



# *The Bulletin*

SEPTEMBER 2015

BULLETIN@FCULITTLE.ORG

September

## WELCOME BACK!!

### **From Your Interim Minister, Warm Greetings to Members and Friends of FCU!**

I am still in the “getting to know you” stage of our interim ministry right now, and am looking forward to our time together over the next two years.

You are the third congregation I’ve served as an interim minister following my 24 year ministry with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, New Hampshire. My wife, Michele, and I continue to reside in Nashua. We have a son, daughter-in-law, and grand-daughter who live in southern Maine.

If you’d like to “dope me out” a bit more, I have a website at [revstephenedington.com](http://revstephenedington.com).

An interim ministry period is a time of unique possibility in the life of a congregation. It’s a time for some self-reflection as to where you’ve been as a religious community, what has brought you to the point where you currently find yourselves, and where you wish to go—and the kind of ministerial leadership you desire—to help get you there. I feel we have some fruitful conversations ahead of us!

In looking to our first few Sundays together in the upcoming weeks, I’m going to do a slight twist on the Soul Matters theme for September of “Invitation.” I’m going to focus on the idea of “Call” or “Calling.” What is it that calls us back together, after a summer break, as a liberal religious congregation? What is it about the life of your congregation that calls you to faithfulness to it? And what have been some of the “callings” over the course of your life that have brought you to the spiritual place in which you now find yourselves? I’ll post fuller descriptions of these matters below.

On a more nuts and bolts level, I’ll be starting my regular office hours on Tuesday, September 8, and will be there from 9:30 am until 12:30 pm. Other times by appointment are certainly available. I’ll be in the office, with these hours, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Friday is my worship prep day, and I work from my home study in Nashua. Monday is my day off.

I’m ready to roll! Let’s be on our way!

Peace,

Rev. Steve Edington, Interim Minister



## September Services

### September 13: Beckonings...What Calls us Back.

This is a brief homily to go with the Ingathering and Water Communion. It's based on an encounter I had several years ago with an airport ticket and baggage agent who, when he saw the "Reverend" in front of my name on my reservation, decided he needed to talk to a minister right in the middle of the bags he was checking and the boarding passes he was issuing. The way he called me aside—as he beckoned me towards him—has long stood as a metaphor for me as to how our faith "calls" us in so many, and often unexpected, ways. What calls—or invites—you back to your religious community as we begin a pivotal two years in your congregational life?

### September 20: The Call of the Third Place.

"Third Place" is a sociological term. The Third Place (with First Place as family and Second Place as career/job/profession) is where one goes for additional dimensions of meaning, purpose, depth, and community in one's life—in addition to what is found in the First and Second Places. For many persons

their religious community is that Third Place. I'll use this concept to help launch this interim ministry period we'll be spending together. Building on what I briefly introduced in the 9/13 service, we'll explore what it means for a liberal religious congregation such as this one to be your Third Place; and how you want to grow it as you anticipate the next phase of your congregational life.

### The Bulletin of First Church Unitarian Littleton

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### September 27: The Absence of God and the Call of the Sacred.

This sermon draws on a book by Dr. Sam Keen titled *The Absence of God and the Presence of the Sacred*. It's about where one goes when the gods of both the religious and secular realms no longer work. How do we find a sacred or holy dimension to life and living in the absence of a Supreme Being? Dr. Keen speaks well to this. I'll also use this sermon to share some of my own religious and spiritual journey from evangelical Christianity to Unitarian Universalism, and how I've responded to the various callings of the spiritual landscapes I've moved across.



## Church Business

### Deacon Notes

Sad to say that summer is winding down, but glad to say our new church year is starting. I hope you were able to join us at our Homecoming Service on September 13th. We greeted Rev. Steve Edington as our new Interim Minister and shared our traditional water communion ceremony for our first Sunday back together.

The Deacons are taking on the **Sunday Hospitality coordination** responsibility for this church year. Listening to those of you who have served as Hospitality Coordinators over the years and wanting to try a suggestion Steve brought to us regarding food at coffee hour we are *trying out* two changes this year – new approaches to filling open Sunday morning Hospitality positions and how food will be provided during Coffee Hour. We are looking to have FUN with this and invite you to join in. Specifics on these changes were sent in late August via the listserve, are available in hard copy in a folder by the Sunday Hospitality sign up board. Please join us in embracing these changes as we strive to be a Joyful, Welcoming Community.

*Jon Welch, for the Deacons*

### Standing Committee Notes

How can summer be coming to a close? Wasn't it just June?

We are planning for an exciting transition year here at FCU. Our interim minister, Steve Edington, has been meeting with many committees over the last month as we identify some of the issues that need to be resolved by the time we submit our package for a settled minister during the fall of 2016.

These are some of the issues that the Standing Committee has on our agenda. Our first, most important job is to create conversations in our community about a whole host of issues. This is our collective church community and we want to make decisions that are based on what we hear from you. So expect that we will be seeking your input often!

Please save the date for **Sunday, October 25, 2015 at 11:30** for a warranted meeting. We will be discussing the following issues:

1. Raising funds through a capital campaign to address multiple issues with our building
2. Addressing the issues related to our use of the parsonage including seeking a court ruling on the issue of ownership
3. Process for calling a Search Committee and timetable for the search

A meeting to discuss the warrant will be held on **Sunday, October 3**, immediately following coffee hour. We urge you to bring your questions, concerns, feedback, and input to this meeting for full and frank discussion.

## ***A Note About the Warrant Process***

We invite and encourage you to bring any issues you would like to see voted upon at a warranted meeting to the Standing Committee well in advance of the meeting for inclusion in the warrant, which is posted at the church and read on each of the three Sundays preceding the meeting. **This is a key element of the church's democratic process.**

The warrant is publicized for those three weeks so that each member of the congregation can give full deliberation to the issues upon which they are asked to vote. When an issue is brought up from the floor, members are not given time to research, discuss, or think about it; it may not receive the full discussion or consideration necessary during the meeting; members who might wish input on that issue may not attend the meeting, not expecting it to come up.

If there's an issue you feel the church body should address, please contact any member of the Standing Committee by **October 1, 2015**. That will give us the opportunity to include it on the warrant and ensure it can be discussed at the October 3 meeting, and subsequently if necessary.

### *Transition Team*

The Standing Committee voted to appoint Joel Ross as Chair of the Transition Team. This group will support our interim minister and the congregation during the search process, and will replace the Committees on Ministry during the interim period. Team members will be David Butz, Martha Child, Araya Fast, and Carol Tillis.

### *Governance Task Force*

At the Annual Meeting in May, there were several requests for a Governance Committee to review our leadership model. Jim Nehring agreed to chair this group.

The charges for both the Transition Team and the Governance Task Force are posted on the bulletin board.

### *Thank you!*

We'd like to thank Laura Semple, Susan Tordella Williams, and Bob Williams for the amazing job they did cleaning out the church basement. This is truly the kind of community we are, finding a need and stepping up to take it on.

As a final note, this will be a year for us to take some risks and try new things. We invite everyone on board to take this journey with us as we embark on the quest that will end with a new settled minister. We hope to hear from all of you in the coming months about the many issues that will shape who we are as a community.

*Deb Girard for the Standing Committee*

*Melissa Baern, Tom Cowen, Mike Pilman, Bob Williams*

## Committee Corner

### Artemis Singers

The Artemis Singers have a new meeting time for the 2015-16 church year: **Thursdays from 6:00 - 7:00**. All women are welcome to join our women's chorus and support group. We rehearse nearly every week and sing for services several times a year. Rehearsals have begun and we hope you'll join us.

*Carolyn McCreary, director and accompanist*



### Beloved Conversations

Plans are underway for FCU's third session of *Beloved Conversations: Meditations on Race and Ethnicity*. Beloved Conversations begins with a retreat held at FCU on Friday evening, October 30, and all day Saturday October 31, and continues with nine 2½ hour sessions. The dates for the sessions will be chosen based on the participants' schedules. Please let us know you are interested in being part of this wonderfully stimulating, challenging and nurturing program by attending an information session on **Sunday, September 20 from 11:30 a.m. to 12 noon** in the Alliance Room, or by emailing Caroline Marvin [carolinemarvinphd@gmail.com](mailto:carolinemarvinphd@gmail.com) and Betsy Read [BetsyRead@verizon.net](mailto:BetsyRead@verizon.net). There is a program fee for participants of \$50 on an anonymous sliding scale – “more if you can, less if you can't” – to cover program materials and snacks for each session.

*We hope you'll join us on the journey this fall.*



## **Multicultural Ministries Committee**

We'd like to draw your attention to some of the work coming out of General Assembly held in Portland, Oregon, this year, in particular the Actions of Immediate Witness (AIW), all three of which include aspects of racial justice.

### ***Support the Black Lives Matter Movement***

This AIW urges member congregations to take initiative in collaboration with local and national organizations fighting for racial justice against the harsh racist practices to which many black people are exposed.

### ***Support a Strong, Compassionate Global Climate Agreement in 2015: Act for a Livable Climate***

In addition to the focus on the December 2015 UN Climate Agreement Talks in Paris, it asks that UUs support the Lummi Nations, local to Portland, in their opposition to coal terminals on sacred lands.

### ***End Immigrant Child and Family Detention Now***

This action asks for humane treatment and alternatives to incarceration for all immigrants. It specifically looks for the immediate closure of all family detention centers.

To read the full statements and suggestions for how our church can support them, you can follow this link: <http://www.uua.org/statements/years>. For more information about the Social Justice process at General Assembly, this link is helpful: <http://www.uua.org/statements/process>

The MMC is gearing up for another busy and exciting year. Movie nights will be resuming in October, and we're looking forward to continuing to build beloved community. **Stay tuned for upcoming plans!**

## **Sacred Circle Dance**

**Friday, Sept. 18, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. in the Vestry**

In our "Welcome Back" circle we honor the harvest and the Autumnal Equinox with a Mabon altar and dances to balance Light and Dark. We observe September's Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur with cleansing dances. Half of the evening will be meditative dances. ***Community Circle easy dances at 7:00 p.m., more challenging dances at 6:00. For more info e-mail [Circle@fculittle.org](mailto:Circle@fculittle.org)***

## **Soul Matters**

Over the past two years many of us at FCU have participated in Soul Matters groups. Monthly themes served as a framework for exciting and inspiring discussions on topics that ranged from Revelry to Faith, from Resilience to Evolution. Framed around the question "What does it mean to be a people of \_\_\_\_\_?", spiritual exercises were suggested and resources provided. Facilitated groups met once monthly for two hour sessions. Would you like to be connected to a group? If so, or if you just want more information, contact Joel Ross at [jrossdmd@verizon.net](mailto:jrossdmd@verizon.net).

## Welcoming Our Guests

*An All Church Activity*



We invite you to serve as a "Roaming Greeter." Whenever you can, please introduce yourself to our guests and help them find seats. After the service, please show them to Coffee Hour and introduce them to people you know. During Coffee Hour let's see if we can set aside "church business" for the first 5-10 minutes to meet and greet our guests and others we don't know. We are planning to offer first-time guests a Welcome Bag with some small gifts inside and information about FCU and Unitarian Universalism. Newcomers will be wearing hand-written name tags.

We have distinguished ourselves in past years as a very welcoming and hospitable congregation. Let's all build on that tradition as we welcome newcomers to our church. If you are interested in serving with the Member/Reach committee, please let any of the greeters know. We would love to have your help.

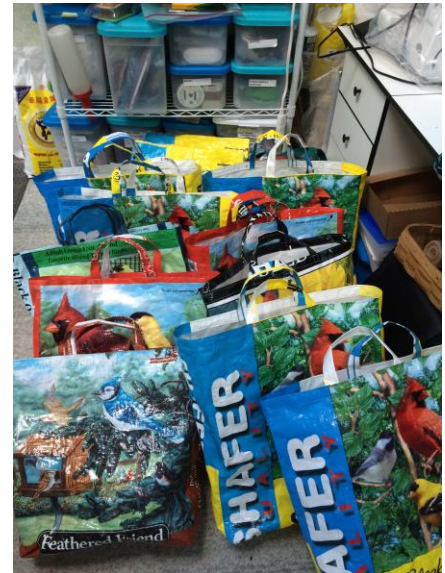
*Joel Ross for the Member/Reach Committee*

## Women's Alliance

The Women's Alliance has been hard at work making crafts for the Fall Fair including these tote bags made from recycled bird seed bags.

Save the date! On **October 3**, Rev. Steve Edington talks about "Woody and Jack: My Two American Heroes." Rev. Edington has written several books about Woody Guthrie and Jack Kerouac. Lunch at noon followed by presentation, sponsored by the Women's Alliance, takes place in the Vestry.

*Wendy McDougall, President, FCU Women's Alliance*





## Kids Matter(s)

“You Are Cordially Invited”

Invitation, our theme of the month, is defined as:

1. the act of inviting, such as an offer of entertainment or hospitality
2. the act of enticing or attracting; allurements
3. a formal request to be present or participate

So, consider this column my invitation, enticement and “formal” request to join together in the coming year to create a place for each other and for yourself. We will have entertainment, hospitality, allurements, and more.

Sometimes I feel like we still have a long time before we start meeting again but I also realize it’s only a few short weeks away. I am looking forward to my second year with you and our first with Rev. Steve.

As I write this in mid-August, I am almost two weeks into my recovery after surgery to replace my right knee. All is going well and I am being well-cared for. I am still a bit worn out and fuzzy from the anesthetics and meds, but do a bit more everyday. I’ll be up and “running” by our first gathering on Sunday, September 13, our traditional Ingathering and Water Communion.

The remaining two Sundays in September will be Chapel Sundays for all ages. We’ll spend time renewing friendships and building new ones, interacting and having fun.

**Be sure to attend our Family Gathering and Pot-luck after service on the 20<sup>th</sup>.** We’ll eat, play, share, and invite each and all to participate in our coming year.

With open arms,  
*Vicki Merriam, Director of Spiritual Development for Children and Youth*

### PLEASE

- Fill out and return SD registration.
- Support our SD program: teach or help with Sunday morning; substitute, nursery caregiver, supply shopper, SD committee member, special events helper, bulletin board creator, activity basket
- Non-parenting adults are also encouraged to volunteer.





# WELCOME

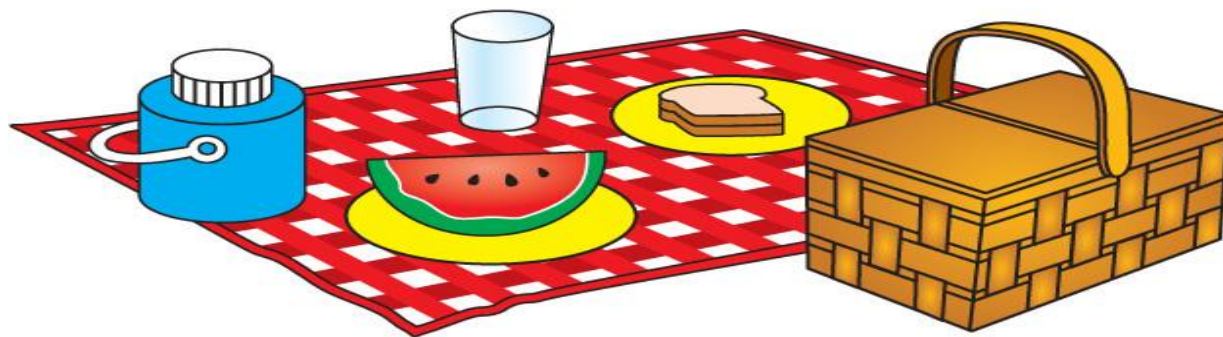
## ALL ARE INVITED

### FCU FAMILY POT-LUCK & GATHERING

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20  
11:30-1:00 (FOLLOWING SERVICE)  
DOWNSTAIRS DINING ROOM

PLEASE BRING A SIMPLE LUNCH DISH TO SHARE  
(finger foods: salad, sandwiches, wraps, fruit, desserts)  
Drinks supplied

WE WILL ALSO HAVE A FEW FUN GROUP ACTIVITIES TO START THE NEW  
YEAR OFF WITH A BANG.



FCU STAFF	FCU OFFICERS	STAY IN CONTACT WITH FCU
 <p><b>INTERIM MINISTER</b> Rev. Steve Edington <a href="mailto:interimminister@fcu.org">interimminister@fcu.org</a></p> <p><b>DIRECTOR OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT</b> Vicki Merriam <a href="mailto:dsd@fculittle.org">dsd@fculittle.org</a></p> <p><b>MUSIC DIRECTOR</b> Molly Lozeau <a href="mailto:music@fculittle.org">music@fculittle.org</a></p>	<p><b>TREASURER</b> Scott Dressel <a href="mailto:treasurer@fculittle.org">treasurer@fculittle.org</a></p> <p><b>ASSISTANT TREASURER</b> Sara Weeks <a href="mailto:assistreas@fculittle.org">assistreas@fculittle.org</a></p> <p><b>CLERK</b> Martha Childs <a href="mailto:clerk@fculittle.org">clerk@fculittle.org</a></p> <p><b>DEACONS</b> <i>The Deacons oversee worship and the pastoral and spiritual life of the church.</i> Jon Welch (chair), Kris Ersland, Debbie Eston <a href="mailto:deacons@fculittle.org">deacons@fculittle.org</a></p> <p><b>STANDING COMMITTEE</b> <i>The Standing Committee manages the business and organization of the church.</i> Deb Girard (chair), Melissa Baern, Tom Cowen, Mike Pilman, Bob Williams <a href="mailto:sc-chair@fculittle.org">sc-chair@fculittle.org</a></p>	<p>First Church Unitarian 19 Foster Street Littleton, MA 01460 978.486.3044 <a href="mailto:office@fculittle.org">office@fculittle.org</a> <a href="http://www.fculittle.org">www.fculittle.org</a></p> <p><b>FCU COMMUNITY LISTSERVE</b> Get breaking news from our community. Sign up at <a href="http://seven.pairlist.net/ma ilman/listinfo/fcu">http://seven.pairlist.net/ma ilman/listinfo/fcu</a> or visit the link on our website under the “contact us” section. For more information, email <a href="mailto:office@fculittle.org">office@fculittle.org</a>.</p> <p><b>FCU FACEBOOK PAGE</b> Like us at <a href="http://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchUnitarianLittleton">http://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchUnitarianLittleton</a> and share our page with others who might be interested!</p> <p><b>WEBMASTER</b> Leslie Gloyd <a href="mailto:webmaster@fculittle.org">webmaster@fculittle.org</a></p> <p><b>Community Matters</b> Printed in the weekly Order of Service and then distributed via FCU listserv.</p>
<p><b>CHURCH OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR</b> Laura Beltrami <a href="mailto:office@fculittle.org">office@fculittle.org</a></p> <p><b>SEXTON</b> Henry Whitcomb, Jr. <a href="mailto:sexton@fculittle.org">sexton@fculittle.org</a></p> <p>Henry can also be reached via cellphone at 978.273.0170.</p>	<p><b>OTHER FCU CONTACTS</b></p> <p><b>LAY PASTORAL MINISTERS</b> <i>Lay Ministers offer a listening ear and pastoral attention to members of the congregation.</i> Jeanne Anthony, Thom Bentley, David Butz, Caroline Marvin, Jim Nehring, Patti Sardella <a href="mailto:laypastoralmin@fculittle.org">laypastoralmin@fculittle.org</a></p> <p><b>MEMBER-REACH COMMITTEE</b> Joel Ross, chair <a href="mailto:memberreach@fculittle.org">memberreach@fculittle.org</a></p>	<p><a href="mailto:announce@fculittle.org">announce@fculittle.org</a></p> <p>❖ Thursday, 10 a.m.</p> <p><b>The Bulletin</b> Published monthly online and distributed via FCU listserv. <a href="mailto:bulletin@fculittle.org">bulletin@fculittle.org</a></p> <p>❖ 3rd Tuesday of each month, 1 p.m. ❖ <b>Next deadline: Tuesday, September 15, 1 p.m.</b></p> <p><i>Items submitted after deadline may not be included.</i></p>



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**September 2015 Issue**

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