



THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

February 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 February

- Feb 2 Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck
Midwinter, St. Brigid, Groundhog Day, Candlemas, & Imbolc
Musician: Karen Froehly
- Feb 9 Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck
Being Inclusive, For Real
Musician: Colleen Fitzgerald
- Feb 16 Worship Leader: Rev. Margaret Beckman
Where the Wood Drake and the Great Heron Rest- For a Time
Musician: Colleen Fitzgerald
Potluck
- Feb 23 Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck
Come to Church!
Musician: Karen Froehly

Contact Us

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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.



From the President's Desk

We will soon turn the calendar to a new month. I always look forward to February because of its shorter length and longer daylight hours. But looking back, much happened in January to make me question the direction our country has taken. Many of our citizens are now frightened because they don't feel safe due to gender issues, deportation concerns, or job security. I think the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism offer a solid foundation for us to follow as we meet the challenges and uncertainties of a new era.

These principles are:

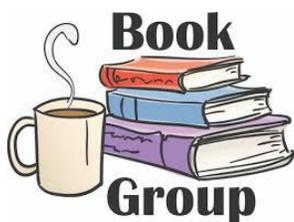
1. The inherent Worth and Dignity of every being
2. Justice, Equity and Compassion in human relations
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement of Spiritual Growth
4. A free and responsible search for Truth and Meaning
5. The right of Conscience and the use of the Democratic process
6. The goal of world community with Peace, Liberty, and Justice for all
7. Respect for the Interdependent Web of all existence of which we are a part



Now is the time to reach out in support of others.

Respectfully yours,

Marcia



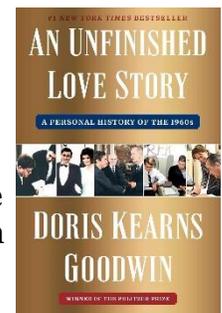
Book

Group

UCC READS Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. on ZOOM

UCC Reads begins February well into Doris Kearns Goodwin's *An Unfinished Love Story: A Personal History of the 1960s* and beginning the discussion about our next read.

Richard (Dick) and Doris Goodwin were married for forty-two years and married to American history even longer. In his twenties, Dick was one of the brilliant young men of John F. Kennedy's New Frontier. In his thirties he both named and helped design Lyndon Johnson's Great Society and was a speechwriter and close advisor to Robert Kennedy. Doris Kearns was a graduate student when selected as a White House Fellow. She worked directly for Lyndon Johnson and later assisted on his memoir. *An Unfinished Love Story* artfully weaves together biography, memoir, and history.



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



Minister's Meanderings

February Theme is Inclusion

To be liberal is to always be expanding, whereas to be conservative is to be confining, restricting, keeping expansion to a minimum.

In politics this plays out with the expansion or restriction of government services, and the expansion or restriction of taxes paid to fund such services.

In church life when we say liberal or conservative, we speak of the rules (values) by which we live our lives, to either be liberal or conservative.

Unitarian Universalists tend to be liberal, expanding the freedoms for people in our lives and in our communities. This is why the term, INCLUSION, is so important. When people have the same rights as others in the same community, inclusion helps us to see people as neighbors, not as "the other."

When we support a legislative act, for instance, it is almost certainly about expanding somebody's civil rights, while others would restrict their rights, removing them from the community, which can be called erasure.



In our current political climate, conservatives will be using legislative means to restrict access to common society through restricting gender expression, restricting citizenship, restricting healthcare, and so forth.

As a church community, our mission is to be inclusive of our neighbors, not necessarily politically. Sometimes, building beloved community, inclusive of all, means working on legislation for an expansion of rights, freedoms, and liberties. This does not mean we are a political entity. Theologically, we are liberal. So when a restriction threatens to limit the freedom of another person, we do what we can for inclusion. Action might be prayer, companionship, or legislative work.

About inclusion, I turn often in my mind to this from poet Edwin Markham

"He drew a circle that shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle and took him in!"
In peace, Rev. Amy

A note about accessibility from Rev. Amy

My scooter, who I call Melanie, is an excellent companion for me, living in the body I have. Sometimes I hear folks, not just church folks, be very thoughtful and considerate when it is assumed that I cannot go somewhere because, "It is not accessible." I implore you to overcome worrying about my limited abilities.

I want to assure you all that, while I prefer to use Melanie, I can certainly grab my cane and get up or down stairs and through narrow aisles just fine. It is nice to have a seat soon



after, surely. My point is to let you all know that I don't need to be protected from inaccessible places. My personal practice is to try my best to go wherever I want to, and if there really is an insurmountable challenge that makes it impossible, it becomes a shared story that bonds us. I want to meet you all whenever and wherever I am needed, or invited. Invite me, in most cases so far, there are no issues and you get your pastor there, where she can participate.

No Neighbor Left Behind

The No Neighbor Left Behind meal on January 10 consisted of chili, corn muffins, coleslaw, cheddar cheese, and clementines. Phew!!!! Many tasks fulfilled by many hands. We had a terrific work crew to pull it all together and volunteers who made chili and baked muffins ahead of time. It all came together and our stalwart drivers delivered approximately 130 meals this time around. When Jess Morehouse came in to collect meals to deliver, he said, “This is a good meal.” In light of it being winter, I’d have to agree, but having that pat on the back, just as we were winding down what can be described as a somewhat frenzied activity, felt good. It always feels good as we work together and share the sense of a job well done. Thank you to everyone involved. You give generously to make these meals happen, and we all leave the Parish Hall feeling grateful to be working with one another.

Good news on the April front: We will serve lemon-garlic marinated pork loin slices with potatoes, a vegetable, and pineapple-upside down cake. Not so many moving parts, and my mouth is already watering!

Anyone wishing to participate in the preparation, packaging, and delivery of the April meal can contact me at 207-326-4924. I will have a sign-up sheet at UUCS in March.

All best, Johanna



Some Activities to Warm Your Spirit and Shoo Away Any Winter Doldrums!



Looking for food, fellowship, and some dandy entertainment? “Gotcha covered!” Starting January 28 and continuing through May, the Castine Arts Association will be sponsoring bi-weekly Potluck Movie Nights held at Emerson Hall, with dinner running from 5:30 - 6:30 pm, with a film viewing to follow. The line-up for February-April movie pics with that evening’s film host is as follows:

Feb. 11 The Birdcage: Pat Winter

Feb. 25 Chocolat: Johanna Sweet

March 11 The Quiet Girl: Peter Musgrove

March 25 Cinema Paradiso: Bob Friedlander

April 8 Billy Budd: Kathryn Hodgkins

The cost: free! Just contribute to the potluck, or simply arrive at 6:30 p.m. if you choose only to see the film. Contributors often whip up dishes to share that complement the film’s locale. Feel free to pack a pillow to soften the provided metal seat or bring along a comfy folding chair.

A second activity coming up shortly will be a Mardi Gras Concert on Sunday, March 2, at Emerson Hall. Last year proved to be such a success that the Castine Arts Association is sponsoring it again. Mix together talented performers and an appreciative group of Mardi Gras revelers, then top that with a slice of King’s Cake— and the event is unbeatable. The exact time is TBA—but check out the castinearts.com site for more information later this month!

Stay warm, stay safe, and “Let the good times roll!”



Good Neighbors

To all of our folks who drive to church: If you are going to park in the Historical Society parking lot, Sundays are completely fine for parking there. Any other day, please go in and check with them to see if it's OK for your car to be in their lot at that time. Sometimes they have had meetings or events at the same time as us and their people had no parking spaces. Let's be good neighbors!



UUAM Online Class: Writing for Animals

February 23, 2025

One of the top priorities of UUAM, as articulated by the Board, is advocacy—the recognition that we not only care about animal issues but also get involved in advocating for positive change. With this in mind, UUAM is sponsoring a [free online class](#) on writing op-eds about animal issues for local newspapers. It's coming up soon—Sunday February 23, from 4:00–5:30 Eastern. Leading the class will be [Julie Knopp](#), a writer and animal advocate with an MA in Teaching, who currently works as Director of Communications for an international development organization and is also a Board Member of the Minneapolis-based Compassionate Action for Animals.



Op-eds are one of the most read parts of any newspaper—often on par with front-page news. They are valuable not just in raising the general public's awareness of animal issues but will also be read by policymakers and key leaders of the community. Efforts like this do make a difference. Thanks for all you do for the animals!

“Writing for Animals” Class Description

“Writing for Animals” is a one-time class for anyone who wants to make a difference with their writing. In this free Zoom session, you'll learn:

- Why writing for animals matters
- Writing tips and tricks for compelling readers to action
- How to write, pitch, and publish an op-ed in the news
- Other strategies for getting animal issues (or any cause you care about) in the news



You'll leave this class with a list of writing dos and don'ts, a short guide to ethical storytelling, templates for op-eds and pitch emails, and much more. Whether you're a seasoned writer or a total beginner, this class is for you!

REGISTER NOW

<https://uuam.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=301f5d2f99f87faf1e40dd92d&id=8dea30a903&e=129d543bbf>

Jean Devereux

1934 - 2025

It is with sadness that we report on the passing of Jean Devereux on January 27, 2025. Jean was a beloved and active member of this congregation for many years. Always upbeat and cheerful, Jean epitomized the UU slogans Love is Love and Kindness is Everything. A memorial service is being planned for the spring and we will let you know when we know the details.



Background by Lisa Kiel

Posted on [January 27, 2025](#) in *Words of Wisdom?*- a ministry of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Gwinnett.

Inside my head, stories rattle around. They are stories about me, woven by storytellers other than myself. I have hated some of these stories, particularly the ones about me crying whenever I drew the Old Maid card, or how as a baby, I pulled my sister's hair. As I grew up the stories changed, and I became the "responsible" one who didn't rebel, made good grades and could be counted on to keep the peace. Over time, all these stories created the role I played in the larger story of my family.

No one, though, has the right to tell us who we are. We own the copyright to the narrative of ourselves. Our stories, like our lives, are constantly changing. We decide what content is significant and what we can let go. What a

shock it was when I realized that I held the red pen in my hand, and I could strike from my story what was not me any longer. Suddenly, my story was filled with more red than black ink. It was also filled with blank pages.

As I searched for my own voice among all the voices of all the storytellers of my life, I realized how all those stories told about me had affected me. They now remain in the background, as my own, unique story takes centerstage. Picking up the pen to write our own story is a courageous act. It is an act of faith as we believe in ourselves enough to embrace our authentic story. If we don't tell it, it won't be told, for it is ours alone to tell. Take heart and tell your true story, especially to yourself.

