



THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

October 2019

Sunday Service Calendar

Services are at 10:30 am

October 6

Worship Associate: Intern Ariel Aaronson-Eves
Guest Speaker: Leslie Linder –
Next Step Domestic Violence Project
Musicians: Chris Poulin and Juliane Gardner

October 13

Worship Leader: Rev. Margaret Beckman –
Indigenous Peoples' Day
Musician: Colleen Fitzgerald

October 20

Worship Leader: Rev. Margaret Beckman
Musician: Ian Brenner-Simpson
POTLUCK

October 27

Annual Ferry Beach Joint Worship Service
with our Collaboration
No Service at the Castine Meeting House

November 3

Worship Associate: Intern Ariel Aaronson-Eves
Guest Speaker: Robert Shetterly
Musician: Ian Brenner-Simpson



Contact Us

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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.

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.



Lakeside Reflections, October 2019

Even within families and among best friends, we sometimes find ourselves struggling to remain close while holding very different opinions about very important things.

We have choices. We can vow to avoid subjects that create conflict or worsen our disagreements. (Note to self: This rarely works for me) We can engage our friend in dialogue → debate → argument → fight → anger → hurt feelings → separation. We can walk away from the relationship(s) for a time and maybe come back when things seem more acceptable. We can try to understand each other without the need to convince, change or demonize the other person's perspective. This last choice holds the most promise for maintaining healthy and loving relationships and it may seem like the most difficult choice to enact. It requires the willingness to let go of our need to be "right." It requires the willingness to see things from a very different point of view, perspective or location from our own. It does not require us to "give in" or "give up" or weaken our commitment to justice. It may require compassion and empathy for their own value rather than as a means to the end of coming to agreement on things we probably won't agree on but might be able to prevent from dividing us as family or friends or neighbors.

As Unitarian Universalists, we often speak about the strength of our first principle that says that we affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Putting that principle into practice can be easier said than done. There is wide gulf separating the political and social views of people today. It doesn't seem that we are closing that gap or bridging the chasm between us. As the political season heats up, we

May you listen to your longing to be free. May the frames of your belonging be large enough for the dreams of your soul. May you arise each day with a voice of blessing whispering in your heart that something good is going to happen to you. May you find a harmony between your soul and your life. May the mansion of your soul never become a haunted place. May you know the eternal longing which lives at the heart of time. May there be kindness in your gaze when you look within. May you never place walls between the light and yourself. May your angel free you from the prisons of guilt, fear, disappointment, and despair. May you allow the wild beauty of the invisible world to gather you, mind you, and embrace you in belonging.

Poem excerpted from *Eternal Echoes: Celtic Reflections On Our Yearning To Belong* originally published in 1999 by bestselling author, John O'Donohue.

are vulnerable to making the distance between us greater and greater. That's a hard place to live.

I am reminded of the wisdom of my spiritual teachers in my moments of clarity and caring. I appreciate Fred Rogers saying that the space between us when we are trying our best to understand each other is hallowed ground, sacred ground. Doing our best – really, our best – to understand with an open heart and without predetermined judgement, is sacred work and

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Lakeside Reflections—continued

it is hard work. We can do this hard thing, if we believe that it is worth doing.

Irish teacher and poet, John O'Donohue, offered blessings for people in every situation and everywhere he went. O'Donohue lived knowing that “blessing” is a way of life, as a lens through which the whole world is transformed. We might learn from his example and rather than offering harsh critical thoughts and words to our opponents, offer them a blessing. Hard work. Spiritual work.

Perhaps you will join me in trying to offer a blessing or entering the space between us as the hallowed ground of human empathy and understanding. We may find that we have a

The older I get, the more convinced I am that the space between people who are trying their best to understand each other is hallowed ground.

—Fred Rogers

greater inner peace even as the outside world roils and boils in division and hurt. Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers.” He did not command us to agree or to fail to work for our highest and best vision of justice and community. Love one another, bless one another, for we are on sacred ground.

Namaste,
Margaret

From your Collaborative Ministry Team intern

9/24/19

Autumnal greetings from your Collaborative Ministry Team intern! I'm writing this from my parents' living room in Dover, NH, where I spent the night on my way home from the Ministerial Formation Network retreat. This network and retreat are one of the benefits I get as a member of the UU Ministers Association preparing for ministry. It's been a busy weekend for me, between the Common Ground Fair, where I helped the Ellsworth congregation with their eggroll booth and connected with local organizations, the MFN retreat, and introducing myself and preaching at the Belfast congregation.

I've been spending this first month of my internship getting to know the three congregations I am serving, Castine, Belfast, and

Ellsworth, your people, your places, and your systems, and starting to develop my learning goals within those systems. In addition to the UUA's requirements for my internship, I am participating in the EcoFaith Recovery Practicum, a program to train me in spiritually grounded community organizing around climate change. I've started having weekly one-to-one meetings with members of your communities and will be working to develop a project with one or all of your congregations to address this crisis. If you are interested in talking with me about this or anything else, please email me to schedule an appointment. I so look forward to our journey together.

Ariel Aaronson-Eves
aaaronson-eves@ses.sksm.edu

Religious Education

During a chat last week in RE the children discovered that they know surprisingly few of their church friends by name. So we developed a list of things we'd like to know about each of you. The girls are keen to conduct interviews so don't be surprised if you feel a tug on your sleeve over the next several months. We will be especially

grateful to those of you willing to let one of the children take a picture of you for a game we're making. We're having a lovely time in the RE room these days. Feel free to stop by and play Jumping Monkeys. It's our favorite game!

Jessica S. Rollerson

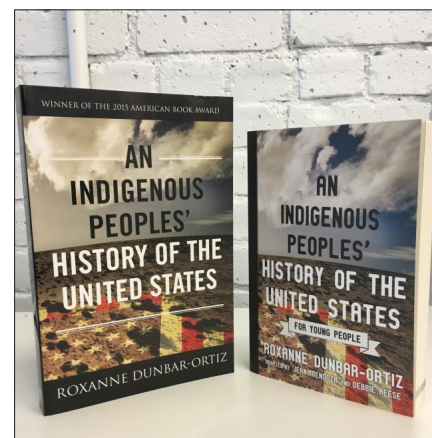
Let's Share The "UU Common Read"

Castine UUs and our friends with the Belfast and Ellsworth congregations will be invited to read and discuss (in a variety of formats) this year's choice of the Common Read.

The Common Read Selection Committee is pleased to announce that An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (Beacon Press, 2015) and An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People adapted by Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese (Beacon Press, 2019) are the new Common Read.

In 2015, Beacon Press published an extraordinary book by Indigenous scholar and activist Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz that challenged readers to learn US history through a narrative that centers the story, the experiences, and the perspectives of Indigenous peoples. In 2019, Beacon Press published an adaptation for young people by Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese. Upending myths and misinformation that have been promulgated by leaders and media, it asks readers to reconsider the origin story of the United States taught to every US school child.

In 2020, our nation will approach the 400th anniversary of the much-mythologized encounter at Plymouth between colonists and those native



to the land, and our own General Assembly 2020, in Providence, RI, will speak to the truths that contradict the mythology. At the same time, movements in response to global and local environmental emergencies, many involving UUs, are increasingly recognizing the connection between Indigenous rights and climate justice. This Common Read invites UU congregations, communities, and individuals to learn the story of trauma and resilience that is the Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States.

If you are not familiar at all with this history, we suggest that you read the version for young people. The discussion guide, available in mid-October, will work for readers of either version. *Note: the original version is available as an audio book.*

Collaborative Ministry Minute

Our collaborative ministry with the churches in Ellsworth and Belfast has been a bit quiet in the late summer. After another successful collaborative service in June, we welcomed our newest ministerial intern, Ariel Aaronson-Eves in late August. As of September 1 she's officially working with Rev. Margaret to make sure her internship is successful and fulfilling. Much to my delight, Ariel has already taken on some leadership around our Collaborative Ministry Team meetings, which take place every second Tuesday of the month in Ellsworth.

Speaking of which, our next meeting on Tuesday, October 8 at 10 a.m. will be centered around finding leverage points where our collaboration may be stronger than our congregations apart. We'll be brainstorming ideas that the collaborative ministry can help our congregations achieve. One example is making an concerted effort to help everyone in our congregations who

would like to get to the 2020 General Assembly in Providence next year.

Finally, your CMT has been hard at work putting together a survey on the effectiveness of the CMT. We are trying to take a measure of the impact the collaboration has on our congregants. We suspect that we need to do more work to get our events and activities advertised to our congregants. Please be on the look out for the survey which should be arriving in your email inbox in the next week or so.

Many thanks to everyone who makes our collaboration possible! Any and all comments and suggestions are more than welcome at colin@onec.me

Colin Powell
Collaborative Ministry Team chair



An Invitation from Neighbourhood UU Cong. of Toronto

Dear Fellow Unitarian Universalists,

As a service and not a business, we offer one pilgrimage a year to a sacred site on the earth. Since 2006 we have traveled with a small group (15-20) fellow UU's to; India, Vietnam, Peru, Turkey, Belize, Romania, Italy, Portugal, Cambodia and New Mexico. The pilgrimages are led by Rev. Wayne Walder, a full time minister in Toronto, Ontario with his partner Joan Walder. We call them Mindful Journeys and each day we meditate and reflect in the presence of beauty.

We invite you to travel with us in April 2020 to Peru and the wonders of Machu Picchu. Over the years Rev. Walder has developed friendships with several of the Shamans in the area. This gives us a unique and often private access to some of the most beautiful places on the planet.

These journeys are fully insured and guaranteed by Worldwide Quest, a Toronto licensed travel agent. We still have a few spots available!! For information and a full itinerary contact Joan Walder at: walderj358@gmail.com.



Photo by Chelsea Cook at pexels.com

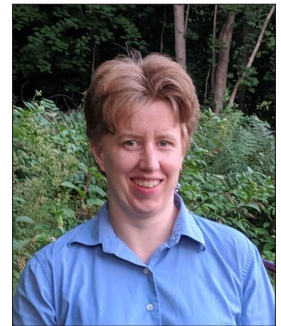
New England Region Team Gets Two New Staff!

The New England Region team's mission is to support and equip congregational leaders for healthy, vital Unitarian Universalist ministries.

We are passionate about challenging, connecting, coaching, and companioning your congregation, through the practices of Spiritual Leadership.

To further this mission, we've hired two new great staff members!

Rev. Erica Baron is joining our phenomenal field staff! She was born and raised in New England, received her MDiv from Andover Newton Theological School, and has served several congregations in lay and ministry leadership positions in the region.



Lóre (rhymes with 'story') **Stevens** is our new Communications Associate, stewarding the NER Facebook page, as well as newsletters, emails, and other communications. Lóre is a queer Latinx woman, beginning her MDiv at Harvard Divinity School to become a UU Minister!

