



THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

January 2026

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 January

January 4	Worship Leader: Rev, Amy DeBeck Musician: Colleen Fitzgerald
January 11	Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck Musician: Colleen Fitzgerald
January 18	Worship Leader: Rev. Margaret Beckman Musician: Karen Froehly Potluck
January 25	Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck Musician: Karen Froehly



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 Victoria Bujan office@uucastine.org.

From the President’s Desk

Weather and other factors made the last two weeks of December rather problematical at UUCU and beyond.

First, winter weather arrived with a bang and hung around to disrupt Holiday plans. Tom and I were scheduled to fly from Bangor to New York on Friday December 19 but severe winds and rain forced cancellation of that flight and we were fortunate to be able to fly early the next day. Meanwhile, power was out in Castine for 30 hours due to the high wind and fallen trees! We missed the white Christmas in Castine but enjoyed a Boxing Day snowfall in New York and returned late Saturday night to clear skies, frigid temperatures and a car buried in snow.

Second, The UUCU staff dealt with much more than winter weather. Kevin tested positive for

covid earlier that week and Rev. Amy tested positive soon thereafter. Although Kevin’s case was mild, Amy’s was not, so, to be cautious, the Sunday service on 14 December was held via

zoom and a planned coffee-hour open house at the Parsonage was cancelled as well.

Third, UUCU Office Manager Victoria Bujan was sick with covid during Christmas week and was unable to carry out her administrative duties.

Somehow, through the efforts of the remaining team, and Debbie Morehouse in particular, UUCU offered a beautiful Christmas Eve candlelight service that was attended by 21 in person and 2 via zoom.

Amazing!

Wishing you good health and happiness,
Marcia



Stormy Weather

We know there are dozens of bad weather scenarios and it's hard to make a plan that covers them all. Let's start by saying that if you don't feel safe driving to church on a Sunday morning, **please don't!** Join us by zoom instead. If a big storm is predicted with enough lead time, we will make every effort to contact WABI to be added to their cancellation list and/or send out an e-newsletter. Be aware, however, that if Castine loses power, then there is no internet as well, so if you try to join zoom on a stormy day and find it not working, that is probably the case, and thus no service, zoom or otherwise, that day.



Clerk’s Summary

The Governing Board held its monthly meeting on December 18th. Building and Grounds took center stage at this Board meeting. Barbara Fleck has volunteered to join the Building and Grounds Committee and was welcomed by the Board.

The steeple finials have been removed and the rails appear solid enough to last the winter. A grant writer will be invited to speak at the January Board meeting to outline the process and prospect of UUCC obtaining a grant for the steeple repair.

Andrew Pataky has been installing a proper access ramp into the Parsonage. While inconvenient for Rev. Amy at the moment, she knows it will be well worth it.

A new area of concern was brought up – the bathrooms in the Parsonage are not only outdated, but there are plumbing leaks and moisture damage that need to be addressed as well as the inadequacy of the two bathrooms to meet the needs



and safety of our Pastor and her family. While more information and estimates are needed, it was noted that repairs of this sort should not be put off too long and that bathroom renovations in general increase the investment value of a property. More to come on this.



UUCC will be the venue for musical educational programs for local schools (Adams and perhaps Penobscot School) on January 26, 2026, put on by the Blue Hill Concert Association (BHCA). Plans are to have the piano tuned prior to the event.

Please feel free to bring your concerns to any Governing Board member. This is our church, and your input is greatly appreciated! Included below are the Governing Board members for 2026 and their emails, please reach out.

Debbie Morehouse, Clerk

President: Marcia Mason

Vice President: Tom Mason

Treasurer/Clerk: Debbie Morehouse

Members:

Peter Fairbank

Keith Hagel

David Jarrett

Alvion Kimball

Alternate: Leslie Fairbank

marciamason@hotmail.com

tmason@biochem.umass.edu

legacycrafts2@yahoo.com

peterfairbank72@gmail.com

wordguy1@gmail.com

daviduufa@gmail.com

ackimball1995@msn.com

b.or_lesliefairbank@icloud.com

2026 UUCC Church Directory - Updates Wanted.

Help us stay connected. Please let Victoria know any changes to your contact information such as mailing address, email address, home telephone number or cell phone numbers. We’ll let you know as soon as a new version is available.

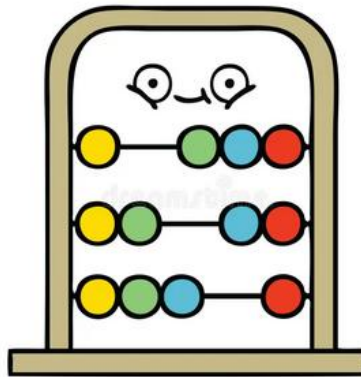


Bean Counter's Tally

December 2025

As budgets are wont to do, it looks like our income dipped slightly behind our expenses for November. This is to be expected as some expenses occur at specific times of the year, namely our denominational support is given in November. Thanks to the monthly disbursements from investments arriving during December along with the month's more "normal" expenses, I feel certain that we will end the year within budget.

I am pleased to report that we are well on our way to meeting or exceeding our 2025 budgeted goal for all general and pledge contributions. And, while a few people have fallen short of their 2025 pledge (things happen, we understand), others have stepped up and we will finish the year having received

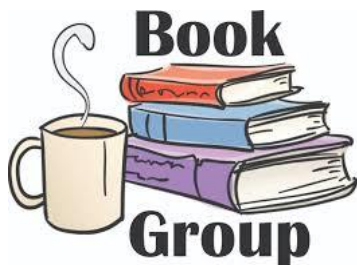


100% of the amount pledged for 2025. Great job everyone!

Now it's time to turn our attention to 2026. If you have been meaning to send in your pledge form, please do so. Lost the form? Not to worry, just send an email to office@uucastine.org. This prediction and promise of what you will give to UUCC in the coming year helps us determine where and when our funds can be allocated to best meet the needs of the Church and our community.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions you may have on UUCC's financial circumstances.

Debbie Morehouse,
Chief Bean Counter (aka Treasurer)

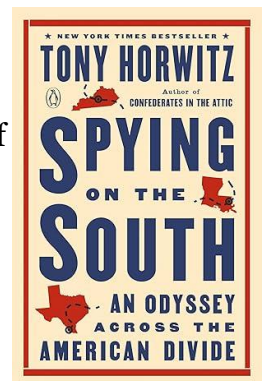


UUCC READS Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. on ZOOM

We begin 2026 by continuing our discussion of *Spying on the South* by Toni Horowitz.

With *Spying on the South*, the best-selling author of *Confederates in the Attic* returns to the South and the Civil War era for an epic adventure on the trail of America's greatest landscape architect. In the 1850s, the young Frederick Law Olmsted was adrift, a restless farmer and dreamer in search of a mission. He found it during an extraordinary journey, as an undercover correspondent in the South for the up-and-coming New York Times.

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



No Neighbor Left Behind

January 9, 2026 approaches and with it our first NNLB meal of the new year! On the menu is Stove-top chicken casserole, baked potatoes, corn, and fruited jello. As of this writing, 14 of the 20 casseroles are set to be baked by volunteers who signed up after the service on December 28th. Six casseroles are still up for grabs and all the ingredients needed will be available for pick-up at our next Sunday service, January 4th. Potato bakers are also needed, as well as meal packers and one or two additional drivers.

Casseroles should be delivered to the Parish House at 1 p.m. on January 9th. Yes, they should be warm. We will heat up the corn at the UUCU kitchen, and I will work on the jello with fruit at my home.



If you have any questions or would like to put in dibs for any of our volunteer jobs, call me at 207-326-4924 or text me at johanna.s.sweet@gmail.com.

Best to all in the New Year, Johanna



First Sunday Day of Giving for The Little Free Pantry

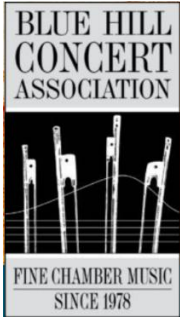
Please bring non-perishable items to the Parish House to help restock the Little Free Pantry behind the Clinic. This resource is being used and appreciated by our community. Help us keep it filled with nutritious food. Thank you for giving!!

Potluck Luncheon January 18, 2026

Join us for the first potluck of 2026 following service on January 18th! Don't miss the lively conversation and, of course, the good food! Bring a tasty dish and a friend.

WE'LL SEE YOU THERE!





Happening at UCC

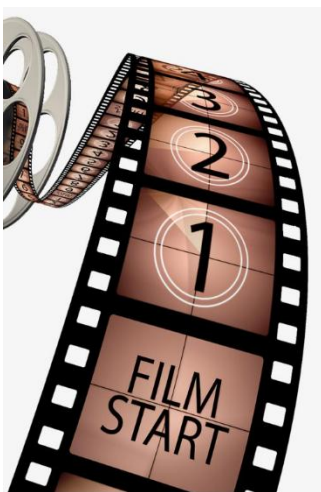
Each year, the Blue Hill Concert Association provides four educational engagement programs in conjunction with their concerts. UCC is pleased to host, on January 26th, one of these Blue Hill Concert Association educational engagement programs for the Adams School and the Penobscot School featuring the Claremont Trio.

Lauded as “one of America’s finest young chamber groups” *Strad Magazine*, the Claremont Trio is sought after for its thrillingly virtuosic and richly communicative performances. The Claremont Trio was formed in 1999 at the Juilliard School. Twin sisters Emily Bruskin and Julia Bruskin grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and they both play old French instruments. Emily's violin is a Lupot from 1795; Julia's cello is a J.B. Vuillaume from 1849. Sophiko Simisve grew up in Tbilisi, Georgia. The Claremonts are all now based in New York City near their namesake: Claremont Avenue. Their public concert will be January 25th, 3 p.m. at the Blue Hill Congregational Church. To purchase tickets, visit their website <https://www.bluehillconcertassociation.org>.



Gather for an evening of good food and good movies at Emerson Hall – potluck at 5:30; movie at 6:30. Bring a dish to share!

Put on by the Castine Arts Association
info@castinearts.org, www.castinearts.org



Date	Film	Host
January 8	Tootsie	Larry Rosen
January 22	Amazing Grace	Joel Deckler
February 5	Hoosiers	Kevin deBeck
February 19	Dave	Don Tenney
March 5	King of the Hill	Riva Berleant
March 19	Star Trek II - The Wrath of Kahn	Kevin deBeck
April 2	The Turning Point	Pat Winter
April 16	Penguin Lessons	Kathryn Hodgkins
April 30	October Sky	Pedrick Sweet
May 14	Marty	Tony Politano





Memento Mori
Open, Honest Conversations
on Death & Dying
facilitated by Maya Massar

Wednesday, January 14th will be our first meeting of the year,
at our usual time, 12:00noon East Coast Time.
(You can check your time zone here: <https://www.worldtimebuddy.com>)

Here is our Zoom link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88247254767?pwd=b712bgGudloGE1DqLaYoIb6eBanXh.1>

For more information click **HERE** for Maya's Memento Mori newsletter.



As 2025 has drawn to a close, we remember those who passed away this year
and hold them in our thoughts and hearts as we begin 2026.

All Is Well

by Henry Scott Holland

Death is nothing at all,
I have only slipped into the next room
I am I and you are you
Whatever we were to each other, that we are still.
Call me by my old familiar name,
Speak to me in the easy way which you always used
Put no difference in your tone,
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow
Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed together.
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.
Let my name be ever the household word that it always was,
Let it be spoken without effect, without the trace of shadow on it.
Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same as it ever was, there is unbroken continuity.
Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?
I am waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near,
Just around the corner.
All is well.

Jean Devereux
January 27, 25

Bev Bishop
May 23, 25

Sue Clement
August 5, 25

Alan Schechter
October 15, 25

