



THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

April 2022



A Month of Sundays in April 2022

The Soul Matters Theme for April is Awakening

- April 3 Worship Leader - Rev. Margaret Beckman
Musicians – Juliane Gardner & Chris Poulin
“Universalism and American Spiritual Awakening”
- April 10 Worship Leader – Rev. Margaret Beckman
Musician – Colleen Fitzgerald
“Staying Awake with Me”
- April 17 Worship Leader – Rev. Margaret Beckman
Musicians – Juliane Gardner & Chris Poulin
Easter Sunday. “Awake, O My Soul, Awake”
- April 24 Worship Leader – Intern Vanessa Williams
Musician – Colleen Fitzgerald
The Meeting House will be open for Multi-Platform Worship
Both on-line and on-site

Our Mission

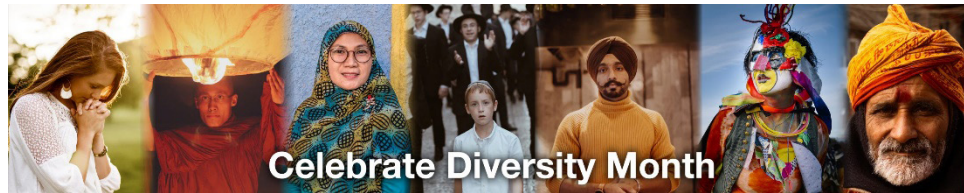
To establish and promote an open and welcoming congregation that supports and sustains the spiritual, ethical, intellectual and overall well being of our members while serving our broader communities.

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 the March issue of *The Common*, please submit items to office@uucastine.org.





Lakeside Reflections, April 2022

Holidays and Holy Days

This year, all three Abrahamic faith traditions (so called because all three are descended from Abraham) will celebrate major holidays during April. Muslims celebrate Ramadan. Jews celebrate Passover. Christians celebrate Easter. Passover and Easter are often celebrated at the same time, or very nearly the same time since the dates for both are set in accordance with the full moon and Vernal Equinox. The simple standard definition of Easter is that it is the first Sunday after the full Moon that occurs on or after the spring equinox. If the full Moon falls on a Sunday, then Easter is the next Sunday. Passover's dates are pegged to the Hebrew calendar, based on the lunar cycle. It starts in the middle of the month of Nisan, when the moon is full, typically falling in March or April of the Gregorian calendar. As a result, Passover typically begins very close to Easter.

Ramadan falls in the 9th month of the lunar year, which means that Ramadan moves with the moon while our Gregorian calendar moves with the sun. This year, Ramadan begins on April 2nd and concludes on May 2nd. It is not typical for Ramadan to fall so close to the celebrations of Passover and Easter.

In addition to the three Abrahamic faiths, Mahavir Jayanti: A Jain holiday celebrating the birth of Lord Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, falls on April 15th and the Theravada Buddhist New Year is April 16th.

Two more holidays in April are important to

notice and honor. Earth Day, the international day of celebration for the modern environmental movement, which 192 countries celebrate, is April 22nd and April 21st – 23rd is the Gathering of Nations, a congregation of 500 Native American tribes. These tribes meet to celebrate their traditions and cultures each year in the largest event for North America's tribes.

Although none of us will celebrate all of these religious/spiritual holidays, each of us may observe one or more of them. And all of us can appreciate and respect the spiritual and ritual importance of these holidays for those who observe them. Becoming knowledgeable and respectful of the many ways that people practice and celebrate their faith is one way that we Unitarian Universalists respect our own Sources. Here is a description of our Sources in case you need a refresher:

Unitarian Universalism draws from many Sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life
- Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love

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Lakeside Reflections, continued

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- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit
- Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

As the daffodils and crocuses come into full color and bloom, may each of us follow the spirituality

that gives us color and bloom. May we be mindful that ours is not the only way, yet it is one way. May our prayer be one of welcome and love.

“You, the one
From whom on different paths
All of us have come.
To whom on different paths
All of us are going.
Make strong in our hearts what unites us;
Build bridges across all that divides us;
United make us rejoice in our diversity.
At one in our witness to your peace,
A rainbow of your glory.
Amen.”

— David Steindl-Rast

Namaste, *Margaret*

Multi-Platform General Assembly in Portland, Oregon



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
MULTIPLATFORM / PORTLAND • 2022

General Assembly is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists, where we conduct business of the Association, explore the theological underpinnings of our faith, and lean fully into our mission and principles. That remains true even when we cannot gather physically. In 2021, GA had more than 4,000 registered attendees participate from remote locations around the world. Although we give up the face-to-face interaction and hugs that are prevalent when we meet in-person, we retain our dedication to community and make our experience more accessible and more environmentally sustainable.

In 2022, we will have the option of meeting online or in-person!

Join us June 22 - 26, 2022 online or in-person in Portland, Oregon.

Each certified UU Congregation may send voting delegates to General assembly. We are eligible for TWO voting delegates and as many non-voting attendees as wish to register.

Thinking about attending GA? Go to Portland, Oregon? Participate from home online?

Registration is OPEN NOW. For more information go to <https://www.uua.org/ga> or contact Rev. Margaret Beckman (minister@uucastine.org or 207-299-5520).

President's Desk

At the March 24, 2022 UUCC Governing Board meeting it was voted to send \$1,500 to the Castine Area Relief Fund (CARF). This is the third donation to CARF since the fund's inception.

The text below was written specifically for the 2021 Castine Annual Report. In it you will find more information and the opportunity to donate to the fund directly.

Castine Area Relief Fund (CARF)

"We all need help at times" was the message on our rack cards that launched the Castine Area Relief Fund in March of 2020, as it was becoming apparent the Covid 19 pandemic was impacting local families in a significant and ongoing way. The immediate need from CARF is weekly food distributions, and there has been significant turnover in individuals and families receiving groceries. The overarching mission of CARF is to alleviate basic life insecurities in families in the Castine area- Castine, Penobscot, Orland, Blue Hill.

A group of individuals, including our Town Manager, met via Zoom in March to discuss what might be done to assist our neighbors and friends. Since our first grocery boxes were delivered 24 months (99 weeks) ago, we have delivered 1,431 bags of groceries, an equivalent of 21,465 individual meals. Each week, we deliver 18-20 bags of groceries to residents in the Castine area with each bag of groceries costing just under \$40 (or between \$700-\$800 every week).

Our grocery deliveries continued to be coordinated through T & C Market, who has supported our logistics effort with a system

to order and bag groceries to be delivered by Castine volunteers. (this regular purchase of food also had the secondary benefit of allowing Todd Tobey to retain staff hours for several of his employees, who might otherwise have been recipients of these same groceries.)

The Town of Castine made an initial contribution of \$2000 from General Assistance, a pair of local churches each gave \$1500, the J.T. Gorman Foundation provided \$10,000 in grant monies, and the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (Cares Act) provided a grant for \$6,055. The most amazing thing was, and continues to be that, with the benefit of only word-of-mouth publicity, donations grew this fund to over \$53,000! Not only local residents, but also many who call the area home in the summer, contributed significant financial support. And while we have never solicited donations, you can send checks to Castine Community Partners (CARF in memo line) P.O. Box 506 in Castine.

Thanks to the Town of Castine and its citizens, we continue to combat food insecurity among us.

Recently I received the following update about CARF. "There has been a fairly significant turnover. The younger individuals and families no longer need our help and the older/disabled individuals are less resilient therefore have continued on the weekly deliveries."

Thank you everyone, your support enables UUCC to make donations not only to CARF but to other organizations and people in need.

Brooke Tenney

From Your Collaborative Intern

Gratitude for a Nonanxious Presence

I have learned much in ministerial formation since starting seminary in 2019. I have learned framework for entering and leading in ministry; I have learned and practiced preaching; I have learned how to meet people where they are pastorally. While there are many more lessons integrated into my life and still in progress, I think the one most integral to my continuation as a minister is my work in developing a non-anxious presence.

A *nonanxious presence*, first described by Rabbi Edwin Friedman is the demeanor of one “who provides a calm, cool, focused and collected environment that empowers others to be relaxed” (Wheeler).

In seminary we are told this is key in ministry from the first day of study. As we investigate theology, our own inner workings and how to minister this non-anxious presence is repeatedly lifted up. We get it, or at least think we do—until faced with a crisis. It is then we realize we need help, leverage, a means of handling the complexities of ministry and life gracefully.

As graduation is closing in the pressure is mounting for me. And in short Murphy’s law of

“anything that can go wrong will go wrong” has been the running trend. And I, cannot say I’m coming through unscathed, but I’ve retained a certain level of composure and steadfastness that I cannot imagine having had before seminary.

While I am grateful for all the lessons of academic study in seminary, it has been in the real life scenarios of ministry, including with and to my internship congregations that I most credit this growth. When things are getting particularly challenging I reflect on the *Serenity Prayer*, and remind myself to breathe. Just breathe.

Such a simple practice and reminder to maintain stability is ironically one that is a challenge to learn. In this process of ministerial formation we empty ourselves, only to look at the pieces and reassemble (or discard) them to form a more stable, grounded, ministerial persona, secured with nonanxious presence. I cannot say I am fully formed, or even will be upon graduation date. But the skills and presence gained will not dissipate, they are part of me now. And for this, to you dear congregants, I am grateful.

Vanessa Williams
3/28/2022

John Wheeler. “Five pragmatic tools to become a nonanxious presence: Tips and tricks for being a mindful counselor”. *Counseling Today*. June 26, 2018. American Counseling Association. <https://ct.counseling.org/2018/06/five-pragmatic-tools-to-become-a-nonanxious-presence-tips-and-tricks-for-being-a-mindful-counselor/#>

Our Doors Will Open on Sunday, April 24th

The current Covid statistics for Hancock County, Maine place Castine in the Medium to Low risk category.

This is very good news.

While the Covid risk factors remain in Medium to Low category, our doors will be open. Of course, not everyone will be in Castine and some will choose to remain at home. Our Sunday services will be live in the Meeting House and on Zoom.



Multiplatform services are tricky and complex. Please support the tech team with your generosity of spirit and patience with glitches.

We are guided by three ethical and theological values in managing our properties and our ability to welcome people inside.

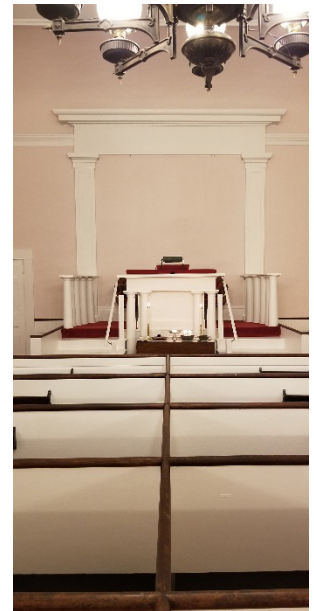
- Community – We are committed to the common good
- Hospitality – We welcome friends and visitors alike and share a concern for the well-being of all
- Concern for the Vulnerable – We center equity and accommodations in our practices

Here are some guidelines UU Congregation of Castine will follow:

1. We prefer that those who can be vaccinated are vaccinated and boosted to protect themselves and others
2. We expect that those who feel unwell or who have been exposed to unwell people will remain at home

3. Rapid tests will be available to worship leaders and the tech team as necessary
4. Seating will be limited so that each person or family can be comfortably distant from others. There is room for 18 to 30 people.
5. While indoors, we will generally remain masked, we are not yet ready for “mask optional” choices
6. Community singing will be minimal
7. Our musicians may unmask while singing
8. Speakers may unmask while at the microphone
9. Adults supervising children in the RE space will be masked and will follow parental requests for increased safety of their children
10. Full Coffee Hour will resume when the Covid protocol recommendations include safe inclusion food and beverages. Meanwhile, we will enjoy fellowship in very small groups and remain masked while inside and to your heart’s content outside.

The Covid pandemic is not over. As the Covid infection statistics in Hancock County change, we will adjust our protocols and expectations accordingly. News of changes will be in the weekly email and our minister and office administrator are available to answer questions.



2022 Directory



The 2022 *Directory of Members & Friends* is now available. We would be happy to email a pdf copy to you, snail mail a hardcopy to you, or hand one to you with a smile, in person, at the Parish House, Monday-Wednesday 9 a.m. - noon

or Thursday 1 - 4 p.m. Let Debbie know how you would like to receive your Directory by calling the office 207-326-9083, or email office@uucastine.org.

New, Convenient Way to Give



Giving to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Castine helps provide for the operation of the

church and its many outreach activities. To make it as convenient as possible, we have partnered with The Breeze to offer on-line giving through our website. You may choose to give to a specific cause or project, or for general support of the church and its mission. Don't worry, cash and checks are still gratefully accepted, but if you're on the computer anyway, give it a try at <https://uucastine.org/giving/>. Thank you for all you do!

Our Minister's Office is Moving



The Governing Board and the Minister decided not to renew our lease on office space on Main Street in Castine. That means moving the office to the Parish House before the end of April. As part of the move, we need to downsize some furniture.

If you are interested in any of the items listed below, please contact Rev. Margaret Beckman as soon as possible. minister@uucastine.org OR 207-299-5520.

Rolltop Desk and Chair. 54" Wide x 30" Deep x 53" High



Small Table. 25.125" Wide x 18.125" Deep x 23.25" High



Other small items may also be available. Please plan to stop by 21 Main Street in Castine before the end of April. Call Margaret to set a time to swing by. Happy to see you all!

“Tiny Home” is a Big Success Story

In October 2020, generous donors to Community Compass contributed \$10,000 to pay the mortgage on a “tiny home” in Sedgwick that foster parents purchased for their foster daughter, Crystal, who was pregnant. Crystal had “aged” out of the foster care system, and there was no longer “any room in the inn for her and her daughter”. Crystal gave birth to Esme in January 2021.

Crystal began work at a local day care center and attends Early Childhood Education classes at Eastern Maine Community College in Bangor. During the past year, her foster parents continue to support her by giving her advice and encouragement about being a parent. Crystal was able to save sufficient funds to rent an apartment for herself and Esme. She has lived in the apartment for three months, is now self- sufficient and happy with her life and daughter.

The story of the “tiny home” does not end with Crystal. One of her foster brothers, who is 18 and a senior in high school moved into the “tiny home”. In June, he will graduate and another foster brother will move into the “tiny home”. So the investment made by thoughtful members of our communities has not only helped Crystal and her daughter establish themselves, but continues to pay benefits to young people, who might otherwise have to find a shelter in which to live.

Jessica Valdez, Executive Director of Community Compass, updated Crystal’s story and that of the “tiny home” with the Community Compass Board of Directors at their monthly meeting on

March 17. A lively discussion ensued in which Elaine Hewes of Sedgwick suggested that the board consider funding two or three “tiny homes” with the hope that it would provide shelter and opportunity for foster children or other potentially homeless people to have shelter and a chance to become self- sufficient.

As Kim Coit of Brooksville suggested, this is a success story about members of our communities “investing in humanity”. Sometimes, a small investment in humanity pays large dividends. Community Compass would like to pursue Elaine’s suggestion of building two or three “tiny homes”. The key ingredient for the next “tiny home” success story is having a mentor or foster parent/family who would be willing to support an individual move into a “tiny home” and willing to host the home on their property.

Residents of Deer Isle, Stonington, Castine, Orland, Penobscot, Brooksville, Sedgwick, Brooklin, Blue Hill, or Surry interested in mentoring an individual and having a “tiny home” placed on their property, please contact Jessica Valdez at 522-7983 or email her at director@communitycompassdowneast.org. If you would like to make a contribution which will be used to purchase a “tiny home”, please mail a check to Community Compass, PO Box 522, Blue Hill, ME 04614 and write in the memo section, “tiny home”. Thank you for your interest and commitment to “investing in humanity”.

Skip Greenlaw
Board President of Community Compass

Wrap your Earth Day observance with indigenous wisdom.

On April 18 and 25, the UUCE Green Sanctuary team will host two evenings of indigenous film and discussion, culminating with a presentation by James E. Francis, Penobscot Tribal Historian. James co-produced the film “Invisible,” our feature film on April 25th. He has curated exhibits at the Abbe and Hudson Museums and at Harvard University, and served on the Wabanaki Studies Commission, implementing the Maine Native American Studies Law. James studies the relationship between indigenous people and the landscape.

Also included in the series will be “Penobscot: the People and their River” and “Nebi:Abenaki

Ways of Knowing Water.” Both evenings will be presented via Zoom. Please mark these two Monday evenings on your calendar and look for a zoom link in the newsletter. For more info, contact Paul Kelly: ourdreamalso@icloud.com.



Sunflowers for the Ukraine

Dear UUCC Family,

As some of you know, I came up with an idea to support the Ukraine that I thought many of you would appreciate and maybe join. My idea is to sell sunflower seeds with ALL donations going to the UN’s World Food Programme and too the Ukrainian-based Razom organization that has been in place to support Ukrainians since 2014. We are all familiar with the UN humanitarian support programs, but few of us have known anything about Ukrainian relief organizations until the attack by Russian on this nation.

“Razom, Inc. is a 501c3 non-profit organization supporting the people of Ukraine in their pursuit of a democratic society with dignity, justice, and human and civil rights for all. Razom coordinates groups of volunteers and fundraising efforts to

build a prosperous Ukraine project by project”

“Razom was born out of the Revolution of Dignity in 2014 when millions of people worked together and risked their lives to build a pathway to a better future for Ukraine. Maidan successfully cleared the path for new leadership and reforms, and inspired countless citizens to get involved in the process. Soon after, in an effort to stifle and punish Ukraine’s progress, Russia invaded and annexed Crimea and began a war in Eastern Ukraine that it continues to fund and sustain today.

With such conditions some might think the odds are stacked against Ukraine, but Razom is here to break that narrative. Everyday we see individuals and organizations working to

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Sunflowers for the Ukraine, continued

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create opportunities and a better future for themselves and their communities. Our mission is to help accelerate their individual and collective contributions through projects that unlock Ukraine's potential and build toward a more prosperous, democratic nation."

As for the idea: I am packaging sunflower seeds (18 ct. envelopes) for distribution to anyone who wishes to donate to the above humanitarian organizations. My thoughts are that we can support the Ukraine financially as well as visually. By planting these striking sunflowers, the national flower of the Ukraine, we can show our solidarity with the Ukrainian people through the presence

of these glorious flowers.

I suggest a \$10 donation amount for each packet, and Pedrick and I will match the first \$1,000 that we are able to collect. For more information, call 326-4924, email johanna.s.sweet@gmail.com, or write to me at P.O. Box 111, Castine, Maine 04421. You can send checks written out to me and I will send all monies along electronically to the organizations. If requested, I will mail packets for any contributions above \$5.00. Packets may also be picked up at our home—41 Court St. Just let me know when you plan to come by.

Thank you for your consideration of this project.

Johanna Sweet



Schnittgold Sunflower

5' stalks with 8 - 10" blooms
18 seeds/pkg



Did you know:

The sunflower is the Ukraine's national flower.

Ukraine is the #1 global exporter of sunflower seeds.

A sunflower blossom will follow the direction of the sun throughout the day.

Sunflowers attract bees, hummingbirds, and other insects. Once pollinated, sunflowers also develop seeds that also provide a source of food.

Start indoors 3 - 4 weeks before the last frost or direct sow after any danger of frost has passed. Plant in full sun.

AUGUST 23-26, 2022 – Tri-Church Collaborative Retreat.



Remember when we gathered together for a fun weekend with our friends from the Belfast and Ellsworth UU Congregations? Well, it's that time again! Yes, there are some changes in place

at Ferry Beach due to the ongoing need to have Covid protocols, but this summer may be a time when the restrictions and protocols in place at that time are quite manageable.

Registration opens on MARCH 1st, Don't delay – think about attending our week in August before the rooms are all taken!

No Neighbor Left Behind

On April 8, we will deliver our second meal of 2022 to area individuals. As in the recent past, I have shared recipes from our meals, and this meal will feature meatloaf.

Yes, we probably all have our favorite versions of this hearty classic, but here's one more to add to your collection.

NNLB Meatloaf

2 lb. 80% lean ground beef (or whatever other meat variety you like to use)
 1/4 cup milk
 1/2 cup plain bread crumb
 1 pkg. onion soup mix
 1 large carrot—grated
 2 eggs

Soak the bread crumbs in the milk and set aside for a few minutes.

Add all above ingredients together and press into a large bread loaf pan.

Top with barbeque sauce and bake at 350 degrees F for approx 40 minutes. Merat thermometer should read 160 degrees.

This recipe generously serves 6.

To jump on board with baking, distributing, and/or serving the meals on April 8, contact me at 326-4924.

All best, Johanna