

Union Church Newsletter

July-August 2018



Beach Roses

Beth Whitney

From Your Pastor...

What a beautiful time to enjoy the coast of Maine. As we head into these summer months, I am really looking forward to my first summer at Union Church. Every season is special, but I know that the Summer Speaker Series and a church picnic in August with our entire community will truly be highlights. I hope that each of you may find time for joy, rest, relaxation and spiritual nourishment in these days ahead. It is a time to allow ourselves to be replenished in mind, body and spirit, and I hope you allow yourselves to follow your bliss, as Joseph Campbell once said in his amazing PBS series on The Power of Myth. I trust that most of us know some of the ways we can renew ourselves and thus we are invited to carve out special moments to provide the time for those rich opportunities. Perhaps too, we may say yes to something new in the months ahead...new friendships, a new experience, new reading. They often say that trying something new can bring happiness to us.

Many of you have given tirelessly to important activities and events at our church and I, as your Pastor, continue to be inspired by the ways in which you share your gifts, your hospitality, and your compassion with me, with one another, and with our neighbors near and far. Thank you for what you have done to enrich the life of our church and thank you to those who will continue to share your efforts to help our Summer Speaker Series be a success.

Blessings to each of you and to your community of friends and family. May we continue to walk together in faith and love.

Peace and joy,

Paula

Moderator Musings about Spring at Union Church

By Paul Schlaver

The past two months have been busy ones at Union Church. The arrival of spring ...finally... helped get us motivated to plant some new items in our church life garden. Many of us were finally also able to burst forth with new plantings in our own yards and gardens. I always marvel at how well Mainers care for their yards and gardens after the long winter so we all can enjoy the colorful blooms of spring. What did we add to the excitement and bustle at Union Church this spring?

Pastor Paula demonstrated her great interpersonal skills by suggesting a new program called ONE TO ONE and we launched it on Sunday May 13th. The majority of those in attendance on that day put their name in a basket for the end of service random drawing of a name to trigger a “one to one” conversation with a fellow member of the church family. Many simply focused their coffee hour conversation with this person. Others chose to meet later for a cup of coffee, meal, or glass of beer or wine in town. Some people that barely knew each other had great conversations sharing their life stories. We drew names again on June 10th and plan to keep doing this during the summer months.

The Social Justice Group, after several winter meetings decided to focus on the topic of ending hunger in Maine and planned two events to highlight that decision. The theme of hunger and food insecurity was the focus of the May 20th worship service to introduce us to this chosen focus by the Social Justice Group. Then on Sunday evening, June 10th we held a public panel discussion with four speakers all with many years of advocacy on the need for the State of Maine to find ways to adequately feed its citizens, especially its children. The goal was to educate the church family and others present as to the problem and then discuss local practical ways to work toward the end to hunger goal along with the advocacy needed on a state-wide policy level as well. I believe all in attendance increased their awareness of the problem and certainly as to the challenges for effective solutions. The Social Justice Group plans to go forward with more efforts to tackle this problem and bring ideas forward to the Union Church family.

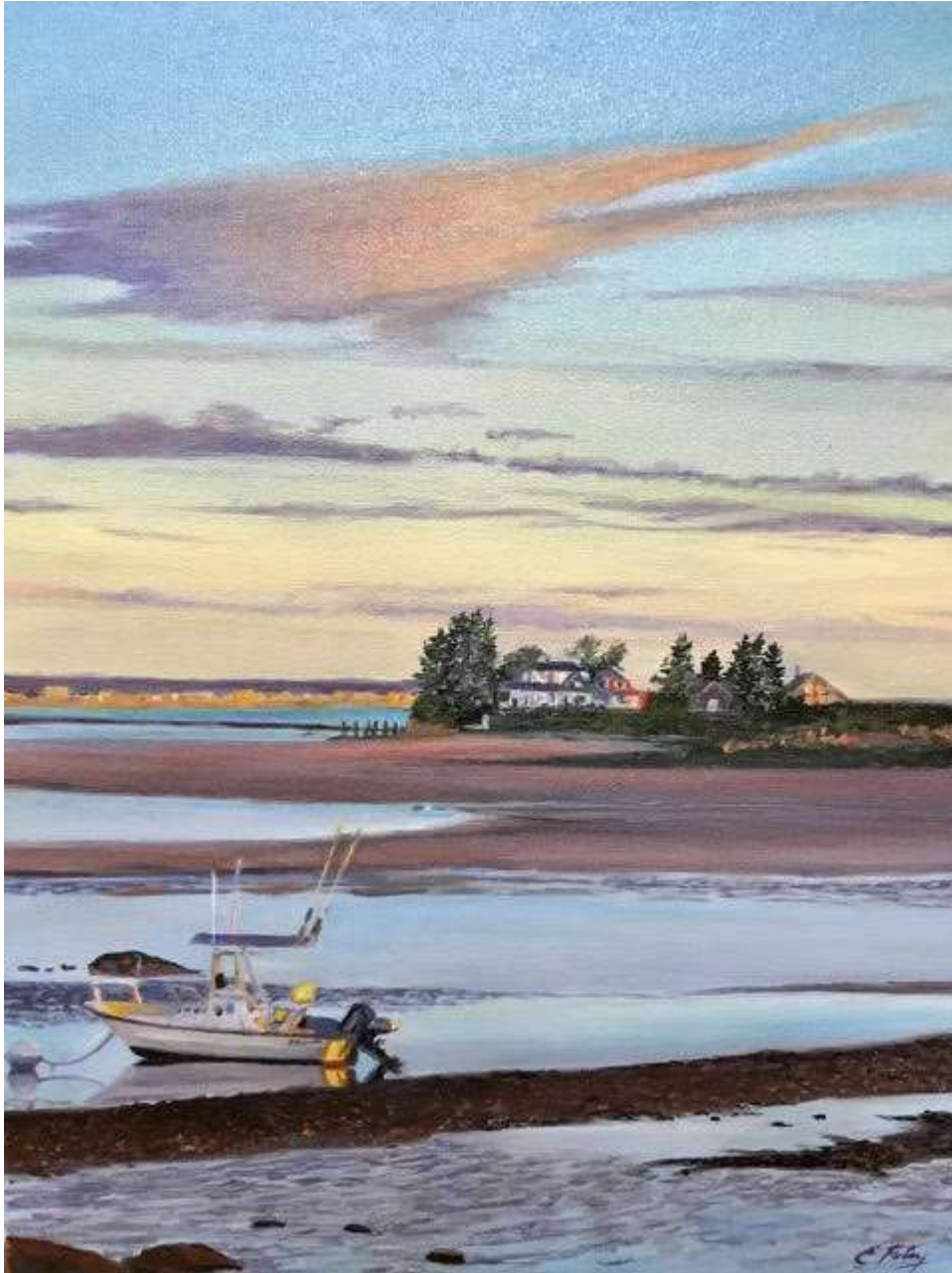
Lastly, I want to mention that I hope all those that were in church on Sunday, June 24th were pleased with the short, but very positive Semi-Annual meeting we conduct as per our church constitution requirements. The fiscal picture and various committee reports were all very positive. Now we can go forward and enjoy the summer, be enlightened at the Speaker Series presentations, come to a church picnic on August 12th and care for and enjoy our friendships within the Union Church family.



Fourth of July Parade Float

Photo Courtesy of Peter McPheeters

Art Raffle for the Anita Shreve Scholarship



"Basket Island" by Eileen Foley, oil painting, 20"h x 16"w

While Anita touched millions internationally with her writing, she touched Union Church in a special and enduring way. In 2002, at Peter McPheeters' invitation to speak at church, Anita read from *Sea Glass*, answered questions, signed books, and captivated those of us lucky enough to be present at the first event of what

was to become our Summer Speaker Series, now in its seventeenth season. Since 2002, Anita and a dozen of her famous author-friends each transported our audiences and gave the series marquis status, attracting still more wonderful speakers.

In tribute to Anita, the series' First Friend in every way, the church is fundraising for a scholarship for young writers, established in her name by Boston's Grub Street, a creative writing center for story tellers of every genre. Thanks to Eileen Foley's generosity, we'll be raffling one of her original and stunning oil paintings of the harbor.

A copy of the painting will be on display and raffle tickets for sale following Sunday services beginning on July 1, and at speaker events, among other places. Raffle tickets will be sold by Jen Comeau, jenjencomeau@gmail.com, 207-229-4136, and Anita Coupe, awcoupe@gmail.com, 207-284-1273. Tickets are \$10 each and 3 for \$25, payable by cash or by check made out to Union Church. Checks can also be mailed to Union Church c/o Coupe, P.O. Box 322, Biddeford Pool ME 04006. Please include your printed name, telephone number and email address. Sorry, no credit cards. The winning ticket will be drawn at the last speaker event, on Thursday, August 23; attendance not required to win. For more information, please contact Anita Coupe (above).

Men's Group: If you are interested in hearing more about upcoming activities, please sign up in the foyer of our church. Contact Chris Sorrentino for more information. Scheduled-

Antique Car Show, Bentley's, Wed, July 18th, 4-7pm

Trip to Portland Sea Dogs (July or August; please check with Chris about preferences) and Wood Island Lighthouse to be planned.

Save the Date for our Church Picnic

August 12th following the Church service - Rain or Shine

11:30AM - whenever

At the home of Eileen Foley & Chris Sorrentino

1 Orin Lane, Biddeford

Please bring a salad or desert. (There will be a signup sheet at Church.)

Mindful Tools For Self-Care Class

Tuesday morning, July 31 10:30 - 12:00

BPCC second floor

Learn some practical tools you can use anytime and anywhere for self-care and stress reduction. Class will include breathing techniques, gentle movement, meditation and a guided visualization. All activities can be done in the chairs provided or optional to bring a yoga mat. Free

Led by Candy Blaxter, Registered Yoga Teacher

RSVP: candyblaxter@gmail.com



“Sunset over Basket Island”

Photo courtesy of Peter McPheeters

Mission Update by Ken Murray

Highlights over recent months include the following:

- Soup Friends – Union Church soup makers provided hot soup and companionship to frail and/or isolated individuals
- Alternative Pathways – The Mission Committee sponsors a holiday party for the secondary school students of Biddeford’s Alternative Pathways Program. The Knit Wits group this year developed a wonderful visitation and mentoring program with those same students.
- In-a-Pinch – The non-food pantry that operates at Seeds of Hope Neighborhood Center twice a month receives volunteer support, and the Union Church Mission Committee provides a light supper meal for this program five times a year.

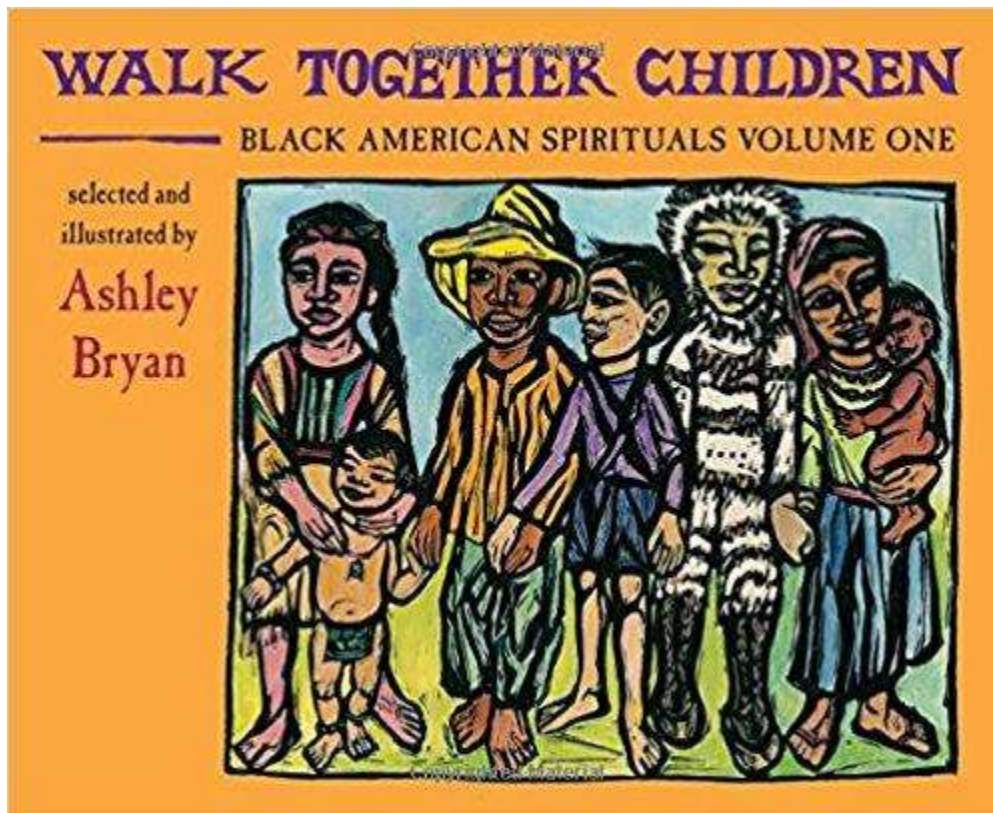
- Seeds of Hope Fundraiser – While not a Mission Committee project officially, members of the Committee organized and walked in this two-day, forty-mile fundraiser. Another Mission Committee member provided the walkers lunch on the first day of the event.
- Mission Hill Community Garden – The Mission Committee provided \$500 in funding for this new community garden that is being developed in the Bacon Street neighborhood of Biddeford.
- Honduran Hunger Project – The Mission Committee agreed to support the York Association of the Maine Conference of the United Church or Christ hunger-relief project in Honduras with \$750 in funds
- Support for Children of Syria – We are donating a similar amount to an organization that helps Syrian refugees.
- Biddeford Clean-Up – Joyce Morrisette organized a group that included some of the children of the church to clean up a park in Biddeford.
- Saco Meals Program – The Saco Meals Team provided the evening meal at the program on the third Mondays of March and May (the third Mondays of January, February and April were all holidays).
- Financial & Other Support was provided to...
 - Stone Soup Food Pantry
 - Saco Meals Program
 - Seeds of Hope Neighborhood Center
 - Ever After Mustang Ranch
 - Holy Cross Anglican School in Belize to support a student
 - Education for All Children-Kenya to support a student
 - Biddeford Primary School ESL classroom with healthy snacks

One of the initiatives that our Mission Committee supports is helping two international students attend school.

This is a picture of Luis Choc. Luis is a student at Holy Cross Anglican School in Belize whom we have supported through the Union Church Mission Committee or several years. He will be going into High School when school starts up again in the fall.



A Wonderful Collaboration... by Sara Bloom



Sara Bloom has spent the past year brainstorming a collaboration with Maine's iconic award-winning author, illustrator, puppet maker, humanitarian, and storyteller, Ashley Bryan. She treasures a friendship with Ashley that began nearly five decades ago and cherishes the privilege it was to have performed with him.

Ashley will travel to Portland from his residence on Little Cranberry Island (Islesford) to attend the opening of an exhibit of his artworks at the Portland Museum of Art and a screening of Richard Kane's documentary, *I know a man*, at the Wishcamper Center on the campus of USM on August 3rd. Oh to be 95 and have such energy! You can learn more about his life and work, devoted to delivering his message of Peace Joy Love Embrace of All People, on his website: www.AshleyBryanCenter.org.

Their latest collaboration is the commissioning of *A Tender Bridge*, the first African American Requiem ever composed, a 90-minute work scored for orchestra, small jazz ensemble, chorus, children's chorus, Gospel choir, and soloists composed by Maine's celebrated Aaron Robinson. Aaron uses his innovative voiceover technique to include Ashley's prerecorded recitation as the evangelist.

Sara is completing her work to build a network of cities across the nation where the Requiem will be premiered between this fall and the end of 2021; consortium members include professional and youth orchestras, public and private high schools and colleges, and churches. A list of cities and dates will be made available.

See https://artnewengland.com/ed_columns/ashley-bryan/



Aaron, Ashley, and Sara
Ashley's home on Little Cranberry Island
Summer 2017

To encourage dialogue events held concurrent with the premieres, Sara has created "a tender bridge" between Ashley Bryan and Moorfield Storey to mark the 110th anniversary of the founding of the NAACP in 2019. She writes:

I wanted to express my thought that our ongoing national and international conversations suggest that the premiere of Ashley Bryan's African American Requiem may be a good opportunity to honor Moorfield Storey (1845-1929). Who is aware that the founding president of the NAACP was a white man? We all share the impulse to build bridges and so it occurs to me to connect the two Cranberry Islands here in Maine and two of their important residents, separated by a sandbar and a century but not by their race. We all need to hear more about people like Bryan and Storey, who graduated from Harvard in 1866, Harvard Law School in 1869.

Excerpts from Wiki:

Moorfield Storey was the first president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), from its founding in 1909 until his death in 1929.[13] According to his biographer Hixson, he "launched and maintained the effective to achieve the total destruction of the legal embodiment of white supremacy." [8]

Storey himself was quoted as saying "It is not success to fight on the winning side. It is success to fight bravely for a principal even if one does not live to see it triumph." [10] Inc, The Crisis Publishing Company (1930-05-01). The Crisis. The Crisis Publishing Company, Inc.

One of Storey's favorite quotes was from his dear friend, Irish lawyer Lord Russel. It stated that the definition of civilization was that "It's true signs are thoughts for the poor and suffering, chivalrous regard and respect for woman, the frank recognition of human brotherhood, irrespective of race or color or nation or religion, the narrowing of the domain of mere force as a governing factor in the world, the love of ordered freedom, abhorrence of what is mean and vile, ceaseless devotion to the claims of justice." [12] Storey must have used this quote as inspiration for both his political career and his championship of civil rights.

Storey consistently and aggressively championed civil rights, not only for blacks but also for American Indians and immigrants. He opposed immigration restrictions and supported racial equality and self-determination.[8] "When the white man governs himself, that is self-government," he declared, "but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism." [7]

In 1887 he built a house on Great Cranberry Island [where many of his descendants continue to spend summers] just a sandbar away from Little Cranberry Island (also called Islesford) where Ashley Bryan makes his permanent residence. Sara and her late husband Robert summered with their extended family on Great Cranberry Island beginning in 1970. Mr. Storey's great granddaughter, soprano Susan Storey Frank, has sung as a guest at Union Church.



Summertime and Living Takes Practice A Month's Worth of Activities

A Month's Worth of Activities

Many of us first come to spiritual practices in the summer. There is something about the changed pace of our lives during these months that makes it a little easier to dedicate time to growth on our path. Perhaps we have (or recall) moments of heightened sensitivity to the sacred while at camp or on vacation. For some the longer days invite reflection. Others are inspired by being around children on holiday from school; they model play and joy and wonder.

To encourage your exploration of practices this summer, we have designed a month's worth of activities. We've looked for ideas from the world's wisdom traditions as well as in books we've read. We'll post the first week's worth now, and add more each week. Who knows, you might just stretch these 30 out for the whole summer! Or be inspired by these to make up your own practices. (If you do, please [send them](#) our way, and we'll post them too.)

1. GOLDEN DAYS.

Gold is the color of summer. In Tibet, it is known as the color for healing. In the first week of summer, welcome the season by filling your house and your workplace with golden objects, reflecting the color of the summer moons.

2. WALK FOR THE GLORY OF GOD.

"Walking is the great adventure, the first meditation, a practice of heartiness and soul primary to humankind. Walking is the exact balance between spirit and humility," Gary Snyder writes in *The Practice of the Wild*. Make an intention that the next walk you take outside in nature will be dedicated to the praise of God. Walk slowly, keeping your senses attuned to the wonders that surround you. In appreciation, say this mantra: "Glory be to God."

3. GO BAREFOOT.

Let the child in you come out to play. Taking off your shoes changes your connection with the world. You relax and let your guard down. Chief Luther Standing Bear in T. C. McLuhan's *Touch the Earth* reminds us: "It was good for the skin to touch Earth and the old people liked to remove their moccasins and walk with bare feet on the sacred Earth. . . . The soil was soothing, strengthening, cleansing, and healing."

4. CONNECT WITH YOUR ANCESTORS.

In [*The Sacred Balance: Rediscovering Our Place in Nature*](#), David Suzuki writes: "Air is a matrix that joins all life together. . . . In everyday life we absorb atoms from the air that were once part of birds and trees and snakes and worms, because all aerobic forms of life share that same air. . . . The longer each of us lives, the greater likelihood that we will absorb atoms that were once part of Joan of Arc and Jesus Christ, of Neanderthal people and woolly mammoths. As we have breathed in our forebears, so our grandchildren and their grandchildren will take us in with their breath." Get out in the open air and breathe in the atoms of those who have preceded you. Thank God for these saints and forebears. Try to imagine someone breathing in your atoms after you have departed this life.

5. TEND YOUR GARDEN

In [*Creating Eden: The Garden as a Healthy Space*](#), Marilyn Barrett writes: "Although weeding, cutting back, and transplanting are activities that may seem repetitive and never-ending, when seen as a necessary and integral part of the overall unfolding of the garden scheme, they become purposeful rather than boring. In fact, what may appear on the surface to be tedious physical work may, in the actual doing, be spiritually liberating. In taking time to contemplate the

small — in observing the details of our gardens — we can experience life on a manageable scale." Get in touch with the spiritually liberating disciplines of attention, repetition, and humility while working in your garden. Experience your time there as a spiritual workshop.

6. FIND A NEW ROLE MODEL

Here's a good exercise by Ruth Baetz from [*Wild Communion: Experiencing Peace in Nature*](#): "Meditate on a rock. Can you become that silent and still inside? Meditate on a cloud or blowing grass. Can you be that flexible and light inside? What personal quality do you want to develop? Find something in nature that has that quality and be it."

7. WASTE SOME TIME

"It does no good to think moralistically about how much time we waste. Wasted time is usually good soul time," Thomas Moore has observed. Summer is just the right season for idleness and just messing around with things. Quit doing and revel in just being.

Shared by Anne Murray

For more information, visit

<http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/features/view/10968>

Summer Reading Recommendations by Tom Bancroft



As a book reviewer, long ago and far away, I always advised my readers on what I considered to be good summer reading. It is my opinion only, but I do not sell my audience short. Just because it's summer, and you may be at the beach or lounging on the porch, doesn't mean that you have to read romances or thrillers exclusively. Not that I am opposed to those genres – well, maybe romances. There has been so much brilliant fiction written this past year. Do yourself a favor and choose from this list for your Sabbath reading.

Forthwith, then, with Bancroft's Best Books for the summer, in no particular order – they're all great:

1. *The Mars Room* (2018) Rachel Kushner. This is a story of women in prison, and in particular, Romy Hall, serving two life sentences for murder. She never makes excuses about what happened to deserve her sentence, and never looks for sympathy. Yet, somehow, she is an appealing character. I hope I'm not giving too much away when I say the ending reminds me of *Thelma and Louise*. A major book.
2. *Asymmetry* (2018) Lisa Halliday. A debut novel, which makes this amazing book all the more spectacular. Two totally disparate novellas linked ingeniously – one a May-December romance, the other a man suspected of terrorism being detained at the airport. Summer, Fall, Winter, Spring, whatever. Just read it.
3. *Little Fires Everywhere* (2017) Celeste Ng. Two families come together; one, the quintessential perfect family – suburbs, mother, father three adolescent children (yawn), the other the marginal single mother-daughter with the murky background (gasp!) Reading the reviews it sounded like anathema to me – dysfunctional domesticity, until I tried it, and couldn't put it down. Currently it's in its 35th week on the New York Times best seller list.
4. Speaking of Lit hits . . . *A Gentleman in Moscow* (2016) Amor Towles is now over a year on the best seller and for good reason. A pre-revolutionary count is found guilty by the new Bolshevik regime of being , well, a count. He is sentenced to house arrest for life, which could be worse, since he lives in the most luxurious hotel in Moscow. How he survives, indeed thrives, over the course of his lifetime makes for arresting (hmm) reading.

5. I just have to do it. Definitely not a beach read. If you do tote it to the shore bring it in a wagon. Clocking in at close to one thousand pages the best biography (not fiction) of the past several years, *Grant* (2017) Ron Chernow. The ultimate summer read. It will take you all summer to read it –but well worth it.

6. *The Maze at Windemere* (2018) Gregory Blake Smith. Windemere is an exclusive bit of real estate in Newport RI and the maze therein is featured both figuratively and literally throughout this fine novel. The Maze tells the stories of five sets of characters who live in Newport in 2011, 1896, 1863, 1778 and 1692. This reversal in time is repeated over and over so that in the end all five sets of characters reach some sort of resolution. Incidentally, the character in 1863 is Henry James. Mr. Blake does a good job with his asexual character and stentorian tone. Each section is about courtship, sexual attraction and the moral choices people make- sometimes only when forced to. Not a best seller but one wonders why.

There we are – a short list-but one I guarantee will not only entertain, but give you food for thought. These titles are all new and in print and should be readily available . Your local library should have them. If not, simply ask, “What up, Library Lady?”



Tom Bancroft

Good Energy Café Arts & Appetizers by the Sea
Monday July 9th 4:30—6:00 PM
Featuring JENNIFER COMEAU
Fadó Fadó — Imagination at Our Core

Come join us,
for a playful
afternoon,
with music and
stories inspired
by Jen's
imagination.
And, if you're
willing, your
own!



At Jordan Memorial Hall in Ocean Park
46 Temple Street, Ocean Park Maine. FMI: (207) 229-4136

Hi there! Summer greetings,

Jen will get the GOOD ENERGY CAFÉ off to a wonderful start this 2018 season. I hope you will ink in 7 Monday afternoons from 4:30 to 6:00 on your schedule and come to quaint and lovely Ocean Park. Come early for shops, beach and a Raspberry Lime Rickey too too! Love to see you, xo Jan

2018 Good Energy Café
Mondays in Jordan Hall; 4:30 - 6:00



50 Temple Ave in Ocean Park

Arts and Appetizers by the Sea

Cost \$5.00

Gather together to enjoy musical performances, appetizers and fellowship... coffeehouse style, led by different performers each week. Enjoy the beautiful, peaceful energy of Ocean Park.

July 9th: Jennifer Comeau, singer, songwriter, inspiring storyteller, creativity plus!

July 16: Cheryl Sager, Neal Zweig & Rick Horton, Trio. Vocalists and guitarists, beautiful harmonies!
experience the joy!

July 23: Delilah Poupore, celebrated singer, songwriter, inspiring inter-cultural

community!

July 30: Rob Duquette & friends, drums /guitars...capture the spirit, feel the beat!

August 6: Ellen Nordstrom & Abigail Charbeneau – Mairzy Doats Duo, Amazing talent! Fun and uplifting!

August 13: Patrick Doane, Violinist extraordinaire! Absolutely superb! Unforgettable.

August 20: Percussionist/West African Drummer, Annegret Baier...inspiring.....captivating rhythms!

Contact Jan Hryniewicz, Program Coordinator for more information.

lhryniew@maine.rr.com. 207- 934-2395.