

## ***Downhill Worship*** (from the January 2008 Newsletter)

Glorious views greet the Sugarloaf at every turn on Tote Road, which is why this trail is often times the unfolding sanctuary for those who attend Downhill Worship at Sugarloaf. This weekly Sunday gathering meets at 11 am at the Downhill Worship sign adjacent to the base of the Double Runner Chair. After some introductions, the group chooses a trail appropriate for those in attendance and the group pushes off for a run together. Four devotional stops are held on the way down the trail.

Each week there is a theme for the service – one week it might be about fear. The group might begin by discussing what trails invoke the greatest fear, and then the discussion might move to what Jesus said about fear.

Some weeks the theme incorporates an aspect of skiing such as how committing to the down hill ski can be likened to committing to faith. Many a skier/rider has left the service with not only a bolstered spiritual life, but also an improved ski/ride technique!

Often times the natural beauty of the mountain is utilized in reflecting upon God's care for people and his creation. The services are kid friendly and the kids usually enjoy racing the Pastor to the next stopping point.

No matter what the weather, the services, led by Rev. Earle Morse, are held on Sundays between Christmas and Easter, as long as there is a lift running. A lift ticket for the one run is provided courtesy of Sugarloaf and is received at the beginning of the service.

### **FAQ's**

***Has anyone ever been hurt at Downhill Worship (DHW)?*** Only once – it was a hit and run.

***What was the worst weather ever for DHW?*** The wind blew so hard one day the entire group was pummeled by death cookies. Not exactly the kind of welcome one expects at church.

***What was the best costume ever at DHW?*** Easter bunny kids galore on Easter Sunday. Though...the former minister Rev. Skip Schwartz looked very dashing *every Sunday*, as he wore a Clergy robe and skied with his guitar! Current minister, Rev. Earle Morse, when he tried the robe look, reminded some people of a Maine Blueberry in a gale.

***What were the best one-liners at DHW?*** One guy (John Livoti) when asked how long he had been skiing at his first ever DHW said, "What time is it?" First time Sugarloafers are often told when going up the Super Quad, "Don't get off at the mid-station."

***What was one of the most meaningful moments?*** Earle Morse received a note after one service where the writer indicated that it was the first time she had said the Lord's Prayer since her son had been killed 17 years earlier. She said that she was finally coming back home.