



THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

June 2020

June Services

We will be having church via our Zoom platform for the month of June. If you need help connecting to our Sunday service, email or call Margaret Beckman: mabme@aol.com or 207-299-5520.

June 7: Our Annual Collaborative Ministry Joint Service at 10:30 a.m. Belfast, Castine and Ellsworth congregation gather together (virtually this year) in June to celebrate another year of ministry together. This year, our Intern has been Ariel Aaronson-Eves. This will be Ariel's last day as our Ministerial Intern and we send her into the wider UU world with praise and gratitude. (Secret – it's also Ariel's birthday) Our extra special guest preacher is The Reverend Shayna Appel who currently serves the UU congregation of All Souls in Brattleboro, Vermont. The music will be great. Please look for your Zoom link in the days just ahead of June 7th – Ellsworth will be the Zoom host so the link will come from them.

June 14: Rev. Margaret Beckman and musician Colleen Fitzgerald team up to bring the worship service. No Flower Celebration at the Meeting House, but let's rejoice in the flowers that adorn our world and reflect on the many ways nature enhances our lives – especially as we continue to stay home much of the time and remain at safe distance from each other when we go out.

June 21: Musicians Chris Poulin and Julie Gardner have been sharing great music with us over Zoom and they join Rev. Margaret Beckman on the 21st to bring us a message of hope and promise on the Summer Solstice.

June 28: This is GENERAL ASSEMBLY SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP. UU congregations around the world will log on to share this amazing Sunday morning service. The Rev. Joan Javier Duval, Minister of the Unitarian Church of Montpelier, Vermont is the preacher on this very special Sunday (more about virtual GA in this edition of The Common). The instructions for logging into this worship service will be sent out in the days before June 28th.

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

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207-326-9083 • Office 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 Jean Lamontanaro at jean.lamontanaro@gmail.com.



Lakeside Reflections, June 2020



In Maine, June brings wildflowers and sunshine. We are free to enjoy as much sunshine and as many flowers as Maine can deliver this year. Our social and commercial activities are strictly managed for safety from Covid-19 transmission, but the sun and flowers will come in abundance.

Sometimes I sink into feeling sorry for myself and all of us for what we cannot do while adhering to the Maine CDC guidelines. Now, I want to shift toward an attitude more reflective of sunshine and flowers; an attitude of abundance.

While we rest indoors, Earth is brilliantly flourishing and quietly recovering a bit during this time of reduced human activity. While we humans are adapting to all sorts of new and different ways of getting by in our world, Nature and Earth are rejoicing in their freedom to do and be exactly as they are created to do and be. Mary Oliver's poem, Peonies, speaks to this ritual of the elements of our natural world doing what they are meant to do.

the flowers bend their bright bodies,
and tip their fragrance to the air,
and rise,
their red stems holding

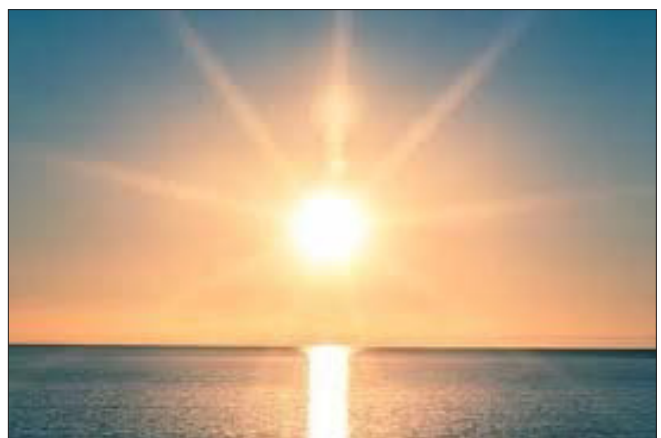
all that dampness and recklessness
gladly and lightly,
and there it is again —
beauty the brave, the exemplary,

blazing open.

We, I think, are also meant to be a part of this interconnectedness where each is made more by the other doing exactly as each is created to do. We are not meant to be destroyers of Earth. We are meant to enter into the dance of life with all Earth's inhabitants. We might be learning something essential to our future survival.

It's June in Maine. May you live in joy and abundance with the flowers and sunshine. Happy Solstice.

Namaste, *Margaret*



‘Peonies’ by Mary Oliver



This morning the green fists of the peonies are
getting ready
to break my heart
as the sun rises,
as the sun strokes them with his old, buttery fingers

and they open —
pools of lace,
white and pink —
and all day the black ants climb over them,

boring their deep and mysterious holes
into the curls,
craving the sweet sap,
taking it away

to their dark, underground cities —
and all day
under the shifty wind,
as in a dance to the great wedding,

the flowers bend their bright bodies,
and tip their fragrance to the air,
and rise,
their red stems holding

all that dampness and recklessness
gladly and lightly,
and there it is again —
beauty the brave, the exemplary,

blazing open.
Do you love this world?
Do you cherish your humble and silky life?
Do you adore the green grass, with its terror
beneath?

Do you also hurry, half-dressed and barefoot, into
the garden,
and softly,
and exclaiming of their dearness,
fill your arms with the white and pink flowers,

with their honeyed heaviness, their lush trembling,
their eagerness
to be wild and perfect for a moment, before they
are
nothing, forever?

From your Collaborative Ministry Team intern

One of the lessons of good ministry I hoped to learn through my internship is the art of leaving well. It's a fine art, and one that your congregations have less experience doing with interns, as I am the first to come to you "from away," and the first to truly leave your communities at the end of the internship. My leaving has been made extra complicated by the pandemic. Geographically, physically, I am already gone. We don't get to say goodbye in person. There will be no hugs. There will be no cake. And because I'm not in your church every Sunday, you might not even notice that I've left. Until you do.

At some point over the summer, I'll be back, to return books and keys, to pick up some things I've left behind in the churches. But it probably won't be safe or responsible for us to gather. In the fall, you will welcome a new intern, and it will be her turn to shine and to grow and to be actively loved into ministry by you. I'll stay away from your congregations for a year. And then, and who knows what the world will be like then, then we can greet each other, not as intern minister and congregants, but as friends. I very much look forward to that day.

Thank you for your kindness and curiosity; for the plentiful opportunities for learning, for challenging myself and taking chances and setting boundaries; for sharing your time and your hearts and occasionally a cup of tea or a slice of bread with me. I am a more confident, more creative, more formed minister because of you, and for that I am eternally grateful.

Until we meet again,
Your intern,
Ariel Aaronson-Eves

Sunday, June 14th Flower Celebration



Will you help me put together a wild and wonderful almost traditional UU Flower Celebration for June 14th?

We can't parade through our Meeting House with flowers from our gardens and wildflower fields, but we can share our flowers through pictures.

Please send me pictures of your flowers by email at mabme@aol.com.

Flowers from your garden.
Flowers in the fields.
Flowers at the roadside.
Flowers in a vase.

We will share our beautiful flowers in our virtual church.

Email your photos by Friday June 12th. And... thanks for participating.

Opportunity Fund Update

Below is a letter from Bob Holmberg of Community Compass dated 5/26/20.

To Members of the Opportunity Fund Committee and Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Castine,

On behalf of the entire board, staff, and Navigators of Community Compass, I would like to extend our deepest sense of gratitude and appreciation to all of you in providing us the generous 2020 Opportunity Fund. This represents your ongoing trust and bolsters our ongoing commitment to our mission of “working together, building community while breaking the cycle of poverty in our 10 town region”.

This grant is particularly helpful during this year of the Covid pandemic with so many families losing jobs and children isolated from their schools, camps, and friends. We are building our unique Neighbor Navigator program with a new position recently filled in the Castine/Penobscot region, an early childhood Navigator program in

process for Sedgwick, and a new Navigator search starting for Blue Hill.

Despite physical distancing, we are discovering new ways to connect families and children in need with opportunity through home deliveries of food, learning materials, and connection to other human services.

I look forward to keeping the congregation at UUCC updated and involved wherever possible in our Community Compass programs as with the Sedgwick Meals program and ongoing (by zoom) Connected Community Forums.

Indeed, Community Compass has been able to develop and grow in serving our community in need in large part through the vision, compassion, and financial support of the UUCC.

Appreciatively,
Bob Holmberg
Board President
Community Compass



COMMUNITY COMPASS

Serving the towns of Blue Hill, Surry, Brooklin, Sedgwick, Deer Isle, Stonington, Brooksville, Penobscot, Castine, and Orland, Maine

Contact: info@communitycompassdowneast.org



LET US GATHER VIRTUALLY AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY!



Rooted, Inspired, & Ready!

We have a big experiment coming up for the Unitarian Universalist Association and that is our first ever Virtual General Assembly (GA) – our annual gathering of UUs from across our congregations and across the world – happening June 24-28!

You can register for virtual GA and attend all events for the reduced fee of \$150.

The June 28th Sunday Morning Worship event will be free.

The Rev. Joan Javier Duval, Minister of the Unitarian Church of Montpelier, Vermont, is leading the service, along with the Rev. Mykal Slack, Community Minister for Worship and Spiritual Care for Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU), and Benjie Messer, Music Director at the UU Congregation of Phoenix who will lead the over 140 member virtual choir! I've also been told that Ysaÿe Barnwell and Emma's Revolution will perform during the service.

The service will stream live two times on Sunday, at 10 a.m. Eastern/9 a.m. Central and again at 10 a.m. Pacific/11 a.m. Mountain. Imagine having 1,000 congregations and

100,000 UUs sharing worship that reaches across the globe!

If you register you can enjoy more! GA will feature prominent leaders from within and beyond our tradition. We will have the Ware Lecture by Naomi Klein, as well as the Featured Speaker Series that includes authors such as Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Robyn Henderson-Espinoza, Howard Bryant, and Unitarian Universalists Rosemary Bray McNatt and Elías Ortega (Presidents of Starr King School for the Ministry and Meadville Lombard Theological School, respectively), and former UUA President John Buehrens.

The UUA Board of Trustees is hosting webinars on [What to Expect at GA 2020](#).

From our UUA President, Susan Frederick-Gray: While I will dearly miss being in person with thousands of Unitarian Universalists, I am excited about the opportunity virtual GA offers for more people to be a part of the conversations, inspiration, and connection of GA. We are definitely learning as we go. Trying to pull off a large-scale virtual event in such a short time, in the midst of a global pandemic, is an enormous lift. So, I remember my own words: "Perfection is not the goal." Connection, community, spiritual growth, love, and justice – these are the values that guide us and bring us together.

Yours in community, Susan

You can view the full address at <https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/message-uua-president-let-us-gather-virtually-general-assembly>

Register at: <https://www.uua.org/ga>

Living as Unitarian Universalists in Troubling Times

“People of faith, particularly those of us who are white progressives, need to combat the systems of criminalization in our country. Systems of policing and criminalization in this country are inherently violent, steeped in and created to reinforce white supremacy, anti-blackness, and racialized control.”

President Reverend Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray

As the pain and grief of centuries of violence without justice find their expression, let us remember the Rev. Dr. King’s words: “America must see that riots do not develop out of thin air. Certain conditions continue to exist in our society which must be condemned as vigorously as we condemn riots. But in the final analysis, a riot is the language of the unheard. And what is it that America has failed to hear?”

This week, we heard about Amy Cooper. And then George Floyd. And then Tony McDade...

All of this just weeks after we heard about the murders of Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. Weeks after a series of armed white militias confronted local police at state capitols across the country without consequence, without arrest—and without death.

We also continue to reckon with hearing that over 103,000 human lives have been lost from the coronavirus pandemic—a virus which has had a disproportionate impact on the Black community.

Do we hear that “Enough is Enough?” Do we hear the cries of resistance in this moment stating that each of us is worthy, and all of us have dignity?

It is critical that we respond to this hearing with action. We must do more than say the names of those whose lives have been taken by racialized violence. We must do more than name the systems of white supremacy and capitalism that wage violence against our black siblings.

As people of faith, we must bear witness to this moment. That means that we must name hard truths, but that we also must act.

Here are three concrete things all Unitarian Universalists can do right now in response to this moment:

[Support the uprising and commit to joining other UUs in working to combat the violence of militarism and the police state:](#) Share this message widely with your networks. Speak about your convictions in support of Black liberation. Articulate your support of Black organizing, grounded in your Unitarian Universalist faith. Have hard conversations with your family, your social networks, your neighbors. And [sign up at this link](#) to be connected with a network of UUs committing to learning, reflecting, and acting together.

Support the front line organizers providing leadership: Give your money, ask others to give, and take up a collection at this Sunday’s service in support of organizations like [Black Visions Collective](#), [Reclaim the Block](#), and [Minnesota Freedom Fund](#).

Learn more & take action: [Join the Movement for Black Lives National Call in Defense of Black life](#) today, Saturday May 30 at 1pm ET/10am PT and plug into #DefundPolice work where you live and are building.

