



THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

January 2022

A Month of Sundays in January 2022



Stories are such a valuable source of wisdom and understanding. Stories help us understand each other. This month, we'll look at stories from a number of sources.

January 2: Happy New Year! "Letting Go. Holding On. Bringing In." – Rev. Margaret Beckman

January 9: Our Ministerial Intern, Vanessa Williams, will share our virtual pulpit with Rev. Margaret Beckman

January 16: "Listening to Stories" – Rev. Margaret Beckman

January 23: "Stories from Native Voices" – Rev. Margaret Beckman

January 30: "Stories from Nature's Voices" – Rev. Margaret Beckman

Our Mission

To establish and promote an open and welcoming congregation that supports and sustains the spiritual, ethical, intellectual and overall well being of our members while serving our broader communities.

Contact Us

P.O. Box 520, 86 Court Street, Castine, Maine 04421
207-326-9083 • Office Email: office@uucastine.org
Website: uucastine.org • "Like" us on Facebook

For questions or comments about *The Common* or to submit items for this newsletter, please contact Jean Lamontanaro at jean.lamontanaro@gmail.com.



Lakeside Reflections, January 2022

It happens every year. It's a civic ritual.

At the end of December, we name, remember and honor those public figures who died in



the previous 12 months. We see photographs and read or listen to brief sketches of the lives of those who lived in the public view. As I

get older, the names and the remembrances are increasingly more familiar.

When I hear the name of someone now gone, I frequently get a catch in my throat. These are my people, my teachers, my heroes and role models, my spiritual guides. I have known and followed the work of these people my whole life. It is deeply sad when one of my own elders and sages passes from this life.

Of course, we remember the recent losses most strongly, and there were great losses throughout this year. December, though, was hard. Bob Dole on December 5th. Then Anne Rice, Joan Didion and bell hooks. Archbishop Desmond Tutu and E.O. Wilson. Earlier this year, we lost Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Hank Aaron. Cloris Leachman and Cicely Tyson. Prince Philip, F.W. de Klerk and Colin Powell. And so many more. These are the leaves of my tree and they are falling. I remember moments of the public spotlight for each of these people that touched my life.

Remembering is good for my soul. They have been bright lights and steady spiritual teachers in my life. The best way I know to honor and remember them is to follow their teachings, speak their names, watch their performances, and

read their books and poetry – again.

I know that the names of public figures get mentioned and my attention is drawn to them. I also know that each year, about 60 million people die. Each of those people was loved and will be missed by those who loved them. I have lost people whose names will never be spoke on the evening news or listed in the New York Times. They were important to me. We all will be grieving the loss of loved ones as we turn the page from 2021 to 2022. Although the names and circumstances are different for each of us, we are together in taking the time and effort and emotion to remember those whose death has left a hole in our heart.

Let us be gentle with ourselves and each other. Let us make room for loss and love. Each night a person dies is a holy night: a time for wondering, a time for honoring.

As we move into January and a new year, we will learn of more deaths, and we will also learn of more births. Each night a child is born is a holy night: a time for wondering, a time for singing.

Our lives are placed between the death of those we have loved and the birth of those we will come to love. We begin wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a cradle and we end wrapped in a shroud and lying in a casket.

May we make the very most of every moment we have to live our lives to the fullest and to love those who touch our lives in so many ways.

Happy New Year!

Namaste, *Margaret*



President's Desk

I hope all of you had moments with family whether in person, Zoom, phone or in your thoughts. As Jess Morehouse said to me recently, "sometimes creativity is the key". It certainly was for our family. We exchanged gifts with one son and family masked indoors. With the other son and his family, we sat around a firepit wrapped in blankets and Christmas tree especially brought outside for the occasion. We feel blessed to have been able to do either.

At the December 16 governing board meeting we voted to send \$1,000 from the operating account and Margaret gave \$500 from the Minister's Discretionary account to the Castine Area Relief Fund also known as CARF. This community effort started in March of 2019 with the purpose of providing food to those in need in Castine and the surrounding area. CARF is funded by UUCC as well as private donations, the Town of Castine and a grant from the Gorman Foundation. To date CARF has delivered 1200 bags of food, each containing about 15 meals. Presently 20 bags a week are delivered to people in Castine, Orland, Bucksport, Penobscot and Blue Hill.

When the parents of four children found work they made a \$200 contribution to CARF. To take this full circle and keeping the effort local the food is purchased from T&C Groceries in Castine.

Earlier in the year the governing board voted to subscribe to PowerMarket, a community solar farm initiative. Today we received the message that the solar farm we subscribed to is now officially operating and generating local, clean energy. This means that the UUCC electric bill will be decreased and we are using solar instead of fossil fuels.

May you all enjoy the lengthening days and a good book during a snow storm which is sure to come.

Brooke Tenney

Leaders at the UU Congregation of Castine for 2021-2022

Our congregational leaders are elected at the Annual Meeting which is held in the Autumn. Our last Annual Meeting was November 14, 2021.

Here are people who are continuing to serve their terms and our newly elected leaders.

Governing Board Officers:

Brooke Tenney, President
Tom Mason, Vice president
Peter Fairbank, Treasurer
Cindi Kimball, Clerk

Governing Board Members at Large:

Keith Hagel
Judy Sullivan
Gil Tenney
Diana Bernard
Monique Brown

Call for Submissions

Do you have something to share in the next issue of The Common? Submit an item to Jean Lamontanaro at jean.lamontanaro@gmail.com by January 29 for the February Common.

From Your Collaborative Intern

Dear ones,

Welcome to 2022! I must admit I am a bit nervous, but excited still for what this year has in store. As 2021 wrapped up I informed one of the congregations I serve that I will be making new years resolutions; this is something I ordinarily avoid because of my negative association with them. But, I am reframing them. I am looking at things I am grateful for and/or that bring me joy, and looking to create more of this in my and others' lives.

A quote by Brene Brown states,

“Joy and Gratitude are spiritual practices bound to a belief in human interconnectedness and a power greater than us.”

There is a direct correlation between gratitude and joy, both of which we ought not celebrate only on

specific holy days. Joy and Gratitude can be found in the everyday moments of our lives, whether in a baby's smile, a warm hug, snowflakes, falling stars, found memories, or even a simple cup of coffee. The beauty of life can light up with joy and gratitude if we are open to experiencing it.

For one, I am grateful and joyous for the opportunity to be in formation, learning and worshipping along side you all as intern minister, in each of your unique congregations of beautiful souls! For me this is a truly a blessing, and “my cup overflows”.

And for you—as this new year dawns, this is me wishing for you all a blessed, joyful 2022 in both the ordinary and extraordinary in all that you experience and do!

Blessed be! Vanessa Williams

Relief Fund for Aquino



Our UU Castine congregation's partner church is in Acquino, a very rural part of the Philippines. Many homes were damaged or destroyed because of the typhoon. They are struggling to rebuild and

right now they need to have water, shelter and food for everyone.

We are hoping to send a generous check to them at the end of January when we can send the funds through the UUA International Office. We have begun receiving checks from members and friends. This is compassion and gratitude in action. If you would like to contribute to this fund to help our friends in Acquino, **please send your check to UU Congregation of Castine, PO Box 520, Castine, ME 04421 – MARK THE**

MEMO LINE
“Philippines Relief Fund”
and send your check before January 31.
 Thank you.

Typhoon Rai's deadly path through Philippines 'exceeded all predictions,' forecaster says.



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
 PARTNER CHURCH COUNCIL

For more information about Partner Churches and The Philippines: <https://uupcc.org/partnerships/country/philippines>

Wood Bank Helps Local Family in Need

Gil Tenney received this note from a friend in Sedgwick:

“I was recently notified of family in need in Ellsworth. They had their main water pipe from the City break. So no water, no flush, no sink, no shower. And worse, they get their heat from hot water. But they have a wood stove but no money to buy wood”.

Fortunately, the Castine wood bank was able to supply wood at no cost to this family in need. Gil received this thank you from the family:

“The family in Ellsworth is very grateful for the wood. They have asked that we thank those involved.”

Gratitude for the Holiday Meal Boxes

Gil Tenney received this letter of thanks from Tammie Cox, a board member and Community Navigator of Community Compass. Community Compass receives financial and volunteer support from UUCC.

“I want to express my sincerest gratitude for the meal boxes we give to our clients. As one client expressed it made all the difference in the world as she would not have had Thanksgiving without it. One box was able to help a family where both mother and youngest son have severe medical

issues and are in and out of the hospital. Another family had Covid and could not get out to get anything for a holiday meal. One elderly woman expressed that it not only helped but made her feel a little less lonely as someone cared enough to think of her on the holidays. This program has touched many lives and I feel honored to help deliver meals to these folks. You are making a difference on the peninsula and on behalf of all those who received the blessing of a food box, thank you.”

Thank you from Blue Angel

The congregation received a digital greeting card from Deborah Joy Corey of Blue Angel that [can be viewed here](#).

The card says:

On behalf of those, which we serve through your generosity, we thank you and wish you a healthy and happy 2022!

Blue Angel
blueangelme.org

Grandmother Flordemayo's Prayer

In January, we will deepen our faith through stories of wisdom and experience from a variety of sources. One source is the Voice of Native People. In anticipation of our journey toward understanding, here is a prayer to begin your year.

Grandmother Flordemayo shares her prayer for 2022

Dear Creator, Mother, Father, Giver of Life,

“Beloved beauty of the Sacred Moment. Allow ourselves to be one with the Earth. Bring our collective energies together during this time of uncertainty. The energy of the heart is pure of intentions. We are made of love and light. Breathe in love, Exhale fear and uncertainty, Breathe in light, Exhale worries and fear. Bless yourself with the beauty of your light. In the name of peace and tranquility, all that is sacred, spirit of our Ancestors, bring the circle of love and light to humanity, Mother Earth, the plants and animals and send healing into the four directions.”

Love and Light, Grandmother Flordemayo



Grandmother Flordemayo (<https://www.grandmotherflordemayo.com/>) is a Curandera Espiritu, or a healer of divine spirit. As a seer, she has the ability to see other realms of color, light, and sound. In addition, has the ability to see the effects of existing imbalances on the physical, emotional and spiritual realms within a person's energy system. She was born in highlands of Central America, specifically Nicaragua and was the youngest of 15 children. She was born under the sign for the seed, in Mayan astrology.

Since 2004, Flordemayo has been one of the founding members of the International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers, a prestigious group of traditional female elders drawn from around the world, who represent a global alliance of prayer, education, and healing for our Mother Earth, all of her inhabitants, all the children, and for the next seven generations to come.

<https://www.followthegoldenpath.org/>