Brooks Jan Fichuk Sally Harwood Mark Jose Joanna Linden Iver Lofving Anna Beth Rynders Beth Schiller Linda Seekins Olga Shabunya **Dick Thomas Margrit Thomas** Harry Vayo: Director Marilyn Wheeler Ray Winship Linda Woods Nancy Wynne

#### Website

Beth Schiller: Webmaster Rurik Spence: IT Administrator

#### **Welcoming Congregation**

## Worship Committee Sub-Committees:

First Sunday: Connie/Ray Winship

Second Sunday: Sarah Michaud

Third Sunday: Karen Kusiak

Fourth Sunday: Caroline Gander

Fifth Sunday and Chair: Dennis Perkins

A common question at the Interfaith Council meetings is why so few community members are accessing the free food programs such as The Evening Sandwich Program? One council member voiced the opinion that, contrary to logic, the COVID-19 pandemic has helped the homeless in a positive way! Before COVID-19, shelters were full and funds to help were scarce. During COVID-19, federal money has come from many sources, and this funding has continued so that many more folks are being housed and fed three meals per day. For instance, SNAP benefits and food stamps have gone from about \$125.00 to \$500.00 per month!

The UCC Congregational Church, introduced its new settled minister, Ian Lynch.

Many faith members of the Interfaith Council are celebrating each Sunday with a variety of indoor and outdoor services as well as continuing Zoom services. *Sue Morrill* 

#### **Evening Sandwich Program**

The Evening Sandwich Program board met by Zoom on April 17, 2021. First for discussion was the transition from Maili Bailey, our director, to Larry Dickey, our summer director. Maili is off to Swan's Island for the summer. Thank you both for all the work and coordination of food and volunteer resources to keep ESP running during COVID-19.

The ESP volunteer who made PB &J sandwiches on the second Tuesday will be gone for the summer and the sisters of St. Joseph, led by Sister Judy Donovan, will fill in. Thank you!

The Waterville Food Bank delivers fresh vegetables and fruit as well as some desserts three times per week to our program. Many thanks!

While we no longer receive meat from Hannaford, the Waterville Food Bank often has good-quality cold cuts and sometimes chicken and hamburger. Larry incorporates these donations into a hot entree to go with the sandwiches.

Charlie Morrill, ESP treasurer, will be speaking to the coordinator of the grant foundation at Mid-State Machine to hopefully renew our grant.

Our final thank-you goes to Connie for helping ESP share each month in *The Point* and for her support, along with Ray, for the Evening Sandwich Program. *Sue Morrill*, President of ESP

#### Who's that UU Sitting in the Pew?



#### **Dennis Perkins**

#### **Demographics**

I live with my wife Sarah Michaud in Winslow, Maine. We have four children — Seth, Elly, Julia, Will — and three (soon to be four!) grandchildren. We moved here in the fall of 2013 to care for Sarah's elderly parents, both of whom have now passed. Both of us are retired, me from teaching earlier and then, after 30 years, from the financial services business, and Sarah from teaching.

#### **Interests**

My interests are far-ranging and primarily intellectual. As examples, I am at the moment re-reading a book from my college years, "The Book" by Alan Watts, on the nature of reality, as well as watching a lecture series on DVD from the Great Courses, entitled "The Axial Age."

#### What brought me to the UU church

I had attended a variety of religious services in the Portland area: UCC, Friends' meeting, UU. I already knew that the UU Principles were reflected in the world's religions and in the "perennial philosophy" so checking out Waterville UU was a natural. When we entered the sanctuary in the fall of 2013, we were greeted immediately by smiles and handshakes. I felt at home.

#### What keeps me coming back

Being a part of an active congregation dedicated to learning, growing and caring.

#### What UU Principle am I currently thinking of

More than any other, Principle #7 captures what has seemed to me the most real and relevant explanation of the human condition since I was a child. As the poet said, "I am a part of all that I have met."

#### What is something I am learning this year

I am increasingly learning to appreciate the richness and complexity of the lives my parents lived.

#### Daily spiritual practice

Many times a day I pray with my eyes, allowing my mind to feast on the beauty, kindness and courage that is all around me wherever I am. by *Katie Clifford* 

#### **Worship Committee**

Based upon the vote at Annual Meeting, worship services in both June and August will continue via Zoom. June services will be a mix of the familiar and the not so familiar. We will reprise a sermon first given by retired minister Severn Towl, delivered this time by Kathy McKay. The Flower Service, a UU tradition, will be led by Rev.Nancee Campbell. Kris Carlson will lead a *Faith Rocket* service and retired reverend Marti Garrison will return to lead another service.

Perhaps the most important news for Worship Committee is that Luke Brooks-Shesler will return as chair of the committee beginning in August. Luke will bring the organizational talents and energy that so aptly served the church before. Welcome back, Luke!

And finally, many, many thanks to the current and former members of the committee who have given so freely of their time to attend monthly meetings and fashion such wonderful services week after week. *Dennis Perkins*, chair

#### **August Services**

Two of our August services will Zoom to us from Atlanta, GA, with two UU ministers leading. Reverend Jonathan (Bucky) Rogers, who grew up in the Waterville UU Church, as well as his good friend and colleague Reverend Duncan Teague of the Abundant LUU UU Community Church will speak to us on August 8 and 15. Stay tuned for details in the MWU as the August dates near.

#### **Small Group Ministry**

There will be no Small Group Ministry groups this summer. We will start up again in some form in the fall, probably September. *Mark Jose* 



This Fall marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our church being officially designated as a Welcoming Congregation. What is truly remarkable is the enormous impact we had in the NNED who, in 2012, chose us as recipients of the *Anne Kempers Award for Social Justice*. "The Waterville Church was cited particularly for its care and focus to the disenfranchised LGBTQ youth in central Maine." See attached insert for more information.

**Pride Portland 2021** has been cancelled due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Although it will not be possible to gather in person for the traditional Parade, **Pride Portland** and other pride organizations have brainstormed alternative ways to celebrate and show pride at smaller events throughout the state. If you would like more information, email them at <a href="info@prideportland.org">info@prideportland.org</a>.

June is celebrated as **LGBT Pride Month** in honor of the Stonewall riots, which started on June 28, 1969. The Stonewall riots were a series of spontaneous, violent demonstrations by members of the gay community against a police raid that took place in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, at the Stonewall Inn in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City. These riots are widely considered to constitute the single most important event leading to the gay liberation movement and the modern fight for gay and lesbian rights in the United States.

The **Pulse Night of Remembrance** commemorates the loss of 49 people in the Pulse Nightclub shooting in Orlando, Florida on June 12, 2016.

June is the month that same-sex marriage was legalized in the United States (2015).

#### **Community News**

#### **Operation Hope**

On Sunday, September 26 at 10:00, the Waterville Police Department will be hosting its 6<sup>th</sup> Charity Golf Tournament at Natanis Golf course. This year, all proceeds from the tournament will benefit their Operation HOPE community outreach program which is designed to help those suffering from substance use disorder.

If you would like to join a foursome or sponsor a group, contact Officer Cody Fabian at 207-680-4700 or cofabian@watervilleme.gov.



#### Services at a Glance

June 6 Worship Leader: Kathy McKay

Worship Associate: Jon Rogers

Why UUs go to Church

In 2006, Severn Towl had been our minister for about 17 years. In this sermon which she delivered that spring, Severn reflects on what brought her to explore being a UU herself, and why we do well by ourselves in continuing to be part of a UU congregation

June 13 Worship Leader: Rev. Nancee Campbell

Worship Associate: Sue Morrill

Annual Flower Ceremony

The Flower Ceremony, sometimes referred to as Flower Communion, is an annual ritual that celebrates beauty, human uniqueness, diversity and community. As we do each year, please bring a flower to the service so you can talk about its significance.

June 20 Father's Day

Worship Leader: Kris Carlson Worship Associate: Karen Kusiak

Faith Rocket Service Searching Among Stones

Science can put us in touch with spiritual mysteries, as one man found out when he handled the stone from a

dinosaur's stomach.

June 27 Worship Leader: Rev. Marti Garrison

Worship Associate: TBA

Title TBA

Message Summary TBA

First Sunday offerings for the summer:

June: REM July: Evening Sandwich Program August: Sustain Mid-Maine

## June 2021

| Sunday   | Monday             | Tuesday   | Wednesday   | Thursday  | Friday   | Saturday |
|--|--------------------|---|---|---|--|----------|
|  |                    | 1 3:00 – 4:00 Evening Sandwich Program  11:00 – 1:00 Discussion Group Contact Carolyn MacRae (carolynrmacrae@gmail.com) for sign-in instructions                                      | 2  11:00 – 1:00  Arts and Crafts Group  For more information, contact  uuwtvladm@gmail.com                              | 3 9:30 – 11:00 Men's Coffee Contact Ray Winship rwinship@roadrunner.com 6:30 – 8:00 Zoom Coffeehouse For more information, go to vayowoods@live.com     | 4 11.00 – 1:00 Women's Group For more information, contact uuwtvladm@gmail.com 3:00 – 4:00 Evening Sandwich Program    | 5        |
| 6 First Sunday Offering: REM  "Severn Sermon" Why UUs go to Church  10:00 Online Service  11:00 - 12:00 Virtual Coffee Hour  | 7                  | 8 11:00 – 1:00 Discussion Group Contact Carolyn MacRae (carolynrmacrae@gmail.com) for sign-in instructions 3:00 – 4:00 Evening Sandwich Program 5:00 – 6:00 Worship Committee Meeting | 9 11:00 – 1:00 Arts and Crafts Group For more information, contact uuwtvladm@gmail.com                                  | 10  9:30 – 11:00 Men's Coffee Contact Ray Winship rwinship@roadrunner.com  6:30 – 8:00 Zoom Coffeehouse For more information, go to vayowoods@live.com  | 11 1 1:00 – 1:00 Women's Group. For more information, contact uuwtvladm@gmail.com 3:00 – 4:00 Evening Sandwich Program | 12       |
| 13 10:00 Online Service Rev. Nancee Campbell Flower Ceremony 11:00 - 12:00 Virtual Coffee Hour   | 14                 | 15  11:00 – 1:00 Discussion Group Contact Carolyn MacRae (carolynrmacrae@gmail.com) for sign-in instructions  3:00 – 4:00 Evening Sandwich Program                                    | 16  11:00 – 1:00 Arts and Crafts Group For more information, contact uuwtvladm@gmail.com  6:00 – 7:30 Board of Trustees | 9:30 – 11:00 Men's Coffee Contact Ray Winship rwinship@roadrunner.com  6:30 – 8:00 Zoom Coffeehouse For more information, go to vayowoods@live.com      | 18  11:00 – 1:00 Women's Group For more information, contact uuwtvladm@gmail.com  3:00 – 4:00 Evening Sandwich Program | 19       |
| WOTLD'S GREATEST TO THE PROOF T | 21 Summer Solstice | 22  11:00 – 1:00 Discussion Group Contact Carolyn MacRae (carolynrmacrae@gmail.com) for sign-in instructions  3:00 – 4:00 Evening Sandwich Program                                    | 23 11:00 – 1:00 Arts and Crafts Group For more information, contact uuwtvladm@gmail.com                                 | 24  9:30 – 11:00  Men's Coffee Contact Ray Winship rwinship@roadrunner.com  6:30 – 8:00 Zoom Coffeehouse For more information, go to vayowoods@live.com | 25 11:00 – 1:00 Women's Group For more information, contact uuwtvladm@gmail.com 3:00 – 4:00 Evening Sandwich Program   | 26       |
| 27 10:00 Online Service Rev. Marti Garrison 11:00 - 12:00 Virtual Coffee Hour  | 28                 | 29 11:00 – 1:00 Discussion Group Contact Carolyn MacRae (carolynrmacrae@gmail.com) for sign-in instructions  3:00 – 4:00 Evening Sandwich Program                                     | 30<br>11:00 – 1:00<br>Arts and Crafts Group<br>For more information, contact<br>uuwtvladm@gmail.com                     |   |  |          |



# 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Welcoming Congregation 1996-2021

#### 1993

No one could have remotely imagined the far-reaching ramifications of participating in a weekend workshop whose goal was training folks to be "trainers of trainers," certainly not the group of individuals that Rev. Severn brought together with the simple request to "give it a try." And yet, to a member, the group later described the weekend as "transformative."

Upon their return from the workshop, the group began to complete the steps required to become a certified Welcoming Congregation. The first in their series of workshops was geared to Board members and committee chairs who were given the big picture about the committee's goals for our church's proposed Welcoming Congregation. Subsequent workshops, earmarked for members and friends, were held intermittently for nearly two years, as were Second Hour presentations and open-to-the-public conversations and discussions.

Some of the aforementioned discussions among members were lessons specifically targeted for our RE classes: for younger groups, there were picture-book stories: "Tango Makes Three," "Say Something," "What was I Scared of?" Senior RE classes focused on the bullying and isolating of gay or perceived gay classmates at their respective schools. These older students eventually met informally with state Civil Rights Team advisors during Coffee Hour!

#### 1996

In May 1996, the Board voted unanimously to become a Welcoming Congregation. Sections of the church constitution were modified to be more inclusive and an official Mission Statement was approved. Documents were completed and were sent to Beacon Street. We were the third church in the NED to earn this certification.

Given the extensive work we'd done with member-friends to satisfy the requirements of becoming a Welcoming Congregation, our primary energy going forward was directed to other UU churches who came to us requesting that we train their leaders.

We soon became known as *the* church who travelled the state to host "training of trainers" workshops. Indeed, between 2000 and 2006, members of our WC took part in the training of church leaders in Augusta, Allen Avenue (Portland), Belfast, Brunswick, First Parish (Portland), Kennebunk, Norway, Saco, South Paris, Westbrook and Yarmouth.

On the home front, it seemed as though we were always recruiting members, modifying our goals, finding ways to be more "out" within the church and community. We signed on as caterers and greeters at services, hosted Second Hour programs and open-to-the-public workshops; our members presented at UU conferences and met with legislators. We wore pins on our nametags, hung a rainbow flag in front of the church, wrote columns for *The Point* which highlighted LGBT holidays or other bits of information about current events. Along those same lines, we invited local media to write columns about our services when we knew the information would be of interest to the public.

Similarly, we advertised the showing of LGBT-themed movies in Averill Parlors or at members' homes, i.e. "Billy Elliott," "Imagine Me & You," "Birdcage," "Bent" and others. These were viewed by groups and then discussed as part of a Sunday afternoon get-together or pot luck lunch-discussion. We marched in Portland Pride Parades in the spring, occasionally marching alongside EQME or church groups. Our banner, a one-of-a kind panel designed by Hillary Ervin and friends, has stood out each year for its vibrant color and unorthodox pattern. It is over 25 years old, a little worse for wear, a testimony of our church's long commitment to gay rights.

From the start, we sought out speakers for our services, both the "man-in the-street type" of individuals and professionals from within the central Maine community and state government. Lay speakers, some of whom were members of our church, spoke from the heart of their own experiences, their messages significant for their poignancy and authenticity. The professional speakers (see below) brought context and background about what was happening in the state. They encouraged us to be vigilant and focused.

| Steve Wessler       | 2005 Assistant Attorney General and Director of the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence |  |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Thom Harnett        | 2010 Assistant Attorney General; Director of the Civil Rights Team Project                     |  |
| Kristen Gilbert     | Assistant Principal, Waterville Junior High, co-chair, Waterville Inclusive Community Project  |  |
| Mark Fairman        | Co-chair, Waterville Inclusive Community Project   |  |
| Rev. Sue Gabrielson | Faith Organizer, EQME  |  |
| Quinn Gormley       | Executive Director, Maine Transgender Network, Inc.  |  |
| Darlene Huntress    | Statewide Supervisor and Policy Director, EQME   |  |

Beyond the four walls of the church, we extended our support to LGBTQ groups in the area. Welcoming Congregation members met with Waterville school administrators, staff and school counselors about developing a "Safe Zones Program" for gay kids. As a result of this collaboration, a LGBTQ Teen Drop-in Center opened in Averill Parlors in 2011. In April 2012 we were recognized by the NNED with the *Anne Kempers Award for Social Justice*. "The Waterville church was cited particularly for its care and focus to the disenfranchised GLBTQ youth in central Maine"

Our work in the community additionally included attending PFLAG meetings and supporting the work of the Waterville High School theater group, "Waterville Inclusive Community Project." In 2012, our UU church was presented with an Appreciation Award by directors of WICP.

#### 2021

The last 10 years have been less active than the heady early ones. Membership on the Welcoming Congregation team has waned due to not having a minister and coping with the restrictions posed by the pandemic. Advocating for gays is less urgent now given that Maine laws prevent discrimination in housing and in the workplace. Importantly, the passage of Obergefell v. Hodges in 2015 assured that gays could marry.

Our focus going forward is about supporting the transgender community. Some progress has been made toward addressing that goal: between 2013- 2019, there have been six services on transgender issues.

A special thanks to the founding members of the Welcoming Congregation — **Rev. Severn Towl, Jody Rich, Dave** and **Nancy Wynne**, **Ed Spear**, and **David Vau**ghan — who started us on our historic journey. Because of their tireless efforts, the church could position itself to play a leadership role in fighting the good fight for LGBTQ issues. *Connie Winship* 

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