



THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

FEBRUARY 2019



On Sunday, January 13, poetry was the theme. See page 5 for more information and additional photos. Pictured above is Patricia Ranzoni and below is Todd Nelson.



Contact Us

P.O. Box 520, 86 Court Street, Castine, Maine 04421
207-326-9083

Office Email: office@uucastine.org

Website: uucastine.org

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

Sunday Service Calendar

Services are at 10:30 am

February 3: Claire Curole is our guest preacher. Sermon: *Solidarity*.
Musician: Ian Brenner-Simpson

February 10: Rev. Margaret Beckman. Sermon: *Charles Darwin, Mary Oliver and UU Theology*.
Musician: Colleen Fitzgerald

February 17: Rev. Margaret Beckman
We will have the service that was cancelled on January 20th. Sermon: *What Would Martin Luther King DO with \$100,000?*
Musicians: Juliane Gardner and Chris Poulin

February 24: TBA
Musician: Colleen Fitzgerald

March 3: Rev. Dr. Duncan Newcomer will begin our month of celebrating women making history.
Musician: Ian Brenner-Simpson



Lakeside Reflections, February 2019

When I Am Among the Trees

When I am among the trees,
especially the willows and the honey locust,
equally the beech, the oaks and the pines,
they give off such hints of gladness,
I would almost say that they save me, and daily.

I am so distant from the hope of myself,
in which I have goodness, and discernment,
and never hurry through the world
but walk slowly, and bow often.

Around me the trees stir in their leaves
and call out, "Stay awhile."
The light flows from their branches.

And they call again, "It's simple," they say,
"and you too have come
into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled
with light, and to shine."

—Mary Oliver (Thirst)

How did you feel when you learned that Mary Oliver died? For me, it was one of those gut-punching moments of loss and grief – tempered by immense gratitude. I said to one of my friends that I felt like I did the day Maya Angelou died. These women have been, and will remain, my teachers, my guides, my companions on the journey of life. When one of them leaves us through death, it takes a toll. It reminds me that what we have is right here and right now. It reminds me to appreciate the beauty of where I am and who I am with. It reminds me to tell the people I love that I love them. It reminds me that friends are precious treasures and family cannot be replaced once they are gone from us.

There is a song that comes into my head whenever one of the giants of my life leaves this life. "They Are Falling All Around Me" by Bernice Johnson Reagon.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KyO5BYPeIx4>
or sung by Holly Near, which is the way I know it.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKxVu_0L55U

They are falling all around me
The strongest leaves of my tree ...
It is your path I walk
It is your song I sing
It is your load I take on
It is your air that I breathe
It's the record you set
That makes me go on
It's your strength that helps me stand
You're not really
You're not really going to leave me

Part of my experience in the second half of my life is losing those I love at a much more regular pace than I did when I was young. The strongest leaves of my tree are falling; the ones who gave color and breath and renewal to my life.



And yet, even when they leave this life, they are not gone from us entirely. It is still their strength that helps me stand and persist through life's ups and downs and to do the work I am called to do.

May the leaves of your tree continue to bless your life. May we be the leaves of a tree for those who come after us and travel in our footsteps. Mary Oliver, may you rest in peace and live forever in our hearts and souls.

Namaste,
Margaret

President's Desk

The parish house was abuzz on the afternoon of Friday, January 24, the table usually laden with Sunday morning coffee goodies held meatloaf, mashed potatoes, peas, containers for each, paper lunch bags and clementines. Cupcakes were on a table all their own and gravy was simmering on the stove. Johanna Sweet was ably directing many of us, Bob Holmberg, Jess Morehouse, Pedrick Sweet, Emma Sweet, Jane Sewell, Silas Sewell, Abby Sewell, Margaret Beckman, Marcia Mason and Gil Tenney. A few community members who became aware of this effort also contributed food. If I have forgotten anyone please forgive me. Seventy-nine meals were prepared, packaged, and transported to homes in Sedgwick, Blue Hill and Castine. At the same time representatives from the Catholic Church prepared twenty meals which were delivered to the Sedgwick Baptist Church for a sit-down dinner there. Three months from now the above scene will be repeated, come join this effort to relieve food insecurity.



Photo by mixedmediajewel at Morguefile.com

Thank you to Tom Mason, Building and Grounds Chair, for engaging Alleman Lawn Service to take care of snow removal this winter. This will help us have safe entrance to and exit from the church and parish house and relieve Margaret Beckman, Becky St. John and a few parishioners from shoveling duties.

The governing board meets on the Fourth Thursday of the month at 9:00 am at the Main Street office. Recently we focused on the Northern New England District (NNED)

Congregational Board Survey addressing a recommendation that the district structure be dissolved. Margaret helped us understand the history of the district structure and how, if the dissolution goes forward, the needs of the individual congregations would be served by the regional staff. For the uninitiated it is complicated. Add in the financial component to this dissolution and the complications multiply. We are fortunate indeed that Margaret understands the history and ins and outs of the NNED. If you have questions I am sure she would be glad to talk with you.

Brooke Tenney, President

Thank you!

The combined energy of the Castine churches make the meal program happen. For our congregation, the leadership and passion of Johanna and Pedrick Sweet has been nothing short of amazing.

Here is a thank you from Tammie Cox, the Sedgwick coordinator.

January's meals were a great success. Everything came together very efficiently. I am pleased to say we served about 170 meals. Despite the power outage on the 26th I was able to distribute what would have normally been our sit down meal between seven individuals and 1 family. People were pleased with their meals and we received a few nice compliments for our hard work. Thank you to everyone involved. You are what makes this program a true success.

Tammie Cox
Neighborhood Navigator
No Neighbor Left Behind Program

Religious Education

In February, our children's religious education will focus on love and caring for others. I have taken some of the books and suggestions for activities from a monthly theme-based program called "Soul Matters," used by the Ellsworth Church for both adults and children. This month's theme is "Trust," and I have chosen several books that show how simple "acts of kindness" develop trust in each other and build relationships, in spite of all our differences. Our Valentine's Day story is a beautiful love story between two squirrels. (The adults who experience frustrations with these creatures may gain a slightly different perspective—for at least a few minutes.) Also,

February is "Black History" month, and Lane Fisher will do her session on Martin Luther King Jr. that she was unable to do in January because of a snowstorm.

"All you need is love.
But a little chocolate
now and then
doesn't hurt."
—Charles M. Schultz



Kay Hansen, Religious Educator
hansen85023@gmail.com

MidMaine DRE Cluster Group Event

The DRE cluster group I belong to has arranged for an OWL (Our Whole Lives) sexuality education facilitators' training for grades K-6 to be held at the Augusta UU Church on the weekend of April 12-14, 2019. This is a rare happening for this training to be this close since most of these trainings occur out of state.

If you are interested in being trained for this program or would like information regarding the program, contact me (Kay Hansen) or Rev. Margaret Beckman.

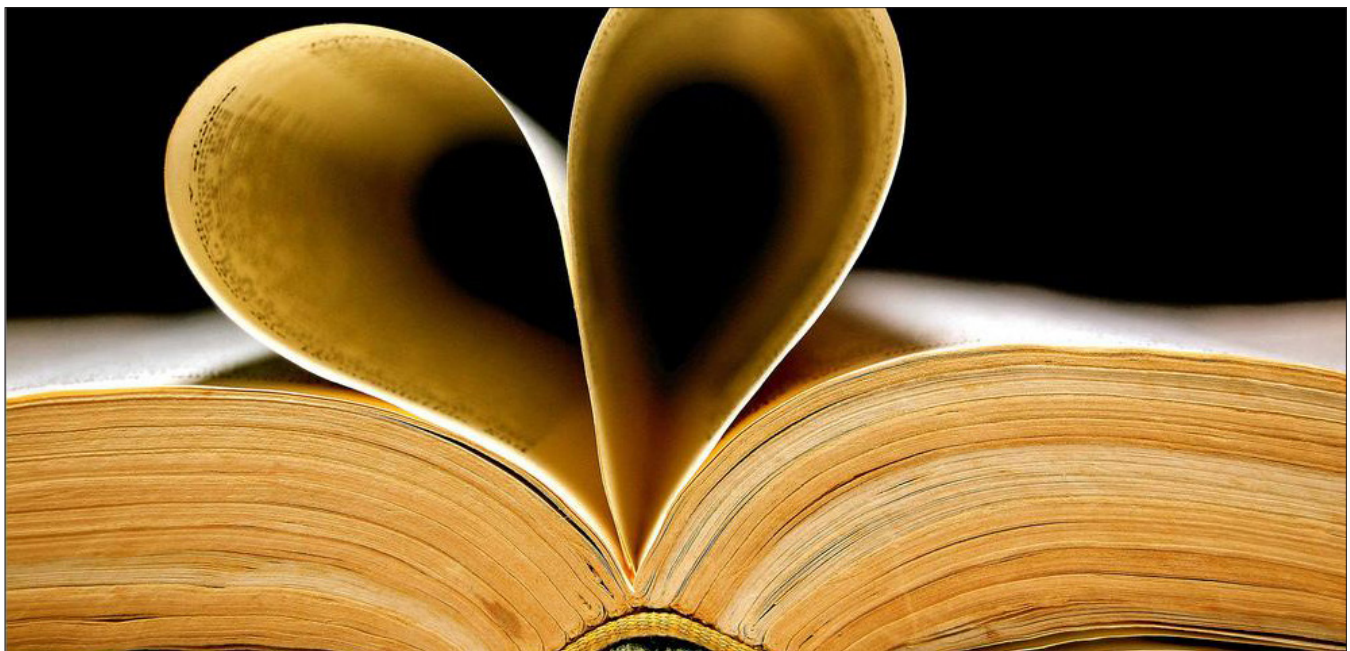


Photo by poojasingh123456 at Morguefile.com

Sunday, January 13 — Poetry That Moves Me

We had a wonderful Sunday morning and early afternoon of poetry and stories at the Meeting House and the Parish House.

During the Sunday morning service, we read poetry from a wide range of poets. Local poets, Patricia Ranzoni and Sharon Bray were with to read their own poetry. The remainder of our poems were suggested by our members. Together, the morning of poetry wove a tapestry of our beloved community.

For those of you who could not be with us that morning, here are the poems submitted by our members and friends:

Hug O'War by Shel Silverstein
Selected by Silas Sewell

Dover Beach by Matthew Arnold
Selected by Rodney Flora

Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat Drowned in a Tub of Goldfishes by Thomas Gray
Selected by Rodney Flora

Colin Powell read one of his favorite poems
In Blackwater Woods by Mary Oliver
Selected by Anne Price



Amy Grant



Johanna Sweet

Johanna Sweet read three short poems about birds
"Hope" Is the Thing with Feathers by Emily Dickinson,
Dust of Snow by Robert Frost, **Dreams** by Langston Hughes

Not To Tell Lies by Philip Booth
Selected by Christian Walker

Essential Rhythms by Louise Wheeler
Selected by Mary Ellen Hunt

The benediction was a blessing — **Bennacht** by John O'Donohue
Selected by Margaret Beckman

We enjoyed a brief Coffee Hour with friends and guests of the second part of our day. **"Tell It Out Loud"** is a series of gatherings sponsored and organized by Johanna Barrett of Compass Rose Books. UUCC was delighted to co-host the first of these gatherings whose theme was "hibernation."

Poets and story-tellers included Patricia Ranzoni, Todd Nelson, Amy Grant, Johanna Sweet and Sharon Bray.

The next **"Tell It Out Loud"** event will be February 10th with a theme of Love at the Compass Rose bookstore beginning at 11:30 a.m.