

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

THE REVEREND WENDY FITTING, MINISTER  
 Worship Service: 10:00 am

10 Church Street [corner Middle & Church Streets]  
 Gloucester MA 01930 (978) 283-3410 [www.gloucesteruu@earthlink.net](http://www.gloucesteruu@earthlink.net)



June 30, 2013

By Dick Prouty

## June 30 was a banner day for our church.

The service at 10 was Wendy Fitting's last one in the pulpit as our settled minister of 24 years. The plan for the service was put together by Wendy and Charles Nazarian with the help of all the Music and Liturgy Committee. Wendy had planned for two of the most important people in her life as our minister, to come to speak to the congregation: Reverend Bert Steeves and Rabbi Ellen Lippman. The music was provided by AzOne Gospel Trio (*minus James Early --- Harrison Kelton, our Music Director, filled in*) and was truly inspiring and a fitting salute to Wendy, who loves this trio and their music. Wendy requested the old gospel hymn, Ride On King Jesus, and Gordon Michaels and Darlene Wynn certainly did it justice. The homilies by Ellen Lippman and Bert Steeves were right on as they spelled out the key relationship they each had in helping Wendy find her home in our church. [Read about Rabbi Lippman and Rev. Steeves beginning on page 8.]

The Celebration at the Bell home on Dolliver's Neck went off without a hitch. All the set up in the morning was made possible by a large number of volunteers from our congregation, so ably organized by the Party Committee members: Joanne Souza, Holly Tanguay, JoeAnn Hart and Alison Rowell. Mac Bell and family cooked up his great fish stew and were gracious hosts throughout the event. We had 170 registered guests and almost all showed up. With the addition of some walk-ons (as we expected) the number at the event was about 175 people. The historic house, a setting for Hammond/Sleeper/Garbo parties in the twenties and thirties seemed made for our event.

*Rather than a long uninteresting article on the service and celebration, below are some tweets about memorable moments from both events:*

### "Service Tweets"

The Lord's Prayer sung by Darlene Wynn during the service was a novel and moving way to have the prayer of Jesus on Wendy's last official day "in the pulpit".



The moving moment when Rabbi Ellen Lipmann placed her hands on Reverend Wendy Fitting's shoulders and blessed her for her wonderful works and legacy of love.

The choir singing "An Irish Blessing" for Wendy and all those who came to bid her farewell felt like a benediction from the congregation, mirroring Rabbi Ellen Lipmann's blessing.

The Poore and Thompsen family sitting attentively in their old pew together, listening to the homilies.

The Bergeron family younger generation all together for Wendy's last day, with proud smiles all around.

Reverend Burt Steve's closing words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

**Continued on Page 2**

"Party Tweets"

Music at the party provided entirely by members of the congregation. Another way of blessing Wendy. Gordon's outstanding organizing of the celebration music and his own participation! Amazing guitar riffs by Deb Hardy done with so much energy they made you shout. Janet Young and Tony Hilliard singing their hearts out for Wendy!



Willie Alexander's gorgeous blue seersucker suit was the perfect complement to his wonderful spontaneous music at the Celebration.

Reverend Lelly Smith and others congratulating Dick on a such a nice and fitting( no pun intended) tribute to Wendy at the party.

Willie Greenbaum, Reverend Anne Deneen, and Geoff Richon sitting with Mac Bell on the Bell estate "stoop" and enjoying the splendor of the party panorama.

Jay McLauchlan, Peter Anastas and Willie Alexander exchanging views on the lawn.

Guests arriving laden with delicious pot luck hors d'oeuvres and cookies.

Seeing Wendy at the party, mingling and maybe even enjoying it, then take the Mic. in order to say ... she had *nothing to say!*



Mac Bell put Dick in charge of weather and the weather gods delivered!

Sherry Borge and Cherry Stone reading their poems written for the occasion.

The delighted expressions on people's faces as they entered Mac Bell's beautiful yard with sweeping views of the harbor.

Brenda and James holding hands with eyes closed during Jim Schoel's excellent rendition of Amazing Grace!



Doris Prouty stopping one and all to inscribe squares for the quilt she will make for Wendy.

The book Grace Notes, conceived by Dick Prouty, written by Wendy Fitting, edited by Rufus Collinson

and designed by Ilasahai Prouty, gave each of us a way to take Wendy home with us.

*(Former Board Chairs reminiscing):* Scott Memhard speaking as one of the former Board Chairs, proudly announcing to all that his predecessor as Board Chair, Marie Blanding, was his date for the event. Bill Baumer saying in his remarks as a former



Board Chair, that the most important thing he had learned from Wendy, was the concept of "Church Time". Loretta Peres thanking Wendy for recognizing her and for working with her as they worked through so many good time and bad times, learning together.

Kerry Mullen's dedication in bringing Brenda Enslow and James Applebee to the party and Lucille LePage's similar dedication in driving Brenda back to Lawrence, delivering her in good health and spirits, after her fall at the party.

Tracy Wood and Lucy Garberg, congregation members and community service volunteers, busily bussing tables and supervising recycling.

Dick Prouty reading the two favorite poems of Wendy as a tribute to her ministry: *[read them on page 7]*



## What Are Newt and His Crew Doing Now?

In June, Newt and his crew spent long hours sanding and refinishing the stage floor. The wood is very hard and it took an entire day — using a rented commercial sander to get the



Newly refinished stage .... many hours of work ... but well worth it!

many years' worth of "use" removed. They did a beautiful job (see photo left). It looks even better 'in person.'

When you come to church in July, you will notice that Phase II of the Accessibility Project is beginning. The minister's office is empty,

the library is a temporary *holding place* in preparation for an expanded corridor leading to a new accessible restroom on the Sanctuary level. This work is beginning thanks to some

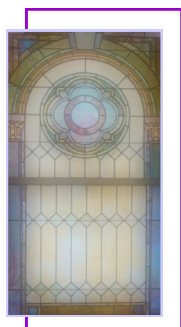
very generous donations that were given so that Wendy's dream of having the church be totally accessible (on all floors) could be realized. We thank those generous donors! We were also able to secure a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) which we will be able to match with funds from our Restoration account.

Bids have gone out; the selected bid will be announced at a future time. For now, Newt and his crew will be doing some "in-kind labor" to prepare for the contractors.

This summer it is anticipated that the church office will not have to be disrupted by the work. We anticipate that the work will also not disrupt church services ... and both lifts will be available for those who need them.

We thank all for their patience during Phase II.

## Music & Meditation in the Meetinghouse



### Series Launched!

On Sunday evening, June 23<sup>rd</sup> the first in a series called Music & Meditation in the Meetinghouse (MMM) was started, offering Cape Ann residents and visitors a unique and varied experience of beautiful music and relaxing meditation in our Sanctuary.

It was a magical evening with flickering votive candles and early-evening setting and golden light of the setting sun beaming through the stained glass windows. Lanesville's Mindfulness Meditation practitioner Dr. Michael Bresnan teamed up with the Dorymates, our own Tony Hilliard and

Janet Ruth Young, to present a combination of meditation and heartfelt music for guitar and voice. There was a collation with light refreshments in the church's Entrance House, giving everyone a chance to meet and mingle afterwards.

Mindfulness has its roots in Buddhist meditative practice, and involves bringing one's attention to subjective present moment experience without judgment — coming out of the world of conceptual thought in which we tend to spend most of our lives and connecting once again with the actuality of our life in the moment. Dr. Bresnan led us through a series of meditations, interspersed with the musical offerings, that enhanced our physical and mental awareness in a way that was gentle, uplifting and profound.

The Dorymates performed a remarkable assortment soulful music in haunting melodies. Janet began with a chant about women in flight like birds that set the mood, followed by a number of lovely duets in which the couple explored many subjects, demonstrating

their personal as well as musical harmony. Tony's skillful use of the guitar, silently changing from one key to another, combined with his warm and comforting voice greatly enhanced the peaceful magic of the evening.

**The next MMM event is scheduled for July 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm featuring both Dr. Bresnan and the Dorymates again by popular demand!**

Special thanks to Holly Tanguay, Peggy Kimball and Susan McKain who assisted in preparing the space for the event. Please contact Charles Nazarian if you know of musicians or meditation leaders who might like to participate in a future event.



## R.E.marks from Tabitha



June was a wonderful month in Religious Education. Children's Sunday could not have gone better and I am very proud of all of the children that participated in the service. There are many talented kids in the congregation and I really enjoying seeing them shine.



I especially want to thank all of my volunteers. Without you the Religious Program would not work. This year Jeremy Melvin agreed to be Chair of the Religious Education Committee and Keith and Paula Gray attended Board meetings in his place. Our teachers were: Barbara Baumer, Caroline

Connolly, and Dianne Stephan. Special Guest, Deb Hardy, presented a program of music and art. Deb Way coordinated pet food donations, accompanied them to the Shelter, and then arranged for a special tour.

For many years now, "The Gray Girls" Anna, Bethany and Mary — alternating with our "Two Phoebes" Phoebe Hagberg and Phoebe Weissblum — have provided consistent and thoughtful care to younger children during the service. This year they also took turns providing activities to a group of children so that their parents could attend R.E. Committee meetings after church.

Now is the time I begin looking for teachers for next year's program. I want to have rotating volunteers that can run a classroom for several weeks at a time. Without teachers we can't have Religious Education. Please email me at [tlcarty@gmail.com](mailto:tlcarty@gmail.com) or Jeremy Melvin at [jmelvin@landmarkschool.org](mailto:jmelvin@landmarkschool.org) to help.

We tried something a bit different for the All Church Picnic this year. Instead of grilling burgers and hotdogs, we had a cold-cut platter and a hummus platter,

as well as the usual pot-luck salads and desserts. The plan worked well and allowed *everyone* to eat at the same time. Cleanup was easier too! THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HELPED!



During the summer I will begin a clean out of the classrooms and dispose of all old supplies. Classrooms will also need to be decorated and painted. Many hands make light work and I can not do this alone. Please contact me if you want to help.

I have fond memories of this year. My goal is to begin the coming year with a fresh start and a fresh coat of paint.



Tabitha Carty-Mercier

## Filling Our Pulpit During the Summer

**July 7** Newt Fink "What Did You Expect?"  
**July 14** Dick Prouty  
**July 21** Rev. Jeremy Melvin  
**July 28** Rev. Sarah Clark

**September 1** Loretta Peres  
**September 8** Shep Abbott  
**September 15** Rev. Jenny Rankin

**August 4** Janet Ruth Young  
**August 11** Nicole & Jim Schoel  
**August 18** JoeAnn Hart  
**August 25** Jesse Fallon

*Please check the official calendar on our website for updates. As soon as we have titles for the homilies, they will be posted on the calendar.*

## Farewell To Wendy

For all of these years  
of Sundays,  
Wendy has been before us  
sharing her sense  
of little girl scrunch and frolic  
and the depths of her ancient wisdom.

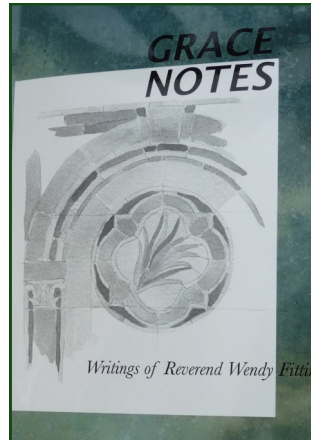
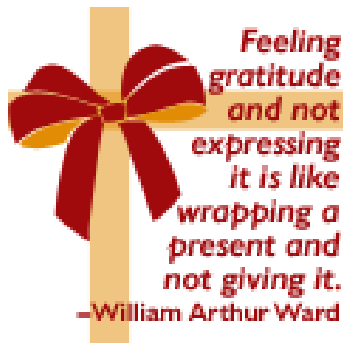
Every week,  
she speaks to us  
from the reality of her own life,  
the puzzlements and discoveries  
that arise from her daily voyage  
as she walks the dogs  
and opens to seashore moments.

And, over time, she provides us  
with the gift  
of someone to call on  
when we need to explore  
or share, question, weep  
or simply Be.

In the pew, in the car  
or on the beach,  
time with Wendy  
is a gift of Grace

And we are so deeply grateful.

*Ruthanne (Rufus) Collinson  
Gloucester Poet Laureate*



**Grace Notes: Writings  
of Reverend Wendy  
Fitting**

**Given to all party  
attendees. Available in  
the church office for  
purchase at \$15 per  
copy.**

We're on the Web:  
[www.gloucesteruu.org](http://www.gloucesteruu.org)



## We Care About You

We are very happy to report that **Marie Blanding** is doing well, following her kidney surgery, and is at home (in fact we saw her at church on June 23rd AND 30th ... and she had a "date" for Wendy's party!).

Due to the effects of her radiation treatment, **Carolyn Edwards** has had difficulty with swallowing. With rest and a liquid diet, she is improving. She was scheduled to leave the Lahey Clinic in early July and be transferred to Seacoast. The prospect of "coming home" is very uplifting, and she wants us to know that she is very appreciative of the visits and care of the congregation have .

**Rufus Collinson** is improving after surgery at Beverly Hospital on June 30th. She had planned lots of activities during the first week in July because of family visiting. Fortunately, they're here now taking care of her. Rufus was anticipating being released after the holiday weekend. Cards and phone calls would be appreciated.

The fall that **Brenda Enslow** took when leaving the party for Wendy on Sunday evening was not serious and did not require hospitalization. We are very happy to report, that after a while in the emergency room, Brenda was able to return home; we thank Lucille LePage and Kerry Mullen for making it possible for Brenda (and James) to attend and enjoy themselves.

# Open Door Meal: Our Turn July 20th



Board of Managers members Jerry Ackerman and Charles Nazarian have agreed to be the "lead persons" for this meal.

Each Saturday afternoon various community groups prepare, serve, and share a meal at the Open Door Food Pantry on Emerson Avenue in Gloucester. Of course, they also clean up afterwards. Since there are many people and groups that take turns, our church serves a meal only four times each year.

On July 20th Jerry Ackerman and Charles Nazarian have

agreed to be the lead persons for the Board of Managers.

This year we are asking each church committee to step up and take a turn planning and serving a meal. It's a way that more people can take part in the very rewarding experience of preparing food and sharing it with others in our community — it is Social Justice in Action.

The Open Door manager tells us that those groups serving meals during the summer are particularly important due to many being away on vacation.

Please mark your calendar for Saturday, July 20, and get in touch with either Jerry or Charles to CONFIRM that you will be there to help.

## July Birthdays

- 1 Corryn Ulrich
- 2 Maxine Fuller
- 4 Gordie Baird
- 4 Jay McLauchlan
- 5 Dick Prouty
- 7 Elaine Bleau Richards
- 9 Christa Sammons
- 13 Rufus Collinson
- 18 Brenda Enslow
- 24 Judy Warrington
- 26 Judy Williams
- 28 Florence Hopkins Melvin

## June Flowers

**June 2** Given by Jay McLauchlan in loving memory of his mother, Roxane Reynal.

**June 9** Given by JoAnn Souza in memory of her dad, who was a remarkable man and father.

**June 16** Given by Charles Nazarian in loving memory of his sister, Sonya (Nazarian) Marashlian, whose birthday is on June 18.

**June 23** Given by Elizabeth Bergeron in loving memory of her mother, Nina Bergeron, whose birthday is June 18.

**June 30** Given by the Staff and Board of Managers with love in appreciation of the many years of service, guidance and friendship Rev. Wendy Fitting has provided to us.

## Family Promise Update By Deb Aminzadeh

There are currently 5-6 volunteers from our church signed up to assist with the Family Promise program. We have agreed to be a support congregation to the program and will be aligned with a host church sometime in the fall. Currently, the program is in great need of help on the weekends at the Day Center on Rantoul Street in Beverly. If you could spare 1 1/2 - 2 hours of your time on a Saturday or Sunday it would be a big help.

You would just be present at the Center that is all that is required. The guests may want to visit with you or may want to just do their own thing but in any event the program requires that a staff member be present at all times.

As a reminder, The Family Promise program calls for churches to offer housing, shelter and personal support personal support overnight for families, over the course of a week, in rotation. During the day the families are

transported by van to the Day Center in Beverly. There, adults are offered counseling aimed at helping them restore normal lives while their school-age children are taken to public schools in the communities where they once lived. In the evening the families return to the host churches, where volunteers prepare and serve meals, are available for conversation, games, or helping children with homework.

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Other volunteers remain with the families overnight, providing security and being on call in case of emergency. As the Volunteer Coordinator for our church I am hoping to grow our list of volunteers. You will need to be trained in order to help at the Day Center and support in the fall. Many of you are anxious to begin volunteering and that can begin right away. This is what to do:

Attend a Volunteer Training as soon as possible, Volunteer Coordinators need this training, too. (You don't need to

wait for a training with a specific Host Congregation).

Fill out a CORI form at the training. (A driver's license is needed for verification.)

Fill out a Volunteer Form at the training. (This lets us know which congregation you are from and what your particular interests and talents are.)

Being trained and ready to volunteer where needed does not obligate you to volunteer every time you are called. It

simply gives you the chance to begin to volunteer at current Host Churches who need extra help.

Regular trainings are held each month at the Day Center, however you must reserve a spot.

*If you are interested in joining our small group of volunteers, please feel free to email me at [deb\\_rearick@hotmail.com](mailto:deb_rearick@hotmail.com) or call me at 617-818-5575. Whatever time you give big or small will come back to you tenfold so please consider supporting this wonderful program.*

## Two of Wendy's Favorites from "Grace Notes"

Go with your love to the fields.  
Lie down in the shade. Rest your head  
in her lap. Swear allegiance  
to what is highest your thoughts.

As soon as the generals and the politicians  
can predict the motions of your mind,  
lose it. Leave it as a sign  
to mark the false trail, the way  
you didn't go.

Be like the fox  
who makes more tracks than necessary,  
some in the wrong direction.  
Practice resurrection.

*Wendell Berry*

### **A Brief for the Defense**

Sorrow everywhere. Slaughter everywhere. If babies are not starving someplace, they are starving somewhere else. With flies in their nostrils. But we enjoy our lives because that's what God wants. Otherwise the mornings before summer dawn would not be made so fine. The Bengal tiger would not be fashioned so miraculously well. The poor women at the fountain are laughing together between the suffering they have known

and the awfulness in their future, smiling and laughing while somebody in the village is very sick.  
There is laughter every day in the terrible streets of Calcutta, and the women laugh in the cages of Bombay. If we deny our happiness, resist our satisfaction, we lessen the importance of their deprivation. We must risk delight. We can do without pleasure, but not delight. Not enjoyment. We must have the stubbornness to accept our gladness in the ruthless furnace of this world. To make injustice the only measure of our attention is to praise the Devil.  
If the locomotive of the Lord runs us down, we should give thanks that the end had magnitude. We must admit there will be music despite everything. We stand at the prow again of a small ship anchored late at night in the tiny port. Looking over to the sleeping island: the waterfront is three shuttered cafés and one naked light burning.  
To hear the faint sound of oars in the silence as a rowboat comes slowly out and then goes back is truly worth all the years of sorrow that are to come.

*by Jack Gilbert  
New Yorker 2004*

## Introducing Rev. Jenny Rankin

As the Gloucester Times said in its front page tribute, it wasn't exactly a case of 'Here is the church, here is the steeple, open the doors and see all the people' when Rev. Wendy Fitting preached her first sermon back in 1989.

In fact, back then she faced a church full of largely empty pews. Another pastor might have looked at this meager flock and been discouraged. But the challenge proved a perfect fit for Fitting, who, by the time she preached her last Sunday sermon on June 23, faced a church full of pews packed with grateful congregants who one by one rose to tell of all the ways she'd touched their lives.

Wendy Fitting is famously averse to limelight. Candle light, as in votive, is more her style. Nevertheless, over the past few weeks she's endured megawatts of limelight as congregants, friends, colleagues and the City of Gloucester itself paid round after round of tributes to a pastor whom long-time congregant Gordon Baird characterized as "the glue."

Finding someone to follow up a long term pastor who had made such an impact on both our church and the community was a daunting task. But, the Interim Committee recommended someone to the Board in May who fits the bill very well indeed. The Board of Managers unanimously recommended that we extend a two year contract to Reverend Jenny Rankin, and she has enthusiastically accepted.



Jenny Rankin is a wife, mother and pastor who is a graduate of Harvard Divinity School, and who loves Emerson and Thoreau, and finds her "joy in listening to peoples' stories about their lives, in learning and teaching, in helping individuals search for meaning and purpose in their lives, in preaching and leading worship that helps us deepen spiritually and feel inspired to go out and be a blessing and a light to a broken world that needs each one of us so very much."

An interim pastor -- "a form of ministry I love" -- Jenny graduated summa cum laude from Princeton, and comes to us from Babson College where she has served as Ecumenical Chaplain, following "fifteen happy years of ministry at First Parish Church in Concord." Although she won't be preaching her first sermon until September 15th, she will be in Gloucester on July 17th.

Jenny brings to her interim ministry with us many traits: a warm, engaging, and energetic personality; experience in interim work in small churches; work

experience in organizing and implementing complex projects, fundraising experience; knowledge of worship and RE materials, 20 years of experience as a parish leader, ability to give compelling sermons; good administrative and lay leadership skills.

Jenny is particularly interested in how we can pass on and draw inspiration from the "spiritual fire" that is handed on to us by Unitarians and Universalists who came before us. The opportunity to work on the history of our church as the mother church of Universalism is one of the reasons Jenny is excited to be joining us as our Interim Minister.

***We're planning an informal  
"meet and greet" for  
Reverend Rankin  
In the Church Vestry on  
Wednesday -- July 17th  
at 7:15 pm***

***Everyone is Invited!***

Please plan to come on July 17<sup>th</sup>. And please check out the full program of interim guest speakers we've lined up for Sunday summer services from now through September 15th. [see page 4] We've got some interesting people stepping up to our pulpit. They may not be Wendy or Jenny, but we think you'll find they have some very, very interesting things to say.

## Two Important People in Wendy's Religious Life

**Reverend Bert Steeves** is a graduate of the Harvard Divinity School and served 38 years as minister of the First Religious Society of Newburyport from 1956 to 1995. He served for two years as ministerial consultant to the Independent Christian

Church (now known locally as the Gloucester Unitarian Universalist Church). From time to time he preaches in our church, continuing a 25-year relationship.

*Continued on next page*



Upon his retirement in 1994, Rev. Steeves became the interim minister of the Kearsarge UU Fellowship of Andover, NH. Following his retirement he was elected Minister Emeritus of the First Religious Society of Newburyport by the membership, and continues to assist the current minister, Rev. Harold Babcock, at various church functions.

**Rabbi Ellen Lippman** is founder and rabbi of Kolot Chayeinu/ Voices of Our Lives: Building a Progressive Jewish Community in Brooklyn, NY. She is the former East Coast Director of MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, and former director of the Jewish Women's Program at the New 14th Street Y in Manhattan.

Rabbi Lippman was Co-chair and still sits on the board of T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights. She served as the first social justice chair for the Women's Rabbinic Network

and has served on numerous boards and advisory councils. She is the founder of the Soup Kitchen at Hebrew Union College -Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, and co-founder of the ten year-old Children of Abraham Peace Walk: Jews, Christians and Muslims Waling Together in Brooklyn in Peace.

Rabbi Lippman was ordained in 1991 by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, and also received there the degree of Master of Hebrew Letters. She holds a BA in English Language and Literature from Boston University and an MS in Library Science from Simmons College. Rabbi Lippman and her partner are long-time Brooklyn residents and believe to be absolutely true what a Kolot Chayeinu member once said in jest: "IT DON'T GET ANY BETTER THAN BROOKLYN!"

## A Few More Pictures!



*We thank the following people for sharing their pictures -- both in church, and at the party:*

*Artie Abelowitz  
JoAnn Souza  
Neil Williams*

*"Tweets" submitted (or overheard) by:*

*Shep Abbott  
Dick Prouty  
Alison Rowell  
Holly Tanguay*

