



THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

April 2019

Sunday Service Calendar

Services are at 10:30 am

April 7: Rev. Margaret Beckman preaching.
“Can We Talk About Sin?”
Ian Brenner-Simpson, Musician

April 14: Rev. Margaret Beckman preaching.
“Our Ministry of Community Investment”
Ian Brenner-Simpson, Musician

April 21: Easter. Rev. Margaret Beckman
preaching. “Who Rolled Away the Stone?”
Joan Kroehler, Musician & Organist

April 28: Rev. Margaret Beckman preaching.
“Renewing Our Covenant”
Colleen Fitzgerald, Musician



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.



Lakeside Reflections, April 2019

It's time. It's time to begin listening for the calls of our returning loons. The ice is looking thin in many places. I had thought ice out would be April 10th. Maybe it will be sooner. As soon as there is enough open water for loon take-off maneuvers, they will be back. Before they return to our lakes and begin their spring rituals of nest building and family making, they send their advance team into the air making reconnaissance flights to check for open water and safe landing and take-off runways. They call to each other from high overhead as they survey the lake below. Once you hear that call, you never mistake it for anything else. The loons are a vital part of life at the lakes here in the north country and we are blessed to be near them in their territory. From late spring to mid-Autumn, we listen for the loons each night as their calls travel the stillness of the night time air through our windows. Somehow, when the loons are calling and signaling to each other in their unique yet familiar ways, all seems right and calm and restful.

I know that all is not right with our world and I know that with each passing year the threats to our loon population continues. At some point, the loons may no longer come to our lake or any lake in Maine. At some point, the loon population may drop to dangerously low levels for survival and sustainability. The primary threats to loons come from us. Loons ingesting or tangling with fishing gear and lead sinkers account for the majority of loon deaths among adults. Loss of habitat due to human development near lakes and ponds is another threat. For me, the loon is a symbol of health and well being of our shared and precious world. When I first read Mary Oliver's poem, *Lead*, I cried. I still do.



Lead

Here is a story
to break your heart.
Are you willing?
This winter
the loons came to our harbor
and died, one by one,
of nothing we could see.
A friend told me
of one on the shore
that lifted its head and opened
the elegant beak and cried out
in the long, sweet savoring of its life
which, if you have heard it,
you know is a sacred thing,
and for which, if you have not heard it,
you had better hurry to where
they still sing.
And, believe me, tell no one
just where that is.
The next morning
this loon, speckled
and iridescent and with a plan
to fly home
to some hidden lake,
was dead on the shore.
I tell you this
to break your heart,
by which I mean only
that it break open and never close again
to the rest of the world.
~ Mary Oliver ~

As we celebrate Earth Day on April 22nd, I'll be thinking about how it is that I take my place within this web of creation and how I might do better for all of creation ... and the loons.

Namaste,
Margaret

www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Common_Loon/sounds

President's Desk

Many thanks to those of you who called or sent me an email indicating that, in fact, you do read the Common. It is interesting that of the seven responses four were from members or friends who are wintering out of state, one was from a former member who still enjoys the Common, one was from Lane Fischer and one you will see below.

Hello Brooke,

Good day to you, I hope you are well.

I am writing to say of course I read the Common. I actually like it a lot and it's one of the few things I will read on a screen.

I think it's very well put together.

Hats off to Jean and all the other people that work on it.

My favorite this month was the kids learning about love in RE, sending Valentine's cards, and getting a thank you note back letting them know how much their expressions of love matter and how powerful love can be.

I am also interested in the Earth Justice common read, and by how I can make a difference in the Wood bank locally or perhaps even for education for child in the Philippines.

The Common IS worth it!

Christy

I recently received the following from Irene Hall, the children's librarian at the Witherle Memorial Library.

Thank you for all your assistance with feeding our children. They have truly enjoyed and devoured the snacks you and your friends have provided.

This time of year, the kids come racing through after school; to stay a bit, relax with friends, then race off to sports practice and games. I try to have something nutritious to fill their bellies as they come through, but I'm facing a snack slump. I'm almost out of food.

Would you be willing to help us out again? If I'm asking too often, please let me know. I so appreciate your assistance, as I do the assistance from the Trinitarian Main St Church. You both are serving your neighbors at the very core – the children of local families.

Thank you to Tom and Marcia Mason for taking the time to shop for the children who visit the library in the afternoon. Some of the favorite items are crunchy granola bars, cheese and cheese crackers, bags of peanuts, fruit cups, mandarin oranges, Go Gurt (yogurt), and peanut bars. Occasional donations of fruit are also appreciated.

The fresh pussy willows were a delight to see on the coffee table today. I hope we will be seeing shoots of crocuses and daffodils not far behind.

Brooke Tenney, President

Collaborative Ministry Congregations Welcome our 2019-2020 Intern

In late August, we will welcome our third Ministerial Intern, Ariel Aaronson-Eves, to the three congregations of our Collaborative Ministry. Castine will be Ariel's primary internship site and Belfast & Ellsworth will fill out her internship experiences. When Ariel arrives, she will need to find 10 months of housing for herself and her canine border collie mix. Can you help? Any rental leads you may have are most welcome – see Rev. Margaret Beckman to share information.

Here is a brief introduction to Ariel. She will join us on Sunday mornings in September.

Ariel Aaronson-Eves is a 3rd year MDiv student at Starr King School for the Ministry, with a

passion for food, land, and place. She spent six years working as a farmer, in Massachusetts, Arkansas, Kansas, and Maine, before starting seminary to prepare for UU ministry. She has a bachelor's degree in history and a deep commitment to racial justice that underlies her ministry. Her work explores the power of co-creation experienced through agriculture and the way our techniques of life and farming can either connect us to or alienate us from our habitats, our communities, and our bodies.



A message from Families First Community Center

The Opportunity Fund of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Castine has granted Families First Community Center a third installment of \$10,000! This donation is to help FFCC with programming start-up costs such as recruiting, hiring, and staff development!

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Castine is a wonderful example of the community support that those in need, and FFCC, are so thankful for!!!

These funds were much needed and we cannot thank them enough!!

A message from Community Compass

Community Compass is extremely grateful to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Castine in awarding us this \$15,000 Opportunity Fund.

We are honored by this expression of confidence in supporting our growing projects, working with others in building community and breaking the cycle of poverty in our region.

I speak for all our Community Compass board in appreciation, and looking forward to further engaging with your congregation in this work.

Bob Holmberg
President, Community Compass

Religious Education

Future of Faith Formation

For the past couple of weeks, I have been listening to a webinar, led by Kim Sweeney, on the “Future of Faith Formation” (religious education). She begins by emphasizing, through research, that parents are the most influential factors in their child’s faith formation, specifically, through their modeling of the principles and mission of the church. The second most influential factor in a child’s faith formation is the adults of the church congregation. In this light, she encourages children, youth and adults to interact and be together as much as possible: in worship services, coffee hour, religious education classes, service projects and community projects. Not only does this help the spiritual growth of the child, but it also contributes to the spiritual growth of the adults.

One small example of this idea was the children’s February project of making valentine cards for adults. Since last month’s “Common” article, the children have received more responses and interactions with adult members of the church. Thank you again for being a part of our children’s “Faith Formation.” Let’s think of more ways our children and adults can interact!

What Will We Be Doing in April?

In April, we will celebrate new beginnings of Easter, Earth Day and more visible signs of spring. We will explore Jesus’ messages of love and peace and read a book about the “Golden Rule.” Instead of an Easter egg hunt in class, we will have a “Can Hunt” to help a local food pantry.

HELP from the adults is needed for this project: Prior to Easter Sunday, bring one or two cans of food that we can put in our “Can Hunt” and take to a local food pantry.

Book Recommendation

I would like to offer this book recommendation for children. It is a newly published book entitled, “Being You,” by Alexs Pate. Its theme emphasizes how children need support in working through negative labels to let their light shine through. It promotes our first principle, “Each person is important.”

Kay Hansen, Religious Educator

A note of thanks from the Rainbow Ball

We want to say THANK YOU for supporting Rainbow Ball Weekend in 2018 and to share some exciting news about its new home. Last year would not have been possible without your generous support!

As we gear up for another successful year, we are thrilled to let you know the founders and organizers of Rainbow Ball Weekend have transferred the planning and hosting of the weekend to OUT Maine, recognizing our mission and track record supporting Maine LGBTQ youth. Working together, we will sustain Rainbow Ball Weekend so that youth can count on this important weekend each spring.

FILIPINO DINNER



Featuring Chicken Adobo

By CHEF RAY NUALLA

At Unitarian Universalist

Parish Hall

On The Common, Castine

April 26, 2019

5:30 p.m.

Adult: \$20.00

Kids with an adult are free.

Proceeds to benefit children in Aquino, Philippines: school tuition, books, uniforms, school transportation and much more!



Call (207) 206-5292 or email: elaine4347@gmail.com

Reservations by April 23, please.

The Opportunity Column: Celebrating Success

In March, Tracey Hair was sworn in as a citizen of the United States. The following is an abridged version of a story she wrote about her life. A more detailed version of this story is available by request for those who would like to learn more about Tracey's experiences.

I started life with two parents, by the time I was four I was down to one. My mother left my father and our little house with both my sister and me in tow. By the time I was 13, I had gone to twenty-two schools, following the shelter system up and down the east coast of Australia. Occasionally, we had our own housing, but evictions were a common event. I've never known a world where there was enough money to buy food or school clothing.

At the age of thirteen the court system removed me from my mother's care. I went to live with my father after the court order and for the next five years lived in a tin camper in their back yard. I spent my high school years struggling to learn, forgetting to eat and mourning my mother who was just an hour away slipping further into a violent drug filled world.

By 18, I moved away from all I knew and for a brief while stayed with a shelter worker I had met when I was younger. I was a poor girl who could speak middle class, intelligent, spunky and street wise. I became an imposter in a world that wasn't really mine and after responding to an advertisement in the paper about a lifeguard job in America, I trained to get a certificate as a life guard. By 19, I saved enough from a job at a Supermarket to fly to America and work at a Girl Scout Camp.

For the next two years I lived, worked and settled in the US, a journey that included being a nanny for very rich people in California and watching children of politicians and a police officer in Bangor. For the first time in my life I felt safe. I

was still poor, working for less than minimum wage but I was not in physical danger.

My early years in Bangor lead me into a relationship. My relationship was with a woman, a relationship not recognized by Immigration laws. I was undocumented in Maine for twenty years.

In 2004, ten years into being underground, that relationship ended, I found myself homeless in a country, in a town that wasn't really mine... until... I stumbled across a group of Nuns in Orland. They gave me shelter and a chance. In order to survive I became an expert at speaking the language of the life I was in. I lied to them, telling them I could write grants, something I had never done but planned to learn very quickly. I did learn to write grants, I learned to use a computer, I drove (without a license) and I worked.

My mother was never able to leave poverty, she collected welfare until the day she died. The chaos of the life eventually took a toll on her spirit and she committed suicide. I ended up here, running one of the largest homeless shelters in our state and have a Governor appointed seat on the Statewide Homeless Council. I made it out of poverty.

I've been at H.O.M.E. for 14 years, I've learned how to run a non-profit without going to school. When people look at me, they see a person who looks and speaks middle class... I'm often treated differently than my peers. That's why I stayed with this ministry, I'm running it because I can, I'm running it because I know how to jump into the chaos of others, in fact it's all I've ever known. I'm running it because in the world of poverty I am not an imposter.

Tracey Hair, Executive Director, H.O.M.E. Inc