



THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

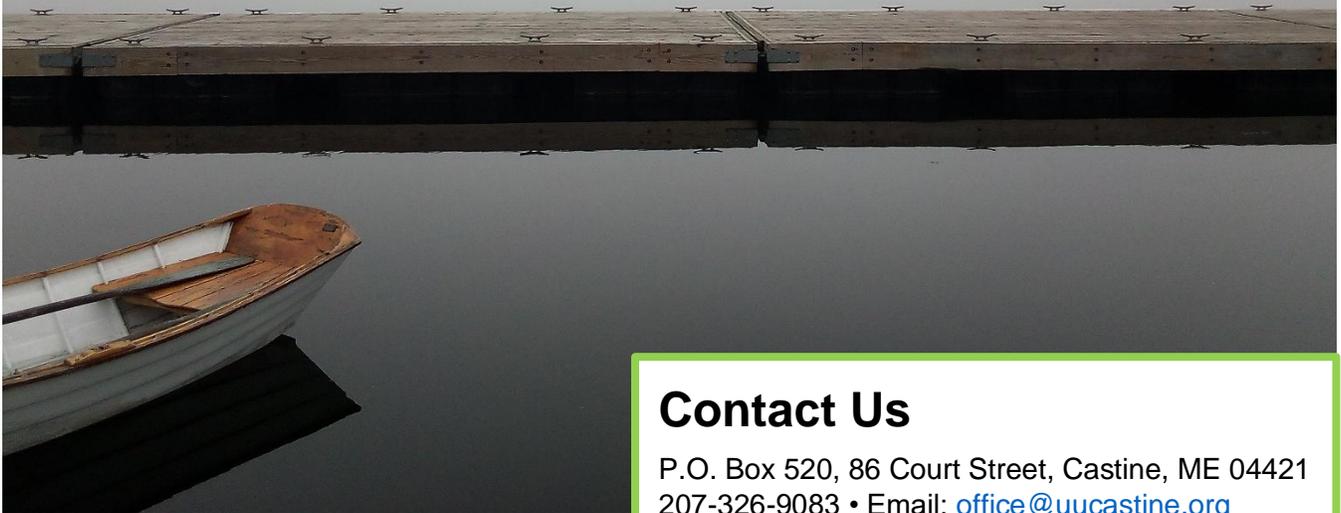
June 2025

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 June

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|---------|--|
| June 1 | Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck
Musician: Colleen Fitzgerald |
| June 8 | Worship Leader: Rev. Vanessa Titang
Musician: Rissa Moore |
| June 15 | Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck
Musician: Colleen Fitzgerald
Potluck |
| June 22 | Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck
Musician: Karen Froehly |
| June 29 | Worship Leader: Rev. Amy DeBeck
Musician: Karen Froehly |



Contact Us

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



Celebrate Congregational Polity! *But first, what is it?

Freedom is our theme for June 2025. Freedom, for our religion, is present in the way we govern ourselves and run our congregations. It is called **congregational polity**. Each UU congregation has independence and autonomy in its operations. The congregation is made up of each member, who has **voting privileges** for the decisions that get made by voting on items such as the call of its minister, its finances, and its leadership.

The UUA is the **Unitarian Universalist Association** of member congregations. We are a **member congregation** of the UUA, and they are a support for its members, but not the authority over us. Each congregation runs itself by congregational polity. In Castine, both our congregation and the Main Street church have congregational polity. In fact, we are historically theological cousins—they are trinitarian **congregationalists** and we are unitarian **congregationalists**. *Grammar note: Lower case letters are used for the demarcation of our historical differing in theological beliefs of God and Jesus.

This is from the UUA website: “**General Assembly** (GA) is the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), where participants gather to worship, witness,

learn, connect, and make policy decisions for the Association through a democratic process. While anyone can attend, congregations must certify annually to have voting delegates.” *Funny note: without fail, every year, as somebody shares a photo or social media post from GA, somebody who is not there will inevitably ask why they are in Georgia.

This year I will be in Baltimore for GA plus 2 days before GA at my professional meeting of ministers called **Ministry Days**. On Wednesday evening, June 18, as Ministry Days wrap up, GA begins with a **Banner Parade**. Close to 1000 banners will be onscreen in an **Opening Celebration**. *Love note: we need 1 or 2 high resolution photos of our beautiful banner so that we may be included.

The GA Worship service is in person and online at 11am on June 22. The opportunity to worship with THOUSANDS of UU folks, in person and online, is not to be missed. *Housekeeping note: During the service on June 1 we will discuss gathering at UUC to watch together, or watching from home. Be there!

In peace and freedom,
Rev. Amy



A note of gratitude from me, Rev. Amy:

Thank you to the Board of this congregation for voting to extend my contract to serve UUC until July 2027, and to continue the Parsonage agreement for that time as well. The Board subcommittee who put together those agreements were Debbie Morehouse, Keith Hagel, and Peter Fairbank. We spent several hours over multiple days getting both of them just right. With deep thanks, hope, and vision for a future together, I am so pleased to know we will be growing, together.



From the President's Desk

Finding Solutions:

I wrote in the May Common about our problems with our heating system and the deterioration of the steeple. This month I want to let you know that we are indeed making progress on finding solutions that can be considered at the June meeting of the Governing Board.

We have one quote for replacing the furnace from R.H. Foster and Osborne's Plumbing and Heating has done an energy audit of our buildings and will prepare a quote based on their findings. The possibility of converting to a heat-pump system is also under consideration. A representative from Solar Logix indicated that such a conversion could be feasible for us and cited cases where they have installed heat pumps in other churches. Barbara Fleck will follow up on this to find out how effective these installations are in keeping

parishioners warm on frigid Sunday mornings. In any case, our goal is to have a recommendation for the heating system by the end of this month.

I have contacted Steeple People of Jonesboro, Maine and spoke with Belden Morse. He seemed very interested in evaluating the extent of damage to the steeple and, of course, in doing necessary repairs. I also spoke to Andrew Wilcox of Mid Maine Restoration of Waterville, Maine and will follow up with him.

I consider solving the problem with our heating system the top priority – we cannot go through another winter with unreliable heat! We also cannot risk having heavy parts of the steeple fall on someone or a parked car, but this could take longer to deal with.

Meanwhile, Happy Summer!

Marcia Mason

UCC READS

Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. on ZOOM

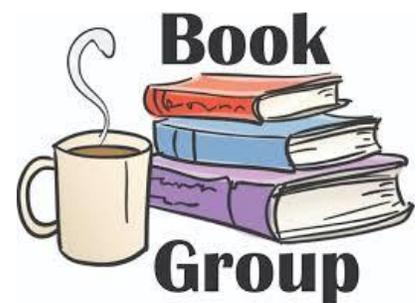
We begin June reading and discussing *Somewhere Beyond the Sea*, by TJ Klune.



Somewhere Beyond the Sea is the hugely anticipated sequel to TJ Klune's *The House in the Cerulean Sea*, one of the best-loved and best-selling fantasy novels of the past decade.

A magical house. A secret past. A summons that could change everything. Arthur Parnassus lives a good life built on the ashes of a bad one. He's the master of a strange orphanage on a distant and peculiar island, and he hopes to soon be the adoptive father to the six dangerous and magical children who live there. Welcome back to Marsyas Island. This is Arthur's story. *Somewhere Beyond the Sea* is a story of resistance, lovingly told, about the daunting experience of fighting for the life you want to live and doing the work to keep it.

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



Opportunity Fund Committee

The Opportunity Fund Committee completed its budgeted grant awards for 2025 at our May 2 meeting.

We awarded the **Next Steps** non-profit organization \$5,000 in general support of women victims of domestic violence in these perilous financial times. In particular, this funding will help educate victims navigate the difficult legal protection process when an attorney is unavailable as so often happens.

Blue Hill Heritage Trust has been awarded \$5,000 in support of their growing Youth Engagement project building outdoor education and exploration for regional children.



Finally, **Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust** is being awarded \$3,000 in support of an outdoor experiential education program within the Bucksport School System in conjunction with the Maine Outdoor School.

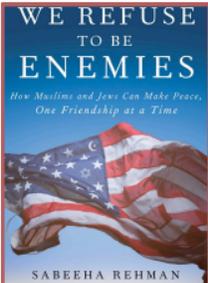
With these contributions, the Opportunity Fund Committee has contributed a total of \$86,000 for 2025, completing our budget from the UUCC. The timely distribution of this funding has been particularly critical in this very difficult year of federal cuts to so many human service organizations.

Bob Holmberg, Chair, Opportunity Fund Committee

the Castine Interfaith Book Club presents:

We Refuse to Be Enemies

a book discussion with authors
Sabeeha Rehman & Walter Ruby



June 14, 2025
4:00 PM
at Delano Hall,
Maine Maritime Academy
Pleasant Street, Castine.

Book signing to follow; books will be available to purchase at Compass Rose Books in Castine or at the event.

The event is free, but donations will be gratefully accepted to support the Mobile Medical Tent project in Gaza.

A reception with the authors will follow the event
6-8 PM at the Castine Inn



Juneteenth in Ellsworth

Thursday, June 19. Juneteenth commemoration, Knowlton Park, 4:00-7:00 p.m. to celebrate the freeing of the last enslaved black Americans in Texas. This free festival invites all Mainers and visitors to participate in a day filled with Black and Indigenous music, culture, food, and activities for all ages. The overarching theme for this year's event is: Caring for each other, as we care for ourselves.



Rev. Randall Hilton Scholarship Awarded

We are pleased to announce that the Rev. Randall Hilton Scholarship Committee has awarded nine \$1,000 and two \$500 scholarships to the following individuals from our local communities who are seeking to further their educations:



Bucksport High School
Paige Bowden

Ellsworth High School
Cadence Graves

Harbor School
Thomas Coolidge

Deer Isle-Stonington High School
Josie Eaton
Thomas Eaton
Stella Gray

Olivia Jordan
George Stevens Academy
Lilley Morse
Ansel Tenney

Husson University
Kaya Gray

University of New England
Elise Dow

The intended courses of study for these students are widely varied, including chemical engineering, pharmaceutical science, occupational therapy, nursing, culinary arts, psychology, art & activism, HVAC trade, secondary education, and biology. They will be studying at a variety of higher education institutions including: 4 at the University of Maine at Orono, 2 at the University of New England, 2 at Maine community colleges, 1 at Husson University, 1 at the University of Maine at Augusta, and 1 splitting time between Rhode Island School of Design and Brown University. Congratulations to these students!

Joan Bothwell, Chair
Debbie Morehouse



Adams School Graduation



UUCC is pleased to be the venue of the Adams School Graduation on June 11th at 12:30 p.m. again this year. While UUCC had been the site of many Adams School graduations in years past, last year was the first year back after the COVID pandemic.

We are thrilled to be part of the tradition of sending our Castine students off to their next great educational adventure!





UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
BALTIMORE • JUNE 18 - 22, 2025

General Assembly: The Unitarian Universalist Association's Annual Meeting

General Assembly (GA), our annual gathering for connection, democratic governance, worship, and learning is happening next month! As we continue to make GA more accessible, this year is a multiplatform event. Many UUs will gather in person in Baltimore, MD and others will join us online on Wednesday, June 18 through Sunday, June 22. Learn more and register for GA today at www.UUA.org/GA.

This year's workshops and presentations will align with the theme, "Meet the Moment," exploring how Unitarian Universalism can address today's challenges and opportunities. As UUA President the Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt said recently:

You are going to hear from your UUA during General Assembly this year, and over the course of years to come, that we are called to Meet the Moment together as one living tradition. Each of us as individuals, and every one of our communities has wisdom to offer the whole...We are relearning the best of

congregational life together as we continue to rebuild from quarantine, engage our rearticulated shared values, and respond faithfully to the needs of a changing world that is broken and still beautiful.

When we come together as a faith community, especially in these difficult times, we find strength and solace in our connections to one another, in meaningful worship, and in learning alongside one another as we do the work to move our faith forward and respond to the world as it is.

[Events and Activities in Baltimore before GA](#). On Wednesday, June 18, there are two private tours and a harbor cruise available for booking.

A comprehensive and interactive [schedule for General Assembly Events](#)

Final Business [Agenda](#)

General Assembly [Registration](#)

[Housing reservations](#)

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY



Flower Ceremony – June 29th

In Unitarian Universalism, we have 2 rituals unique to us that have gotten global notice and wide interfaith adaptations. We celebrate Flower and Water Communion or Ceremonies, depending on individual minister or congregational practice. I was with you in time for Water Ingathering last year, but this will be our first Flower Ceremony together. The Flower Ceremony was begun by the Rev. Norbert Capek, and has a Wikipedia page that was written or informed by UU folks because it is true to our practice.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flower_Communion

No specific date is attached to it, but we will be doing ours on June 29th, plan to bring single flowers for sharing.



Beverly Alden Bishop

1941-2025

Our beloved member and friend of the whole town of Castine, Beverly “Bev” Bishop died on Friday, May 23 after several months of illness. Details about her service are pending as of this publication. Rest in power, Bev, and when we know plans, we will share them.

For an obituary written by Brian Norris and posted on the *You Know You Are From Castine Maine If...* Facebook page, <https://uucastine.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Beverly-Bishop-obituary.pdf>.

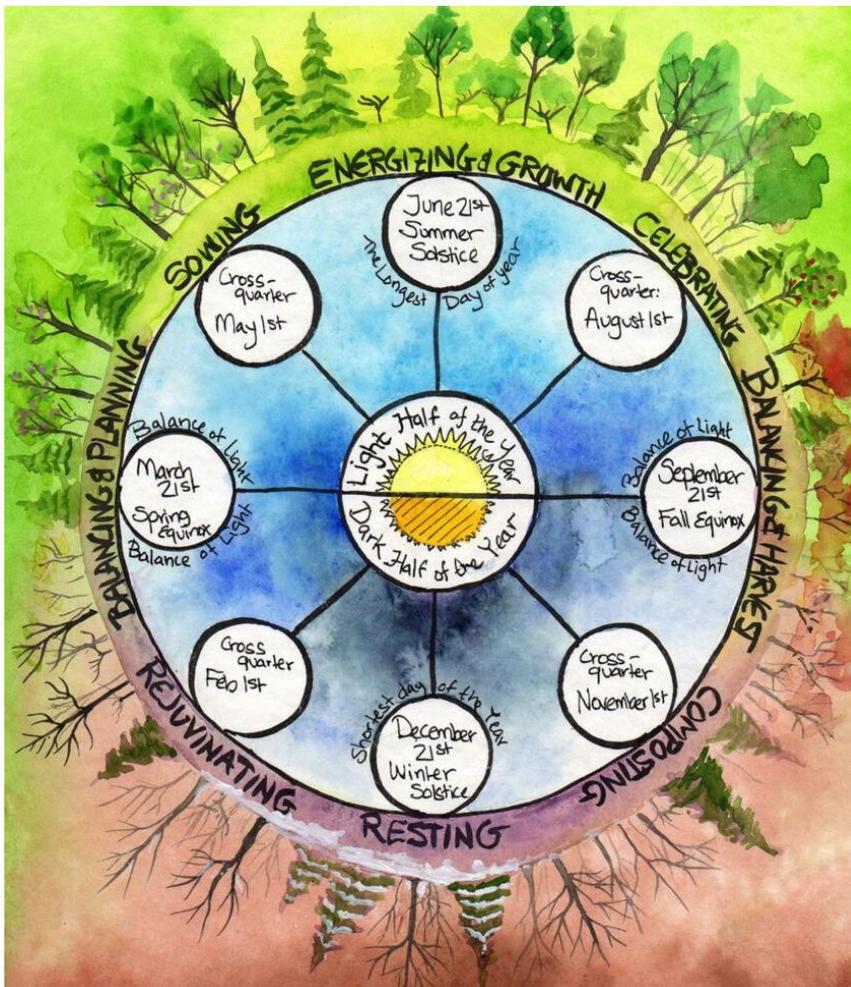


Only forward

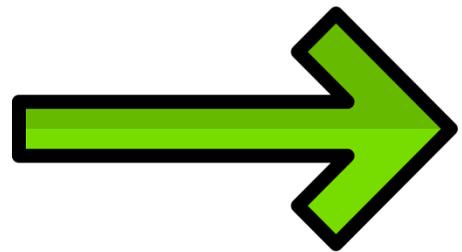
by Galen Guengerich 3/17/2015, in <https://www.uuworld.org/articles/only-forward>

At the opening of each new season, I often pause to ponder how our movement through time as human beings imitates the motion of the Earth, which moves through space in three distinctly different ways. The Earth turns on its axis about once every twenty-four hours, and the daily rising and setting of the Sun upon our horizon establishes an elemental rhythm of waking, eating, working, and sleeping. The Earth also orbits the Sun once every 365 and a quarter days, the tilt of its axis occasioning our journey through the four seasons. And we catalogue in years the milestones in our lives: birth, childhood, adolescence, graduation, adulthood and a vocation, sometimes marriage or union, perhaps parenthood, eventually retirement, and inevitably death.

There is yet a third way the Earth moves through time and space. For fifteen billion years, the universe as we understand it has been expanding. As far as we know, the universe will continue to expand for perhaps 100 trillion years into the future, slowly cooling as it does. There is no cycle to this movement, no daily rotation or seasonal repetition. In the cosmic sense, the Earth's journey is a singular one; it will not pass this way again.



The same is true of our lives as human beings. Our journey too is a singular one; we will not pass this way again. Time moves only forward. This realization is an invitation to respond with a sense both of awe and of duty—the twin sources of the religious impulse.



This article first appeared in the September 2006 All Souls Bulletin of All Souls Unitarian Church in New York City.