

North Fork Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



Jamesport, Long Island

Newsletter

Summer, 2026



Love radically, serve gratefully, wonder daily.

PRIDE & JOY

NFUUF Members and Artie March in the 2026 Pride Parade



CONGRATULATIONS

To Marguerite Volonts for leading a thoughtfully selected and thoroughly enjoyable concert with the Jamesport Community Chorus. Marguerite directed a moving program celebrating the 250th anniversary of USA with a wide selection of songs and music.

To Reverend Ben Bortin on his fourth anniversary as the minister of our congregation. Ben enriches every service with his presence and his thought provoking, wise and hopeful words.

On Pastoral Care...

Message from Rev. Ben

One of the basic responsibilities of the ministry, traditionally, has been pastoral attention and care. The religious leader was someone you could trust with personal information, someone to whom you turned for comfort and counsel.

Even as I say that, I can't help but think of something my stepmother said years ago. (I had a lot of respect for her judgment by the way.) She mentioned that when a person had a problem to discuss, and people would suggest, "go to your doctor, or go to your minister (or priest or rabbi)," discerning people would smile. Those two professions notoriously lacked training in the area of counselling.

I can't vouch for medical education in recent years, but I can say that with ministerial training, pastoral care and counselling are now very much part of the curriculum. In most seminarians' cases, including mine, there is a mandatory semester of what's known as "clinical pastoral education---" ten weeks at a hospital, drug and alcohol rehab center, or prison, where a student, under supervision, could get training, interacting and counselling with people in need. That does not mean that at the conclusion of one's ministerial education, one is equivalent to a professional therapist. Such would require additional education and credentialing.

It does mean that a minister should offer a listening ear, attentiveness to individuals' needs, and such support as he, she, or they can offer.

I'm leading up to saying that you should always feel free to engage in personal and private conversations with me. While not having a physical office in the greater Riverhead area, the phone and Zoom (as happens so often in this day and age), can become our office. Please feel free to text, email, or call me, and I will be back in touch within no more than 48 hours.

I also promise, of course, that any conversations of a privileged nature will be kept confidential.

So never hesitate to contact me, if you are inclined. (I'm available by phone or text at 917-733-1460, and email at Benbortin@gmail.com; the Zoom link is <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5488194523>pwd=azFlZmxxOSTjTy9ZSGVGRUs3WlRQT09.

Take time for relaxation, pleasure, and re-creation in the summer ahead!

As ever, Ben



David Roth Concert Is A Success

The haunting, organic notes of a three sided ocarina opened David Roth's beautiful concert held in our Meeting House on May 16. The sold out show featured a combination of stories, original and traditional songs, accompanied by David's virtuosic guitar playing. His musical message gave us much to ponder, while making us laugh and sing along. Everyone in the audience was then treated to a reception with wine from Old Field Vinyard donated by Ros Baiz, appetizers and cookies. Kudos to Mary Ellen and Tom Tomaszewski for bringing this wonderful experience to fruition. Also thank you to all who volunteered that night, including Marguerite Volonts, Kathy Murray, Dyan Grey, Liala Strotman, Elizabeth Daly and Betsy Kaplan.



David Roth with Tom and Mary Ellen Tomaszewski

Greenport Photography Exhibit

With Joyce Culver



Joyce Culver is a renowned photographer and NFUUF member. Her work is part of an documentary photography exhibit at the Floyd Memorial Library in Greenport titled A PORTRAIT of AMERICA, . As part of the 250th celebration of USA the Library has assembled a selection of photographs that show America today. Included in the exhibit are several of Joyce's photos that represent a slice of NYC. The exhibit will be on display through August 23, 2026. Our congratulations, admiration and appreciation go out to Joyce for sharing her artistry with us all.



REFLECTIONS

from Reverend Ben

The Hebrew prophet Amos, who is believed to have lived during eighth century before the Common Era, was a shepherd and sycamore fig farmer. He was the first Biblical prophet to write down his prophecies.

During his early lifetime, he came to be aware of the growing disparity between the super-wealthy and the poor in his country. He believed that a compassionate God would never tolerate people going hungry, as others basked in luxury. Here is what Amos wrote in response to what he witnessed....(Amos 5:21-24).

“I hate, I despise your religious festivals;
your assemblies are a stench to me.

Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings,

I will not accept them...
“...But let justice roll on like a river,
righteousness like a never-failing stream!”

(The last lines, you may recall, were invoked in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have A Dream” oration.)

That message didn’t sit well with either the Head Priest of the time, nor King Jeroboam II. Amos was expelled from the “Northern Kingdom” of Israel.

I wonder what Amos would say in response to the \$14.7 million, green algae dominated Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, the \$600 million East Wing ballroom, and the \$60 million South Lawn Ultimate Fighting Championship event. (Despite promises to the contrary, a lot of the cost of those projects have been charged to us, the taxpayers.)

Ben Continues to Reflect...

At the same time, over \$186 billion is being taken away from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, denying some 700,000 children access to food benefits. And \$600 billion or more is being subtracted from Medicaid, leaving vulnerable people without medical care. What would Amos say, furthermore, about people incarcerated in substandard detention centers, merely because they're immigrants (or the children of immigrants.) And speaking of children, how about the 500 babies and toddlers, aged three and under, who have been held for weeks in those warehouses, often allegedly with worm-infested food, unsafe drinking water, and inadequate medical attention. With all of that said, is there any recent event that, for me, inspires hope and fosters a sense of joy?

Emphatically yes. It is the opening of the Obama Presidential Center. First, unlike other Presidential libraries, this place is also a garden, a basketball court, and a branch of the Chicago Public Library. It is not a shrine to one man or one couple, or an institution of interest primarily to Presidential historians. It is a place that is of, for, and by the people it serves. And second, the principles it celebrates are admirable ones – like human dignity, respect for human differences, integrity, and compassion. The Center also affirms true democratic values, like honoring the voice and the vote of people being governed, and the peaceful transfer of power. In a time of deep division, the message of this Center is one of unity, amid our differences. “We want to find a way to look toward each other again, not further away,” said former President Obama. Michelle Obama echoed the theme, when she said, “No one, and I mean no one, has the right to sit in judgment of who is American enough.”

I celebrate any caring community dedicated to freedom and justice for all, and the North Fork UU Fellowship is one eloquent example, thanks to all of you.

But on the national scene, during what too often seems like a starless midnight, the opening of this Center, and all that it represents, comes as a joyous daybreak. This Presidential Center is, in short, a great triumph for democracy and for this great country, as we enter our 250th year.

NFUUF

Speaker Series

NFUUF has recently been graced by the words of two admirable women who are part of essential organizations who contribute greatly to our community.

Gianna Miller- As part of The Butterfly Effect Project, Gianna serves as a Head Junior Volunteer helping to oversee 700 youths. She joined BEP at age 11, hoping to build confidence and find friendships. She flourished through the many activities offered and built up her confidence, sense of responsibility, leadership and commitment. Her most important activity has been as part of the Social Action Committee Group which traveled on six-day trip through Southern states, visiting historic sights and learning first hand about Black History. While NFUUF had learned about The Butterfly Effect Program through an earlier talk give by BEP Executive Director Tia Fulford, it was inspiring to hear about its direct impact on Gianna.



Gianna Miller

Pam Grieke is the Executive Director of Hope & Resilience Long Island, an organization which offers informed services and support for those experiencing domestic violence and/or sexual assault and human trafficking. Pam's moving and impassioned speech highlighted the many ways in which survivors have suffered and what is needed to help those survivors find "safety, healing and hope. HARLI offers a range of services including legal protection, trauma support and financial counseling via bilingual advocates and case managers. The shocking statistics of those in need is matched only by Pam and HARLI's deep commitment to this cause.

Book Corner

Here Comes the Sun by Bill McKibben. An engaging, highly informative, yet not overly technical book on climate change, by someone who has written and spoken out on environmental issues for a number of years. Recommended by Rev. Ben Bortin

Unsheltered by Barbara Kingsolver. The characters are intriguing but believable, and the somewhat tame plot somehow manages to be fascinating. Kingsolver's writing is greatly enhanced by brilliant metaphors and adept turns of phrase. Recommended by Rev. Ben Bortin.

CARING

CORNER



We continue to collect donations for local food pantries. Bring your food items to the next service and they will be delivered by Elizabeth Daly.

The Ukrainian Church continues to collect clothes and hygiene products to send to Ukraine. Bring your donations to the next service and Desiree will deliver them to the church. Many thanks to Elizabeth and Desiree!

If you wish to reach out to someone with support, concern, or celebration, email Desiree Passantino at desiree.passantino@gmail.com

NFUUF is an open-minded, open-hearted spiritual community. We are ever grateful for the guidance of our Reverend Ben Bortin. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month at 10:30 a.m. Jamesport Meeting House, 1590 Main Road, Jamesport, NY www.nfuuf.org

Editor Betsy Kaplan