

The Gloucester Universalist

The First Universalist Church in America: Organized 1779

THE REVEREND WENDY FITTING, MINISTER

Worship Service: 10:00 am

Words from our Youth

"Somewhere in northern Vermont, after driving in uncertainty, a traveler becomes convinced that he is on the wrong road. At the next village, he comes to a halt. Calling one of the villagers to his car window, he says, 'Friend, I need help. I'm lost.' 'Do you know where you are?' the villager asks. 'Yes,' replies the traveler. 'I saw the name of your village as I entered.' 'Do you know where you want to go?' 'Yes,' the traveler again replies, and names his destination. Ruminating for a moment, the villager shakes his head and says, 'Mister, you ain't lost. You just need directions.'"

"To me, that little story sums up the spiritual search. We know where we are. We know where we want to go. We feel lost sometimes. We just need directions."

Forrest Church (April 24, 2005)



Many of us, sitting in the pews, during the recent Coming of Age Service of Recognition were inspired to hear our own youth eloquently and compassionately read their personal credos, which they worked on for months. They began this particular project by reading Forrest Church's sermon, "The Seven Paths to God," in which he describes how each of us approaches our own relationship to spirituality and a higher power through one of seven models: The Child, The Lover, The Champion, The Servant, The Dreamer, The Mystic, and The Star Gazer. This month's words are the credos from our very own Mary Gray and Emma Paddock. May they inspire you...

Mary Gray

These things are important to me. Love because when you love a person, you care for them. Also, family because you want the best for those people. Sometimes I hope I will never lose my grandparents because of the things they have done for me since I was younger.

I also think working hard is important because when you work hard, it can lead to something bigger than what you wish. It is important to me to try to help all people that are in need like sick people, some elderly people and people that are lonely. One time when I was in California, I saw a homeless person wanting some money to buy food, and I asked my mom if we could give money to her.

I believe that spirits watch over you and help with your future. I believe that there are several lives ahead of

you each time you do good or be a good person, your next life will be better, I believe this because when I was younger, where I was from, we believed that we had several lives ahead of you and growing I always believed that. I believe that angels help you to make right choices in your life. I believe that there is one God and several ways to reach God, by different beliefs. One way to reach God is by praying.

Emma Paddock

Seven Paths For The God Project written by Forrest Church is a list of identities that could relate to one's beliefs. As I read this list I thought about which ones I related to. I ended up with three. The first item on the list "The Child" talks about how some people are filled with wonder and everything in the universe is enchanted. I always

believe that a few things that I meet throughout my life are magical (or enchanted) and they bring a good feeling to me, as if they might stay with me forever. Secondly I related to "The Lover" which is someone who cares and is compassionate. I find that caring for others gives you care in return. I know what a good feeling it is to be cared for and I like to give that feeling to other people. "The Star gazer" is a person who connects science with a deeper meaning and a fascination with life. In this way I like to believe that scientific life was all meant to be and that the world will have a happy ending and not an apocalyptic one.

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All About Us

Condolences

Our hearts go out to *Janet Young* and her family on the death of her mother in early May.



Church member, *Howard Blatchford*, 89, passed away on May 15th. He had been under hospice care for a long illness. We send our condolences to his wife, *Priscilla*.

Acknowledgments

A *glowing* thank you to these *sparkling* people who worked hard on the resurrected Cleaning Day (May 1) to make our church *shine* just a little *brighter*.

- Linda Kidder* - cleaned downstairs window sills
- Faith Magoun* - washed upstairs window sills
- Carol Ackerman* - cleaned pews
- Jerry Ackerman* - cleaned front entrance stairs & landing
- Lynne Holton* - cleaned pews
- Holly Tanguay* - cleaned choir loft
- Kate Ruzecki* - cleaned pews
- Tracy Wood* - cleaned upstairs window sills

Our church is a huge old building with lots of dust and dirt. We hope to have this Cleaning Day be an annual event and hope that you can join us next year. Until then, should you find yourself with some time to stop by the church to clean any little nook or crannie throughout the year, it would be greatly appreciated! Please contact Karen at the church.

Megara Wood

To all Coffee Hour Enthusiasts

Many thanks for all who've contributed to the feeding of the multitudes. This includes bakers, shoppers, setter-uppers, & cleaner-uppers. Kudos to *Kerry Mullen*, our faithful coffee maker. And thank you to *Donna Grinnell*, for her many months of silent, invisible (and perhaps sometimes) thankless service.

With three people/families/groups a week, this makes coffee hour very doable. Do contact Diana Peck, and we'll soon fill up the calendar for the summer months. Remember, what goes around comes around: you reap what you sow, and if you enjoy coffee hour, help make it happen for all of us! NEVER TAKE ANYTHING FOR GRANTED.

Peace, Light, & Caffeine- Diana Peck



Happenings

The Gloucester Stage Company will be rehearsing in our vestry again this summer. Please do not enter the vestry during their rehearsal times.

Meetings can be held in the vestry when they're not rehearsing, but props and floor markings are not to be disturbed. It's fine to temporarily move a table or two and some chairs for a meeting, but please put things back the way they were before you leave.

The Stage Company is rehearsing for five plays this season: "Table Manners," "Tender," "Trying," "An Ideal Husband," and "Trad."

As in other years, they will provide us with complimentary tickets, (20 total). You can sign up for tickets with Karen in our church office, then call the Box Office to see if there are seats available to the performance you are interested in, and say you have a UU play pass. It's as easy as that!



June Birthdays

- 5 - Geoff Richon
- 8 - Wendy Fitting
- 25 - Priscilla Runkle
- 28 - Morgan Baird

May Flowers

- May 2: Given by the Judith Murray Guild in celebration of the May 1st birthday of Judith Sargent Murray.
- May 23: Given by Scott St. Cyr and Keith Saucier in appreciation of Rev. Wendy Fitting, who married them on the 22nd.

Note: If you would like to give flowers in memory of someone or to mark an occasion, please call the church office at 978/283-3410.

Choir as Gift

We at the ICC are very fortunate to have a choir of such committed and talented members. Choir is gift in so many ways. Each Sunday our choir expresses something in sound and music that is amazing. Just as the membership of our church congregation, members of the choir possess a great diversity of faith perspectives, come from totally different walks of life and social backgrounds, have widely various tastes and interests in just about anything you could mention.

But all of these walking opinions and preoccupations disappear into a unity of choral sound and musical interpretation every single Sunday when they stand to sing! As it says in Psalm 118, "It is amazing in our sight." Our choir takes my breath away every Wednesday night and Sunday morning when the miracle keeps happening over and over. Where else in this church can you go where all personal opinions become emptied into such ineffable mystery?

Choir is such a gift among us. It is like Gregorian Chant where



conflicting musical and narrative rhythmic streams vanish into a singularity.

The gift of choir to the congregation is in the same moment highly personal, and each member of choir experiences an individual purpose within its harmony. Texts are occasionally disputed, and theological preoccupations are butted about as the metaphors fly. But no theological orientation, no musical preference, no distraction from the vagaries of the day, no conceits whatsoever come anywhere close to the inspiring power that is the metaphor of the musical experience of choir itself. We

may read in books of monkish ways and the ecstasies of mystiques, but there just isn't anything more palpable and accessible to the senses and sensitivities as a group of people surrendering to an easy vocation in choir.

I give my esteem and thanks to our choir members who so faithfully participate in our weekly musical sacrament. They know the passion of it. To any who can carry a tune and who have not lately or ever experienced choir, consider singing with us. We sing Sunday worship from October to mid-June and rehearse on Wednesday evenings during this time. "I will sing!"

David Bergeron, Music Minister



What's Missing?

The grass in our cemetery is getting greener and stronger — our reward for taking out so many trees in the past few years. And as a result we need to mow every ten days or so. After mowing, it looks fairly decent.

SO, we need a few more volunteers to help this summer with mowing. Two people can do the grassy area in about 35 minutes. There is one mower on site, and we can provide another if needed.

Please take a turn this summer or be part of a team:

call Newt Fink.
978-283-3484.



On **Sunday June 27th** immediately after the service please join us for the Annual Church Picnic. If Nature is good to us, we'll have the picnic outside on the front lawn. Otherwise, join us in the vestry.

This is a pot-luck picnic. If your last name starts with A-M please bring a salad or side dish, last names N-Z please bring a fruit or dessert. We'll provide hamburgers, veggie burgers and hot dogs, (along with the buns, and all the toppings that go along with them!) as well as the drinks. *Sign up with Barbara Baumer or Karen Rembert to help with set-up, grilling and clean-up.*

We can't wait to see you there!

Words from our Youth

Continued from page 1

(Emma continues)

In my mind I do not yet know if I believe in a God or if I ever will. If I did my idea of god would be an unexplainable being made up of all feeling organisms on earth. To me God is an idea because if our God is any more than an idea it is a faith. Because this idea of God is made up of every feeling organism it knows how to care for all. Though we have tragedy and pain on earth I certainly do not feel that these things happen out of punishment from a powerful being. I feel that those sorts of beliefs make us feel as if we should live a perfect life which in my view is impossible.

To identify with something is to say that these things are part of our own identity. Something I identify with is justice, that people should be treated fairly and that everyone should know how to treat others fairly. I think I identify with justice strongly because of a family past connected to the Holocaust. Today justice plays out in areas of civil rights and The Gay and Lesbian Movement among others. I also find that my friends and family make up a large part of my identity through their actions as I try to follow their good examples. Sometimes I mistakenly pick up on their bad ones as well.

I value my rights as a human being because I know that if I did not have them my life would be much more



Coming of Age Class
Top row (from left): Peggy Duff [service leader], Raina Baier, Mary Gray. Bottom: Owen Sears, Lindsey Duff, Emma Paddock

difficult as a citizen because I would hate to live in a country where political dissent was not recognized. I value my family because they give me love. Many people do not have this. I value the safety of home. I think it is important to love yourself. Life would be very unhappy if we did not feel our own value. Friends and friendship is an outcome of feeling this self worth. I like to be comfortable. It is nice to know that when things get difficult there is a place to go to feel safe.

I love books for this reason. They help me feel safe and also allow me to see a world outside myself. I want peace in the world. I wish that we had more of it. The beauty of nature gives me a sense of comfort. It allows me to meditate when the world is difficult. Meeting new people always gives me hope. New friends are out there waiting to be made.

I believe that you should always stand up for what you believe in and what you care for. I care for equality and am always looking for new ways to give people the courage to speak up for it also. In middle School you hear a lot about these issues. I believe in Kindness. Trust is big in my book. I will always trust someone unless they prove me wrong. I believe that creating joy in the world is creating joy in yourself. If you set a good example you are helping the world. I believe in being responsible and still having fun. Think about your actions, be sure that what you are doing won't hurt others. To be independent is to follow your own actions because you know that they are right. Do not follow others just to feel included regardless of whether they are good or bad. I believe that Honesty is the best policy. My uniqueness is important to me and I believe that should never change. Everyone thinks a little differently and you should always accept another's view unless it is hurtful.

As I get older my views of my church have changed. I was two years old when I was dedicated at the Gloucester U.U. Church. Between then and when I was 8 or 9 the bulk of what church meant was coffee hour and the sweets. Over the years church has become a place where I can learn about important current events, other religions, and the spirituality of myself and others. My church is a special community to me.