

# The COMMON

*H.O.M.E. a winner in UU Castine Opportunity Fund awards*



## CALENDAR

### Pulpit:

January 7  
Rev. Mark Worth

January 14  
Rev. Margaret Beckman

January 21  
Amy Fiorilli  
Potluck Lunch

January 28  
Rev. Margaret Beckman

February 4  
Rev. Charles Stephens

## A POSTER ORGANIZATION FOR AN OPPORTUNITY AWARD

The H.O.M.E. craft cooperative and shelter community has occupied its prominent hilltop campus in Orland, just north of Bucksport, on Route 1 since it was founded in 1970. It's easy to drive right past without stopping, despite the sign at the corner of Schoolhouse Road inviting a visit to the craft

shop, open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., seven days per week, all year.

But the H.O.M.E. campus — the apt acronym stands for the more proletariat [Homeworkers Organized for More Employment](#) — is way more than a crafts outlet. It's more like a medieval village.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

On December 17, representatives from five Hancock County organization were on hand to receive Opportunity Fund Awards from the Congregation. The more than 50 attending were welcomed warmly by Rev. Margaret.

The five organizations, which received a total of \$100,000 in Opportunity Funds, were H.O.M.E (Orland), the Families First Communities Center (Ellsworth), the Open Door Recovery Center (Ellsworth), the Community Compass (Blue Hill), and the Community Early Childhood Learning Place (Castine).

The UUCC's Opportunity Fund Task Force consisted of Gil Tenney, Chair, and Diana Bernard, Anne Parsons, and Rev. Beckman. Gil Tenney welcomed Barbara Royal of the Ellsworth Open Door Recovery Center and Tracey Hair of H.O.M.E. Anne Parsons welcomed Bob Holmberg of Community Compass. Diana Bernard welcomed Dawn Carter Coffin of Families First Center, and Rev. Beckman welcomed Nancy Sayre, of the Castine Community Early Childhood Learning Place.

The title of Rev. Beckman's homily for the occasion was "Connecting with Our Neighbors," in which she stated, "The divine spark lives in the open hearts and loving hands of the helpers who show up day after day to offer what they can in the midst of challenge or difficulty. The five recipients of Opportunity Funds have heard the call to be good neighbors. . . . Faith has moved this congregation into action. We

here at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Castine are thrilled to enter partnership with them as they continue their work in our communities."

[For more information contact Rev. Beckman at 207-299-5520, or [mabme@aol.com](mailto:mabme@aol.com)]

---

 Snapshots of our awardees:

**Community Early Childhood Learning Place (Castine).** It might not look like much now, but soon the old wind mill and reservoir site on Castine's State Street will host a state-of-the-art early learning center and after-school program for young children.

The center, which will host up to 60 children once completed, will address an urgent need for professional childcare on the Blue Hill peninsula. According to 2015 U.S. Census estimates, there were 164 children under the age of five living in Castine, Penobscot and Orland. (Ellsworth American)

**Open Door Recovery Center** offers intensive treatment for adults and adolescents suffering from chemical dependency and/or co-occurring disorders.

By offering simultaneous treatment to the individual person suffering from addiction and/or mental health disorders and those directly affected, Open Door strives to educate and support family members and loved ones. We have had the privilege of watching many families reunite and resume healthy relationships as the client returns to being a productive member of society. When Residents leave the Center, they will have reliable housing, parenting skills, a steady income and savings, and affordable transportation.

**Families First Communities Center.** Teaching life skills needed for success, FFCC is a medium-term housing program that

will help residents with everything that they will need to live an independent, stable and fulfilling life.

The Community Compass works together with partner organizations, volunteers and neighborhood navigators to break the cycle of poverty on the Blue Hill and Deer Isle/Stonington Peninsula.

Community Compass recognizes that community collaboration around services is more effective for those in need. We collaborate with organizations, volunteers and Neighborhood Navigators to support and empower those living in poverty. Our organization advocates for those living in poverty by raising awareness of available resources and we work with local service organizations in removing barriers from attaining those services.

### **Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Castine Opportunity Fund**

Now that we've shared our 2017 Opportunity Fund awards with five local organizations, it's time to consider what's next in our congregation's commitment to living generously. Your initial Opportunity Fund Task Force has finished its task and is ready to engage others in the ongoing work of maintaining relationships with current awardees and helping to provide opportunities for our members and friends to get involved with the actual work of these organizations. Consider how YOU might contribute to this ongoing effort of our congregation.

The original Task Force was Gil Tenney, Diana Bernard, Anne Parsons and Rev. Margaret Beckman. Gil and Diana want to stay on with the next generation of our Opportunity Fund work. They will provide some continuity and a little bit of leadership going forward. They need others to join them in establishing working relationships with our current five.

Then we also want our Opportunity Fund volunteers to scope out next steps with our pathway toward generosity. Maybe it means establishing communications among our partners, or finding ways of checking in with them on a regular basis, or gathering them together once in awhile to share ideas and stories of their work in our communities, or getting people to volunteer with them on special projects or routine needs, or maybe it means being a good friend in times of plenty and in times of want.

Not a lot of meetings; more time will be spent in interactions with others who are doing their work. No need to reside in Castine year-round. This might be a great opportunity for some of our folks who summer in Castine and want to contribute to our Hancock County work with these five organizations.

Sound interesting? Talk with or email Gil Tenney or Diana Bernard to express your interest. The group that forms from this effort will shape itself so there are no 'job descriptions' at this point. We are in the generative stage just now, so let your imagination soar.

## Lakeside Reflections

### January 2018



Snow. I love snow. I love the beauty of snow. I like to watch it through a window as it transforms familiar landscapes. I like to walk in it at night and absorb its soft glow. Snow is wonder and magic.

And yet .... My hometown is Erie, Pennsylvania and it received well over 100 inches of snow in December. That's more snow than Erie usually gets in a year. This year, that heavy snow fell on December 25 & 26 – just when I was planning to head 'home' to visit my mother and siblings. Well, the best laid plans often don't come to fruition. I will get to Erie sometime before Easter, if the uncertainties of life fall in my favor.

As we move into 2018, I am reminded that life is an adventure that we really don't control all that much. We do the best we can to plan for the life we want to live and then we respond to what life brings us. A good life is not necessarily the one that goes exactly as planned so much it is the life that makes the most of what comes along. Human beings have the ability to both plan and to act spontaneously when situations and circumstances change.

Some of the best advice for the New Year comes from folks like Ann Landers. Although she is no longer with us, her words are as meaningful now as they were when she offered them.

- Make a genuine effort to stay in closer touch with family and good friends.
- Resolve to stop magnifying small problems and shooting from the lip. Words that you have to eat can be hard to digest.
- Find the time to be kind and thoughtful. All of us have the same allotment: 24 hours a day. Give a compliment. It might give someone a badly needed lift.
- Walk tall, and smile more. You'll look 10 years younger.
- Don't be afraid to say, "I love you." Say it again. They are the sweetest words in the world.

Finally, here is a short meditation from UU minister Aaron Stockwell.

*In this new year, let us be amazed.  
Let us search for new life and hope in our midst.  
Let us nurture creativity in every form.  
Let us be reminded that new insights of the universe are always being made.  
In this new year, let us be amazed.*

Let us be amazed. Let us love and be loved. Happy New Year!

Namaste,  
Margaret

"Snow" in *Taking Pictures of God, Meditations* by Bruce T. Marshall. Boston: Skinner House Press.

---

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT****Leslie Fairbank**

What a joy it was to be part of the December 17 distribution of the Opportunity Fund (formerly the social justice dividend). One of the Sundays in Christian Advent is usually designated Joy. It certainly fulfilled that concept. Our guests from the five designated projects were delighted to receive their checks. They indicated various steps forward that will be enabled or furthered by such cash infusions. During the ample potluck lunch that followed, which had been enhanced by their contributions, the leaders spoke of the work being done. They mentioned concrete steps being taken, property secured, windows purchased, and gave real assurance of forward motion. We all look forward to continued connection and chances to learn about the accomplishments that will surely follow.

Many thanks to the Task Force (Gil, Margaret, Diana and Anne Parsons) for the yearlong effort that resulted in this first large gift. Perhaps there will be others. A modified group to be called Opportunity Fund Connectors, or some such, will be formed to

facilitate our community's desire to build relationships with the various groups. If there are members or friends of the congregation who would be interested in participating in this group, they should speak to any Task Force member, who all plan to continue in some capacity. Contacts are ongoing and new ideas and possibilities are swirling around.

The Governing Board would like everyone to know we have changed our time and place of meeting to 9:00 am on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month at the Main Street office. Our meetings are open, except perhaps for rare executive sessions to do with personnel.

Warmest wishes to all for a happy, healthy 2018.

Leslie

Potluck Sunday is January 21!





Hello All, From Amy, Your Intern

I am filled with gratitude this morning. I am looking out onto a gray and snowy landscape, buffered by the twinkling Christmas lights and warm greenery decorating my space. I am aware of what a privilege it is to pursue this calling I love and engage my life with ever deepening connections to you and to all that is truly holy and sacred. We create miracles, by loving each other well, by being kind in ways both subtle and clear. With our honesty and our openness. With bravery and generous hearts.

As is true for most of us at this time of year, my calendar has been full, some days have been very long and there is still a list waiting. And so, I appreciate this time to reflect. I am almost half way through my collaborative ministry internship. I am writing my mid-year self-evaluation this week. In many ways, I feel like I just got started. I am still getting to know you all and I feel like I meet new people every week. It is a blessing.

This month I had the joy of seeing the Castine church give away a substantial sum of money to worthy organizations serving Hancock County. In a service both meaningful and fun, I heard lessons of generosity and commitment to service.

We create miracles.

Brian, Lilliana, and I attended the Winter Solstice celebration at the Belfast Church and were moved through a story

of light and darkness, of inward waiting and jubilant welcome. Through music and story, humor and pageantry we participated in the worship of the earth and her cycles. We create miracles. In Ellsworth I heard of a child dedication, of magic and synergy. I know of vespers happening each week that nourish souls and bodies, and though I am not there as much as I might wish, I feel more whole and content knowing such things exist. We create miracles.

In this time of waiting and preparing, of moving within and of resting life and light, may you all know the gift you are to the world. May you see your existence as a necessary part of the whole. May you hear the voice of wonder and peace speak within you and may you be brave enough to listen. Choose quiet and reflection when it calls you, let yourself know who you are and what you long for. My hope for all this season is an unabashed look at what is true. You are the gift. Whether your journey be big and bold, loud and public...or soft and quiet, gentle and steady. Know you are needed. Trust in yourself...and allow for giving and receiving in equal measure. May it be so.

A very merry blessing on all the Holy days we share.

Amy Fiorilli,  
Collaborative Ministry Intern  
UU Belfast, Castine, and Ellsworth  
207-930-0007

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

In December, we learned about Christmas traditions and symbols of The Philippines and the African American celebration of Kwanzaa. Though New Year's Eve was over on January 1, it will still be fresh in our minds. So, we will take the opportunity to learn more about a Filipino New Year's Eve. So far, I've learned that it is loud, and there is lots of light. For good luck, families try to come up with 12 round fruits, each to signify a month of the year. Ideally, there should be twelve different fruits. Do you think we can come up with twelve different ones?

On the second Sunday of January, we will remember the life and contributions of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. For the remainder of the month, we will return to the book, "How We Do It," to learn about the foods children eat in other parts of the world. We might even try making some of these foods.

A closing message for the New Year and for every day:

*Shine your light on someone's  
path,  
It warms the heart and comforts  
the soul.*

Kay Hansen  
Religious Educator

**GOVERNING BOARD**

Leslie Fairbank, Pres

Brooke Tenney, VP

Diana Bernard, Treasurer

Anne Price, Clerk

Tom Mason

Rodney Flora

Colin Powell, Alt.

**The Common**

The Common is published monthly and is distributed in both electronic and photocopy forms. All members and friends are invited to submit items for consideration. Send submissions or comments to editor Kent Price at [kapricorn75@gmail.com](mailto:kapricorn75@gmail.com). Deadline is the 15th of the month preceding publication.

**CONTACT US**

Leslie Fairbank, President

469-7531

Kay Hansen, Religious Educator

Becky St. John, Office Admin.

[office@uucastine.org](mailto:office@uucastine.org): 326 9083