



THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

April 2025

It is 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 and friends while serving our broader communities.



A Month of Sundays in April

- Apr 6 Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck
Musician: Rissa Moore
- Apr 13 Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck
Musician: Karen Froehly
- Apr 20 Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck
Musician: Karen Froehly
No Potluck Today – see you next month
- Apr 27 Guest Speaker: Kim Hopkins
Musician: Colleen Fitzgerald
Paperwork for Advance Directives
will be available after the service

Contact Us

P.O. Box 520, 86 Court Street, Castine, ME 04421
207-326-9083 • Email: office@uucastine.org
Website: uucastine.org • “Like” us on Facebook

For questions or comments about The Common or to submit items for this newsletter, please contact Debbie Morehouse office@uucastine.org.



Minister's Meanderings

Maybe for this newsletter piece, you want to open it in a place where you can play the music link pretty loudly and maybe leave yourself space to move a little, too. The Resistance Revival Chorus is based on the idea of Joy being fuel for resistance.

This joy that I have, the world didn't give it to me

The world didn't give it, the world can't take it away

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TbDPwA09Bc>

Joy is a sleeper cell for happiness. Joy lives inside of us, accessed at different times. Happiness might come from inside us or from external sources, but joy is always inside us, waiting for a chance to be activated. The world didn't give it. And while times can be hard and it can be hard to reach our joy, it is still there—the world can't take it away.

When a song moves us down to our toes, even if the topic is not a happy one, joy is the feeling that rises up and feels a bit like happiness. We take joy to protests, we take joy to sickbeds, we carry joy with us.

Here is the thing about joy—it seems counter-intuitive to tell my people to face battle, join protests, keep up the fights against injustice—



AND build in space for joy. But all of the hardships and disappointments could strip us of hope, can make happiness inappropriate or impossible, but JOY is the piece of our self that keeps life going.

Joy is deep and abiding. Joy can be present at terrible life events where happiness would not be welcomed or appropriate. We might say that we are crying happy tears—it is joy that held them and formed them until they could be expressed.

Old time religions used to speak of people being overcome with ecstasy or having ecstatic experiences in the presence of the holy. Those speak of joy—the feeling of life that is inside of us, driving us on and keeping us going.

This joy that I have, the world didn't give it to me, and the world can't take it away.

In peace and JOY
Amy

Celebration of Life for Jean Devereux



Saturday, April 19
1 pm at UUC
with reception to follow
in the Parish House



Notes from Building and Grounds

The heating system for Parish House and the Meeting House has been a huge problem this winter! Basically, the Bosch propane-fired boiler refused to ignite on several occasions, mostly at inopportune times, such as a Saturday night before a Sunday service. R.H. Foster, our service provider, has been very helpful in restarting the system after emergency calls, but, so far this winter, this emergency service has cost us close to \$1,000 with no permanent solution to the problem. The boiler has been in service for only eight years and is expected to last several more years. In an effort to solve the problem, R.H. Foster has arranged for a technician from Bosch to visit our furnace room at 9:00 AM on April 3. Hopefully, we will get an accurate diagnosis and a plan for a cure. In the meantime, we continue to manually start the boiler after it fails to reignite, which means that Debbie begins work in the morning under frigid conditions. It was 48 degrees in the Parish House at 9 AM today (3/24/2025). She

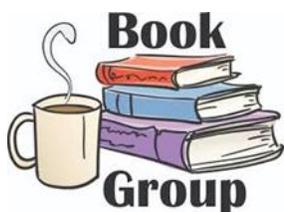


probably deserves “hardship” pay, but our thanks might have to suffice.

On another note, many of us on the Governing Board falsely assumed that our UUC-owned Parsonage at 88 Court Street would be exempt from local property taxes. Cindy and Marcia pursued getting an exemption through the Town Tax Assessor only to get confusing answers. After some back-and-forth, they finally learned that Maine State Law only allows a

maximum exemption of \$2,000 on the assessed value of a church parsonage. Since our parsonage is assessed at \$846,500 and the tax levee in 2004 was \$8,041, the maximum saving, if an exemption was granted, would be 0.236% of the tax, or approximately \$19. It is doubtful that the congregation would complain if this matter was put in the round file. The bottom line is that more than \$8,000 per year will not be available for the operating budget and philanthropy.

Tom and Marcia Mason



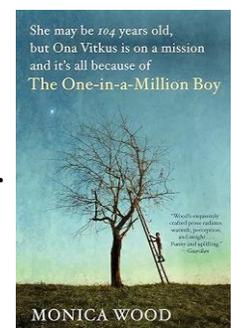
UUC READS

Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. on ZOOM

We start April discussing *The One-in-a-Million Boy*, by Maine author Monica Wood.

The One-in-a-Million Boy: Winner of the Nautilus Award and the New England Society Book Award, Monica Wood's *The One-in-a-Million Boy* is the incandescent story of a 104-year-old woman and the sweet, strange young boy assigned to help her around the house—a friendship that touches each member of the boy's unmoored family.

Consider becoming part of the UUC Reads book discussion. Drop an email to Debbie office@uucastine.org and we will add you to the weekly reminder list.



~ DO SOMETHING ~

Turn Anger to Action

To all members and friends:

As our government continues to take actions against values that our faith stands for, as well as carrying out actions that are overall immoral, there is growing energy around UU participation in resistance and resisting helplessness. We are not trying to reinvent any wheels so that these actions are particularly UU; bringing all resisters together for collective action will bring better results. For staying informed, or not being isolated, or planning for your own act in this resistance, we may want to keep up, in part, through these national and local channels being shared through the UUCG office.

First, there is **UU the Vote**. They are re-starting their work after the November campaign. Here is a link to their request for input.

<https://uuthevote.org/big-news-from-uu-the-vote-help-us-build-whats-next/?emci=691a2c75-c5fa-ef11-90cd-0022482a9fb7&emdi=3948ead6-cofd-ef11-90cd-0022482a9fb7&ceid=19286074>



Within that article, there is a link through another co-UUA group, **Side with Love**. They have weekly action updates, monthly zoom and phone calls for the purpose of planning action, hearing about actions taken, and general support for us, however we are “handling” our ways of resistance.

https://sidewithlove.org/action-center-updates/2025/3/18/31825-action-center-weekly-update?fbclid=IwY2xjawJHxxRleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHZBKo7a-IKW-I2ceK9XFvcnK4KuJaIGLs6hkfb3lD-7PtYc4Uf78IUk81g_aem_k_-ZgChP1itY2xbQLuakxA

Next is a list of ways to get engaged, locally and nationally.

We look forward to **Do Something** with all of you, Rev. Amy & Debbie

Local Protests / Marches



April 5th – Castine & nationwide, **HANDS OFF**, noon-2 p.m. The Common Tuesdays, Bangor, 11-1; Federal Building, 202 Harlow St.

Wednesdays, Bangor, 11-12:30; 6 State St, bridge over the river

Saturdays, Bucksport, 12:30-1:30; Verona Island Bridge.

Saturdays, Blue Hill, 12 noon; Blue Hill Town Hall.

Sundays, Belfast, 12 noon; Post Office Square.

Sundays, Ellsworth, 12 noon; Union River Bridge, downtown.



Blackouts & Boycotts

Put the power of your wallet to work.

- **April 7-13:** Walmart Blackout – Shutting down spending at one of the biggest price-gouging, worker-exploiting corporations.
- **April 18:** Economic Blackout #3 - Another full 24-hour halt to the economy.
- **April 21-27:** General Mills Blackout - Exposing food industry corruption and the poisoning of our families. Organized by The People's Union USA - <https://thepeoplesunionusa.com/faq>



Six Phone Calls a Day

This advice on the most impactful way to lobby your Congressperson comes from a high-level Senate staffer. According to the staffer: *“Calls are what all the congresspeople pay attention to. Every single day, the Senator gets a report of the 3 most-called-about topics for that day at each office (DC and local), how many people called and what they said. They're sorted by zip code and area code.*

Call their offices EVERY DAY. This means 6 CALLS A DAY.

- Senator **Collins:** Portland: 618-5560 -- Lewiston:784-6969--Biddeford: 283-1101-- Caribou: 493-7873 Augusta: 622-8414 -- Washington DC: (202) 224-2523
- Senator **King:** (202) 224-5344; Portland: 245-1655
- Representative **Pingree:** (202) 225-6116; Portland: (207) 774-5019
- Representative **Golden:** (202) 225-6306; Maine: 241-6767 (We are in District 2)

HOW TO CALL?

1. Call your 2 Senators + 1 District Representative at BOTH their DC and local office = 6 calls.
2. Do it each morning: it takes no longer than playing Wordle or Connections!
3. Ask for the Staff member in charge of your issue ("Hi, I'd like to speak with the staffer in charge of Healthcare"). If they're not available or the office has no such staffer, give your spiel to whoever answered the phone. Don't leave a message (unless the office doesn't pick up at all).
4. Give them your zip code, even if they don't ask for it. Extra points if you live in a zip code that traditionally votes for them, since they'll want to be sure they get/keep your vote.
5. Your spiel:
 - a. Make it personal. "I voted for you in the last election and I'm worried about," or "I'm a teacher, and I'm appalled by," or "as a single mother" -you get the idea.
 - b. Pick 1-2 specific things per day to focus on. They're figuring out what 1-2 topics to mark you down for on their lists. Ideally something that will be voted on/taken up in the next few days, but even if there's not a vote coming up, call anyway.
 - c. Be clear on what you want : "I'm disappointed that the Senator..." or "I want to thank the Senator for..." or "I want the Senator to know that voting for X is wrong for our state because..." Don't leave any ambiguity.
 - d. Jot some thoughts down before you call, and don't worry if you sound or feel awkward. After a few days, it will start to feel natural.
 - e. Keep calling. Don't worry that they'll learn to recognize you: the people answering the phones turn over every 6 weeks, so even if they're sick of you, they'll soon be gone.
 - f. Put the 6 numbers in your phone, all under Politician-- making it easy to click down the list each day. e.g.: Politician Collins DC, Politician Collins Portland, etc.

No Neighbor Left Behind

Calling all bakers and packers!

We need more volunteers to bake potatoes, roast pork loins, and make pineapple-upside down cake (see last month's The Common for the recipe). Note: I will have the canned pineapple rings available at the UUCU following the next two services. The sign-up sheets will also be available during coffee hour.

We are set for drivers, thank you, volunteers!

On April 11th, we will meet at the fellowship hall at 1 p.m. and pack the meals with an expected send of drivers at 3 p.m.

So there you have it! Looking forward to working with you. If you have any questions, feel free to call me at 207-326-4924.

Johanna Sweet



Potluck Movie Nights: Good for Fellowship, Entertainment, & Food



Just a heads-up that five more movie & potluck events will take place every other Tuesday night at Emerson Town Hall in Castine. These events have been very popular and a great way to dine, socialize, and see some film gems!

April 8 - Billy Budd 1962

April 22 - Wall-E - including Earth Day Clean Up & Scavenger Hunt activities

May 6 - Star Wars Part 4

May 20 - Rabbit-proof Fence

June 3 - Tom Jones (Albert Finney version)

Woodland Community Consultation

Thursday, April 3rd, 5-7:30 p.m. at Emerson Hall

This consultation is for woodland owners and woodland strollers alike.

What are your concerns and questions regarding trees?

Consulting Professionals:

John Harriman – Conservation Forester, BHHT

Kevin Allcroft – Forester, Forestree Concepts

Caleb Jackson - Associate Director of Stewardship, MCHT



A Journey of Peace & Friendship

Please join us for a 7-Day Prayer Walk, designed to kindle the flames of moral courage, kindness, and connection across Maine. This processional prayer will begin on April 22nd at the Penobscot Nation and conclude on April 29th at the State House in Augusta.

We will be coming together with friends and neighbors, from across all perceived areas of division, to walk toward the world that we most want to inhabit - a world where acceptance, inclusion, and mutual respect are consistently centered and normalized.

Our goal is to walk 10-15 miles per day, holding in our hearts the future that we most want to create and all that we wish to uplift with honor and respect.

For more information: <https://www.landpeacefoundation.org/>



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY BALTIMORE • JUNE 18 - 22, 2025

At each General Assembly, time is spent on congregation study/action issues. These three issues have been identified, over the course of various surveys and polls in our congregations, as the top 3. One of them will become a 3-year study. Please read up on them, go onto the learning sessions if you can, and make time to learn about this important part of our congregational polity—voting! Our delegates will hold a couple of times for input (after church, probably in late May/early June) and then go to GA and represent you. FYI, in this context, abolition refers to the brokenness of the current prison industrial complex. Follow this link to find out information on the issues, and how you might participate in selecting the next study issue.

https://prod.cdn.everyaction.com/emails/van/EA/EA005/1/79085/cSonjM2UNzK6wkWW7xAIHMMHFu_j_dNz2C7Jd65xOUI_archive?emci=22fb1b32-ecfd-ef11-90cd-0022482a9fb7&emdi=f1f00648-0104-f011-90cd-0022482a9fb7&ceid=13268151



Covenanting is at the heart of the practice of Unitarian Universalism. Our religious ancestors created our tradition as a faith community bound not by allegiance to a particular creed — that is, specific beliefs — but rather by faithfulness to a covenant — that is, a set of mutual promises to each other and to something greater than ourselves.

Over time, the practice of covenanting in many congregations has been reduced to behavioral covenants and used as a way to monitor behavior between individuals. This leaves out so many important aspects of covenanting: living our commitments to Spirit, Justice, Love, Earth; to ancestors and generations to come; to other UU congregations who are part of our Association.

Spiritual Leadership calls us to remember that covenanting is a practice, not a product. There are ways to practice covenanting that are multidimensional and liberating, and that help us learn skills needed to contribute to liberation in the world.

<https://www.uua.org/new-england/spiritual-leadership/covenanting>



Meeting House, Castine, Maine, 1941
 Stow Wengenroth, (American, 1906–1978)
 Cleveland Museum of Art, lithograph, gift of The Print Club of Cleveland 1945.237

