



# THE PIONEER

Vol. 43, No. 7

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NORTHAMPTON AND FLORENCE

March 2013

## MARCH SUNDAY SERVICES AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



**March 3**

**Worship and RE at 9:15 and 11 AM**

**“It’s a Miracle!”**

The Reverend Janet C. Bush

*Celebrate the crazy miracle of congregational existence on Stewardship Sunday, and renew your commitment to supporting our mission. What we do matters – and you make it happen.*

**March 10**

**Worship and RE at 9:15 and 11 AM**

**Adult Credo Service**

Members of the Congregation and the Worship Committee

*A service that has become a USNF tradition. Congregation members share what has shaped their values and touched their hearts.*

**March 17**

**Service for All Ages at 10 AM**

**A Case of Stripes**

The Reverend Janet C. Bush and the Worship Committee

*Join us for a story and reflection on what it means to fit in, and what it means to be unique.*

**March 24**

**Worship and RE at 9:15 and 11 AM**

**The USNF in Haiti**

USNF Haiti Support Group and the Worship Committee

*Members of the Society's Haiti Support Group will update the congregation in words, pictures, and song about the good work we have accomplished in Haiti during the last year.*

**March 31**

**Rebirth, Return, Resurrection**

The Reverend Janet C. Bush

*A reflection for Easter morning and the coming of spring.*



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## NOTES FROM THE MINISTER

FOR OUR WORSHIP SERVICE on the Sunday after Valentine's Day we told a story called "The Perfect Heart," about a village that needed to find a new mayor. This village had a system of taxation that required people to help one another *and* to give money, and the system worked so well that not only was everyone in the village as happy as people could reasonably expect to be, but the village treasury was filled to overflowing.

Many of the adult actors in our story were members of our Stewardship Committee. (It was apparent that some of them have missed a calling in stand-up comedy.) Thanks to maestro Greg Hayes our tale was accompanied by music composed by Merv Griffin (the theme from *Jeopardy*) and Malvina Reynolds' *Magic Penny* ("Love is something if you give it away..."). But it was just a Valentine's Day story, about love and what makes a perfect heart.

And yet I heard later that some in the congregation that day thought I had made a mistake, and had rolled out Stewardship Sunday a few weeks early.

I admit that there are times when there is method in my madness. This time, however, the possible relationship between our Valentine's Sunday story and stewardship arose more out of serendipity. When I decided to use it I hadn't remembered the incidental part about the taxes, nor had I thought to recruit people from the Stewardship Committee to enact it.

If you were to ask me how the story *might* be relevant to stewardship, I would say this: Every person who participates in the life of our congregation is a steward, a caretaker, of its heart. Like the heart of the woman in the story, it is a heart worn with age, broken in places, and mended with time and attention. It has been held together by stories, and memories of the past.

This heart surges with joy and gratitude for life's gifts. It beats calmly in the quiet of communal silence. It burns hot in the presence of injustice. It tears and forms new scars with shared suffering and sorrow. And it beats strongly with hope for the way things might still become.

I am grateful for your stewardship of this precious heart, and I am blessed to be your minister.



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### HOW TO CONTACT THE MINISTER

Email: [revjanetbush@gmail.com](mailto:revjanetbush@gmail.com) or [minister@uunorthampton.org](mailto:minister@uunorthampton.org)

Phone: 584-1390 x202 (office); 727-8497 (home – before 9 pm for non-emergencies)

Office hours: Please email or call for an appointment: Mondays, Tuesdays, or Thursdays.

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## Caring Community Campaign — What We Do Matters II

*from Rich West, for the Stewardship Committee*

WHAT WE DO HERE MATTERS. Those of us who have attended services in January and February have heard many members speak from the pulpit about what we do here that matters most to them. In February we heard from four members of the Society on the subject.

**Jon Sass** talked about how the Society helped him and his wife, Christine, raise their two daughters. “Emma and Molly have grown into healthy, young women who identify as Unitarians and are caring, empathetic people. And the credit for this we share with you. We had them dedicated here those many years ago and in that dedication, this congregation vowed to walk with them, teach them, guide them and welcome them. And that you have done.... All the little things that people have done over all these years mattered to them – and they matter to us. And what all of us do for all the children of this community every week matters.”

**Kate Kruckemeyer** also talked about the children here, this time from the perspective of a teacher. “One of the things that matters most to me is how our Religious Ed program makes manifest our Third Principle, 'Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations,' and how it does so for our adults as well as for our children and youth.... I've now been with the Youth Group long enough to have seen three cohorts of youth pass through all four years, and I marvel at the leaders we are helping to grow. This year we will graduate two seniors, Ana and Andrew, and I am so proud to know what gifts we are giving to the world through them. They really rock. And I marvel to see how much *I* have grown, also, through that work.”

**Julie Kurose** spoke about UU principles. “The inherent worth of each individual, the importance of justice and equity in human relations, the concept that we have a responsibility to ourselves to actively engage in searching for our own truths, the beauty of finding meaning in teachings from the religions of the world ... these are the things that we as a congregation, and as a denomination, teach our children and strive to live out in our lives. These ideas have shaped and informed my life and my relationships; they sustain me as I go about my daily life. And my belief in their truth is renewed and reaffirmed every time I come here to sit with all of you as we worship together.”

**David Junno** reflected on the importance of community. “When I think about what matters about our Unitarian society the first thing that comes to mind is that we are *here*. We come from many different places and experiences but we come together *here*. *Here* we have a place to step away from our day-to-day lives, to reflect on the bigger questions of life, to practice right relationships and being in community, to plan and support each other in making the world around us a better place. *Here* we know each other and are known.”

So, what do we do here that matters most to you? The stewardship committee (myself, **Cathy Lilly**, **David Nelson**, **Kate Collins**, **Bob Barker**, and **Janet Bush**) would be happy to hear about it from you. Then please come to Stewardship Sunday on March 3 and celebrate our amazing, vibrant, committed community together.

*The Pioneer* is a periodical publication of the Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence, 220 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060. It is issued monthly, except for a combined July/August issue. This is volume 43, number 7.



## SPRING FLOWER ORDERS

For Our Festive Spring Worship March 31, 2013

Your Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Flower Orders at \$11 each \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check out to:  
Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence (USNF)

Please circle your preference:

I will collect my spring flowers after the March 31 service

or

I would like you to deliver my flowers to someone in the congregation.

**Please complete and return to the office by March 17**



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## BULLETIN BOARD

### COA ITALIAN DINNER FUNDRAISER

Saturday March 9, 5:30-7 PM  
Adults and children 12 and older \$10  
Children \$5  
Family maximum \$30

Come enjoy a delicious Italian dinner and support the coming of age class! In addition to great food there will be live music by Serenata Mandolin Trio who will play Italian and American selections. Peggy Hart & Christopher Stetson, mandolin; Eliza D'Agostino, guitar.

Get your tickets this Sunday at service! You won't want to miss this amazing event!

— *Suellen Walsh-Rother*

**SOCIAL HOUR NEWS:** Do you want to see refreshments at Social Hour continue? If so, **James Hatzis**, the newest member of the Web Weavers, wants to help our congregation make that happen. Contact him ([jilhatzis@yahoo.com](mailto:jilhatzis@yahoo.com)) for information on how you can pitch in to make social hours more enjoyable and welcoming.

— *Kate Collins*

**SPRING IS COMING! OUR ANNUAL PASSOVER SEDER** is set for Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM in the Social Room. This very kid-friendly event celebrates the historical exodus of the Jews from Egypt as well as more contemporary issues of social justice. We tell stories (and act them out, too!), sing songs together and eat a great Passover meal with matzoh ball soup and all sorts of other traditional foods. Look for the sign-up board in the Parlor starting in March. If you are interested in helping in some way or have questions, contact **Ty Power** at [tynanpower@yahoo.com](mailto:tynanpower@yahoo.com) or **Jon Sass** at [jsass4@comcast.net](mailto:jsass4@comcast.net).

### CANCELLATION OF SUNDAY SERVICES:

In the event that Sunday services need to be cancelled, an announcement will be sent via email and posted on the Society's website. In addition, the office phone message will be updated (by 8 AM) and television stations WWLP (Channel 22) and WGGB (Channel 40) will be notified. It is recommended that you check at least two of these sources (you will not get the recorded phone message if the building is without power). The decision to cancel services will be made no later than 7:30 AM on the Sunday in question.

— *Lisa Britland*



## Small Group Ministries Takes on "Challenges"

IN THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY each of our groups delved into the concept of "challenges." Obviously a difficult topic, but as always, we grow closer as we share our stories with trust and confidence. We asked questions such as, "What resources do you draw upon to meet a challenge," and "How does meeting a challenge make you feel?"

In the words of Ellen de Generes (you can't say we don't use a variety of source materials): "It's our challenges and obstacles that give us layers of depth and make us interesting. Are they fun when they happen? No. But they are what make us unique. And that's what I know for sure...I think."

Next month's topic follows well from this as we look at "Doorways" in our lives. — *Katie Olmstead*

*The Pioneer*  
Unitarian Society of  
Northampton and Florence  
220 Main Street  
Northampton, MA 01060  
Phone: 413/584-1390

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**THE PIONEER**  
THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF  
THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NORTHAMPTON AND FLORENCE

**MINISTER**

*The Rev. Janet Bush*

**DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

*Cindy Beal*

**CONGREGATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR**

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**OFFICE AND RE ADMINISTRATOR**

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**THE PIONEER STAFF**

**MANAGING EDITOR**

*Patricia Wright*

**WEB MANAGER**

*Julie Kurose*

**COORDINATOR**

*Lisa Britland*

**PIONEER DATES**

**DEADLINE**

March 21

**PUBLICATION**

March 28

*Articles should be 350 words or less. Submit to Patricia Wright at [pwright@admin.umass.edu](mailto:pwright@admin.umass.edu). Include the word "PIONEER" in the subject line.*

Office hours: Tuesday through Thursday 9:30-3:30  
Contact the Society at 584-1390. Visit us online at [www.uunorthampton.org](http://www.uunorthampton.org).

Go Green – Send an email to [office@uunorthampton.org](mailto:office@uunorthampton.org) to receive your *Pioneer* online only