

Newsletter of the Gloucester Unitarian Universalist Church
The First Universalist Church in America
Organized in 1779 as *The Independent Christian Church*

THE REVEREND JENNY RANKIN, INTERIM MINISTER

Worship Service: 10:00 am

**10 Church Street [corner Middle & Church Streets]
 Gloucester MA 01930 (978) 283-3410 info@gloucesteruu.org**



Interim Musings



December is upon us! I write this a few days before Thanksgiving when my mind is on apple cake and Brussel sprouts. Next week it will be a December, a month that evokes wonder in some, strikes terror into the hearts of others.

December, a month when the world is dark early in the evenings and the lights that are lit, in the store windows, on the steeple high above the harbor, when the lights gleam out all that much more brilliant because we need them so. the longest night of the year, the month of festivals of light, Advent, Hanukkah, the Solstice, Christmas.

“So hallow’d and so gracious is the time,” Shakespeare wrote about these December days, this Advent-tide, this time approaching the Solstice. I wonder what it is we can each do to find what is hallow’d or holy in our ordinary days, to make them more gracious and less harried and frazzled. I wonder, what festivals, rituals and traditions inform your December days.

For me, it is simple things like setting up a Christmas village with my son, with a train running somewhere through it or around it, putting out the little houses and figurines that my mother used to love, twinkling white lights wherever I can string them, and cutting greens from my garden and the

woods and fields to bring into the house and fashion into something pretty. It is music I listen to as I cook and candles I set out on the kitchen counter and maybe something with cinnamon sticks and orange simmering on the stove.

I thank you for your participation in this fall in the life of this community. You have been caring for one another, making phone calls, bringing casseroles, writing notes and checking in with each other. You bring food for coffee hour, welcome visitors, go to retreats, bake for the Christmas fair,

show up for “grown up Sunday school,” sing in the choir and in so many other ways, engage in the life of this spiritual community. That in itself is a spiritual practice and many of you have other things you do, yoga, meditation, prayer, walking, painting, writing, playing the piano, the list goes on. Ways that you choose to center yourself, to deepen your inner life. “How goes it with thy spirit,” the Quakers say. “How is it with thy heart?” We probably do not say those exact words, but when we check in with each other, stop to chat in coffee hour, when woofers a comment or a question, then listen, we are essentially saying with our body language and our eyes and our attention, “how goes it with your heart today? I am listening, I care.”

Minister's Hours
Wednesday and Thursday, by appointment.
Please call the church office (978) 283-3410.
revjenny@comcast.net

Continued on Page 15



**Accessible Entrance at
 Corner of
 Pine/Proctor & Church
 Streets
 AND off Gould Court lot**



www.gloucesteruu.org

**www.facebook.com/
 pages/Gloucester-
 Unitarian-Universalist-
 Church/205512609487543**



Solstice Concert

**CAPE ANN
WINTER SOLSTICE**
SATURDAY DEC 20th AT 7:30

Concert for a Cause...
MEETINGHOUSE
RESTORATION PROJECT

PRESENTED BY
gimme
LIVE

CHARLIE FARREN **ALLEN ESTES**

**DANIELLE
MIRAGLIA**

TICKETS
\$20 ADV
\$25 DOOR
VIP AVAILABLE ONLINE

AT GLOUCESTER UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
Corner of Middle & Church Street
TICKETS ON SALE HERE
OR WWW.GIMMELIVE.TV ~ 978-525-9093

Last winter we started a Gloucester Tradition - The Cape Ann Winter Solstice - a tremendously successful kick-off to our Meetinghouse Benefit Concert Series, culminating in a memorable concert by 60s icon John Sebastian, the first ever Gloucester appearance by a **Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame** inductee.

This winter we continue the tradition featuring three of the area's top acoustic artists: Boston rock star, Charlie Farren, of THE JOE PERRY PROJECT & FARENHEIT, rising Boston Blues star, Danielle Miraglia and Gloucester's iconic singer/songwriter Allen Estes.

Tickets are available online or by calling 978/525-9093.

- **VIP** (online only) for **\$30** - includes premium seating, exclusive early entry and commemorative VIP laminate.
- **General Advance \$20**
- **At the Door \$25**

Just like last year, a portion of the proceeds support the Meetinghouse Restoration Project. Enjoy a festive night of original music, traditional holiday favorites and a few surprises as you help Gloucester's Meetinghouse become a world-class concert and performance venue.

Showcasing Our Church

On November 30, potential ministerial candidates from all across the country will be able to see that the Gloucester Unitarian Universalist Church (GUUC) is looking for a settled minister.

The Search Committee has worked very hard during November to finalize our presentation, which describes the church, the congregation and the community and the position we are offering. We used your thoughts and results from the survey and cottage meetings for much of this. Specific information about church activities and building renovation came from committee chairs, financial information from various sources, and the Board gave us a lot of useful input, as well.

We have put all that together in a way that we think highlights our history and the historic building, tells who we are right now and tells where we are hoping to go in coming years. We have expressed our hopes in this way:

"Our community has expressed its collective desire to recruit a Minister who can meet several simultaneous goals: embrace our desire for spiritual growth, our respect for tradition and our acceptance of diversity, and also provide the leadership needed to grow the church and its impact for peace and social justice. We hope that the new Minister will bring in new members, with an emphasis on younger families, while creating a culture in which people with diverse beliefs feel comfortable."

During the month of December, ministers seeking positions will be able to look at all that we have written and indicate an interest in our church, and in the first week of January, we will begin to find out more about potential candidates.

We thank the congregation for such a robust response in sharing your thoughts.

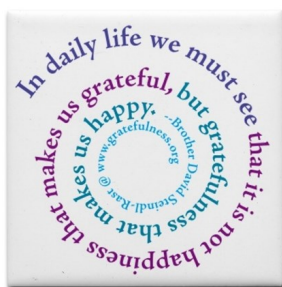
**Search
Committee**

UPDATE

Why I Give

For just a moment think back to a time in your life when you had a really serious worry about yourself or someone you love. Remember how that worry seemed to cast a shadow over life. Perhaps it was hard to focus without the worry intruding. The things you usually enjoyed might have lost some of their savor. You probably felt weighed down.

I've been there recently.



Then something I read a few days ago shifted my outlook.

Have you heard of Gratefulness.org? It is a network for living gratefully. If you wish, you can go to their website and subscribe. You will receive an email each day containing a quote, a quote that inspires you to reflect on gratitude. Each day I read the quotes that

gratefulness.org sends and appreciate them. You might even say I'm grateful for them. They frequently do inspire, for a few moments, a feeling of gratitude for the many blessings in my life.

Then this week they sent a line from a poem. It is a poem called "Jet" by Tony Hoagland and the line is, "We would give anything for what we have."

"We would give anything for what we have."

That line stopped me in my tracks. The proverbial light went off in my head. Of course. Of course I would give anything for what I have right now. Suddenly I could see how full my cup is. Gratitude flooded in and hasn't left.

Perhaps you are wondering what this bittersweet story has to do with why I give, so I'll tell you. This (indicate sanctuary) is part of what I would give anything for - this faith, this sanctuary, this choir, this congregation, and you. If I lost this church it would leave a hole in my life. Among many other things I

would lose the chance to talk about gratitude with people who care.

I give out of gratitude and out of the certain knowledge that I am giving to myself as much as to this vibrant institution. For the same reason I ask you to give. Does this place help to fill your cup? Is it part of what you would give anything to keep? Would something important be missing in your life without it?

Believe it or not I am even (sometimes) grateful for the task of asking you to give. Doing the work of the church is like pledging. It adds meaning and depth to your spiritual practice. If you haven't pledged yet please see Doug and me at the canvass table at coffee hour. We should be wrapping up the canvass soon so we can prepare next year's budget.

Since we would give anything for what we have, we should give from our hearts for what we have.

Holly Tanguay

Canvass News

We're Almost Done!

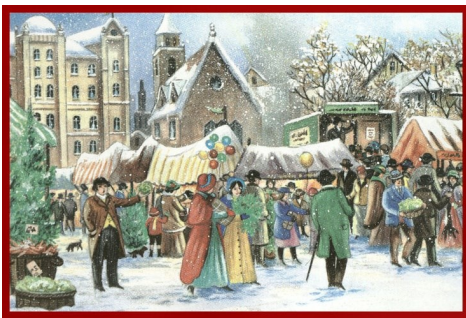
The annual appeal is close to wrapping up though we still have a few people to visit. It will be some time before we have a figure for projected pledge income in 2015 but we heartily thank all those who have made pledges. The church would not endure without your generosity.

If you have not pledged yet, and have not heard from a canvasser please give one of the canvass co-chairs, Holly Tanguay, 525-2192, or Doug Smith, 281-5710 a call this week.

Many thanks go to our dedicated canvassers, Doug, Holly, Dick Prouty, Newt Fink, George Smith, Janet Young, Charles Nazarian, Bill Jackson and Peggy Kimball.



A Successful Christmas Fair Depends on Many “Elves”!



Whether you want to sit at a table for a two-hour shift on December 13th, bring a batch of cookies, or help set up or clean up — there are many small (and big) jobs

and we'd love you to be on our *Old Fashioned Christmas Fair* team. All are welcome and invited!

The church will be filled with the wonderful aromas of coffee, pastry, hot dogs, chowder, veggie chili and cookies. The vestry will be buzzing with happy people looking for that special gift, listening to stories, making crafts, hoping to win one of our wonderful raffle items.

The annual Middle Street Walk will also be in full swing. Upstairs in the sanctuary students will be singing and playing holiday tunes.

On the lawn (from 1-3 pm) you will be able to make your own ‘Smores — an activity which was a great big hit last year.

Children will be able to have their pictures taken with Santa from 11 am until 1 pm.

Sign up at coffee hour -- or contact the co-chairs to help. Caroline Connolly (carolinec@rumrow.com) or Karen Lundh (newvoices@juno.com)

AND look for the flyer on page 7.

Call for Gloucester UU Artisans

If you want to bring your artwork or hand-crafted items to the *Christmas Fair* to sell on December 13th, we will be having a table that highlights Gloucester UU Artists and Artisans. Contact Karen Lundh by December 1st (newvoices@juno.com). We expect artists to help staff the table and to donate 5-10% of their proceeds to the Gloucester Meetinghouse Restoration Fund.

Black Friday OR Giving Tuesday?

If you missed out on Black Friday, or want to go another path, consider joining in on Tuesday, December 2nd as Unitarian Universalists across the country participate in “Giving Tuesday.” Created by people who want to buck our consumerist culture, “Giving Tuesday” encourages us to give to local, national and international organizations and causes that make the world a better place.

You could call it the response of our free faith tradition to the Black Friday escalation! Go to our Facebook page or the Unitarian Universalist headquarters’ website (www.uua.org) to learn more.

“A Mingling of Souls” — A Play About Our Church and Founders



During the Middle Street Walk on **December 13**, the church will host a costumed reading of Jay DiPrima's new play "Mingling of Souls from Sorrow to Joy," based on the lives and writings of Rev. John Murray and Judith Sargent Murray.

The production features the playwright as John and Kimberlee Cloutier-Blizzard as Judith. **Showtime is 1 p.m.** and a donation of \$5 is suggested.

After the half-hour performance, walk with the actors to the Sargent House Museum. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Gloucester Local Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

The "Shutter Hoist"

November 8, 2014 **Temperature = 37 degrees** **Wind Chill = 29 degrees**

CAST: *Newt Fink and Jim Schoel "leading men"*

SUPPORTING CREW: *Bob Tanguay, Rob Hill, Holly Tanguay, Alex Floyd*

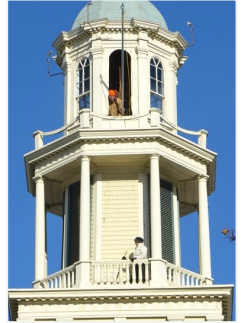
FINISHERS: *Bonnie Stafford and Newt Fink*

The Shutter Hoist

Script by Holly Tanguay — Photos by Karen Rembert

Last Saturday morning I left the house to drop off some food for the family of baby Walter and to help Newt and his crew haul a rebuilt shutter up onto the steeple. It was windy and chilly so I bundled up and tucked my cell phone safely in my pants pocket. (*Can you hear the background music warning of disaster to come?*) I dropped off the food and met the shutter crew in front of the church.

I had little to do at first since the riggers had to sort out their ropes. What a magnificent view. I swear I could see the "other cape" way down south looking sandy and unspectacular. Gloucester and the harbor were spread out before me. Karen and Alex down in the allée looked mighty small from that height and they thought I was very brave. I drank it in. Here I was, the least able of the crew, getting all the glory.



Eventually Newt and Jim, those brawny guys up top, raised the shutter with great effort. The wind soon caught it and Bob and Rob, who were manning the tag lines, had trouble holding on as the shutter sailed about. I braced myself behind a pillar and managed to hook the thing and pull it in over the railing. My chest swelled with pride. What a hero, a key player in "The Shutter Hoist," book and movie expected out in 2015.



Newt Fink, Bob Tanguay, Jim Schoel and Rob Hill were there to do the job. Karen Rembert soon arrived to document the endeavor and Alex Floyd arrived later, in time to observe.



After a lot of rope rigging and knot tying on the front steps, Newt and Jim went to the top of the tower and prepared to haul up the shutter using a boom made from an aluminum mast. Bob, Alex and Rob staid on the ground holding tag lines designed to keep the shutter from blowing all over the place once it got up into the wind.



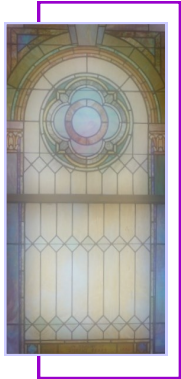
I lack a bit in the brawn category so my job was to snare the shutter as it came up to the right level. That involved standing outside way up on the steeple at the level that has a little balcony with a railing. I was equipped with forked hoe from Newt's garden. It made a nice long hook with which I might grab the ropes tied around the shutter.



A sequel, "The Installation of the Shutter," filmed a few days later, stars Bonnie Stafford and Newt Fink, the dynamic duo who heroically attached the shutter to the tower, working outside at great height!

If you liked this script ... you might like to read Adventures of a Wayward Cellphone Owner page 10

Music & Meditation in the Meetinghouse



De-stress from all the activity of the holidays; plan to relax for 90 minutes beginning at 7:30 pm on Sunday, **December 28th**. The meditation leader for this next event in our monthly series called **Music & Meditation in the Meetinghouse** (MMM) is **Charles Nazarian** -- who is the originator and driving force behind this monthly event. Music will be provided by guitarist **Steve Lacey**.

Each MMM event offers the participants an opportunity to enjoy a different combination of peaceful self-awareness through various kinds of meditation enhanced by the musical offerings.

The MMM experience is intended to be comforting,

entertaining and spiritual but it is emphatically not a church service. It is held in the candle-lit sanctuary of the grand Meetinghouse, a place of gathering and welcoming for the entire Gloucester community for over 200 years.

There will be a collation with light refreshments afterwards in the Entrance House, giving participants the opportunity to meet the leaders and each other . MMM is open to the public; a free-will offering (\$10 suggested) is received but everyone is welcome.

Charles Nazarian, a designer and Historically Informed Cape Ann Architect, is a member of our church, our choir, and the chair of the Music & Liturgy

Committee. He has been arranging these monthly Music & Meditations since June, 2013.

Steve Lacey, a lifelong Gloucester resident, is a guitarist of 13 years. He received his B.A. in music from Salem State University with a background in both Jazz and Classical theories, which he incorporates with other influences into in his improvisations. He believes in the communicative nature of music. Steve performs widely, provides music for special events, and teaches private lessons for guitar/bass.

Filling Our Pulpit During December



- December 7** Rev. Sarah Clark
- December 14** Rev. Jenny Rankin
- December 21** Rev. Jenny Rankin
- December 24** Rev. Jenny Rankin
- December 28** Gordon Baird

Christmas Eve Service

Our Christmas Eve service will be held at **5:00 pm**. *Families are encouraged and invited to attend; the public is welcome.*

The Christmas Eve Service will feature a Clarinetist who will play sections of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto.

The choir will sing traditional carols, "Still, Still, Still," "Ding Dong Merrily on High," "The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy," (West Indian Carol); and "O Holy Night." One will have a lively rhythmic accompaniment, some with clarinet and organ accompaniment, some unaccompanied. The congregation will sing traditional carols, and conclude with the candle-light singing of "Silent Night, Holy Night."

We thank **Carolyn Edwards** who continues her long tradition of ordering flowers for Christmas and Easter.



Please call Carolyn (978) 283-9129 if you would like to purchase flowers for Christmas to honor, or in memory of someone. The cost this year is \$13 per plant.

Checks should be made payable to Gloucester UU Church — with the word "flowers" in the memo line and indicate the color (red or white).

Drop your check in the collection plate, or mail it to: 7 Perkins Road, Gloucester MA 01930

Carolyn will need your order and payment by December 14th !



An Old Fashioned Christmas Fair

Saturday — December 13, 2014

from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm

Gloucester Unitarian Universalist Church

Accessible entrance at 10 Church Street

gloucesteruu.org

978/283-3410

Coffee & Pastry



*Stocking
Stuffers*

Cookie Walk

Raffles

Unique Antiques



Crafts

*Photos with
Santa*

11am - 1pm

Storytelling



Gifts

**Lunch:
Hot Dogs, Veggie Chili
or Chowder!**

Noon until 2 pm or
when food runs out



Wreaths

**Make-Your-Own
'Smores!**

1 - 3 pm

Board Notes

Care: New chairs Peggy Kimball and Ann Straccia have been busy organizing food for parishioners who are under the weather. They have also been preparing for Care Committee holiday activities. Thanksgiving host and guest forms were made available in the vestry. Donations of toys, gift cards and warm clothing (or cash with which to purchase those) will be accepted to benefit Pathways for Children families until December 14.

Building and Grounds: As always Newt and his helpers have been hard at work. See the photos and story about installing a shutter high on the tower elsewhere in this newsletter. The Building and Grounds (B&G) crew has accomplished much more – including installing molding around a new door on Church Street and moving an exit sign out of the new vestibule in the vestry. Newt is planning a new Saturday morning B&G effort once a month so those who work on weekdays have a chance to participate.



Religious Education Notes: Rose Sheehan, Interim Director of Religious Education led a session about Lifespan Faith Development Visioning in our church. Members of the congregation began by defining the purposes of religious education. The conversation will continue at future meetings as we dream big about Sunday school, youth programs and adult religious education. Rose is also busy working on a junior youth group, possibly in cooperation with Essex and Rockport. The Religious Education Committee will meet at 11:30 on December 14 or 28. Stay tuned for the actual date. Please join us to support this crucial aspect of church life.

Membership: Six prospective church members attended a special Saturday introductory class on November 15 led by Janet Ruth Young, Susan McKain and Reverend Jenny Rankin. Those who decide to join the church will sign the book during our service Sunday December 14. Janet Young, membership chair, has taken on coordinating the church's contributions to the Middle Street Walk which will occur on December 13 from 11 to 4:30. On the same day our own Christmas Fair, revived by Caroline Connolly and others, will be held from 9 AM to 2 PM. During the Walk our church will host a number of programs in the sanctuary and provide roving carolers to brighten the Middle Street scene. Many hands will be needed and much holiday spirit enjoyed. Come join the fun.

Music and Liturgy: Preparations are underway for special music during our Christmas Eve service provided by the choir and a guest clarinetist.

The benefit organ concert donated by Bob Wech, our Music Director, was beautiful and well attended. *The concert was sponsored by a gift from Judith A. Williams in memory of her husband Robert M. Williams. This event is part of the 2014-15 Series to Benefit the Meetinghouse Preservation Fund.*



Photo by Charles Nazarian

Thank you Judy for sponsoring this lovely event.

The concert and lecture series will continue with the second annual Solstice Concert on December 20, produced by our partners from GimmeSound. Charles has found sponsors for most concert and lecture series events. Having a sponsor guarantees that event costs will be covered and the restoration fund will benefit.

The one missing piece is an organized group of volunteers to provide set up and cleanup for events and receptions. Too often those duties fall on series coordinator Charles Nazarian and one or two others like faithful helpers Janet Young and Tony Hilliard. Would stage crew T-shirts help?

Finance: Happily Ken Belanger is largely recovered from his long illness and is back on the job. The balance sheet is as expected though cash-on-hand is low because \$22k in 2014 pledges is still due to come in. The treasurer's report income shows significant work still to be done on pledges, building usage and fund raising to reach the budget goal. The expenses have been held in check and are running less than budget at this point in time. The creation of the 2015 budget is finally under way and we need all committees to submit their 2015 proposed budgets by November 30 to Ken Belanger/Karen Rembert. Much work remains to be done to summarize the 2014 financial picture and prepare a budget for 2015.

If you have a head for figures and operations the Finance Committee is looking for members.

Social Justice: Because the current chair has been ill the social justice committee has been quiet. Though many members of our congregation are devoted to social action this committee could use more participants and leaders. Please let Karen or a board member know if you are interested.