



# THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

March 2020

## March Services at UUCC — Services are Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

*Soul Matters Theme for March is Wisdom. March is Women's History Month.*

### March 1:

Ariel Aaronson-Eves

"Wisdom of Earth"

Ian Brenner-Simpson, Musician

HUNGRY SUNDAY – Tree of Life, Blue Hill

### March 8:

Margaret Beckman

"100 Years of Suffrage"

Colleen Fitzgerald, Musician

### March 15:

Margaret Beckman

"Wisdom of the Ancients"

Julie Gardner & Chris Poulin, Musicians

POTLUCK SUNDAY

### March 22:

Margaret Beckman

"Feminine Wisdom"

Colleen Fitzgerald, Musician

### March 29:

Margaret Beckman

"Spiritual Wisdom"

Ian Brenner-Simpson, Musician

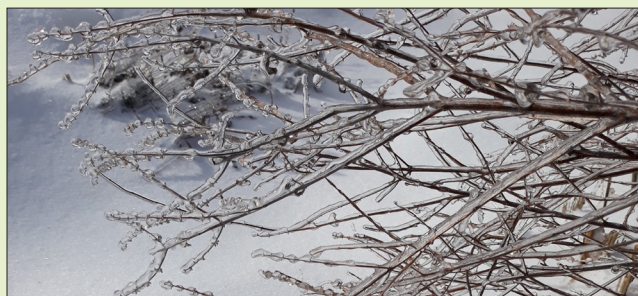


Photo by Jean Lamontanaro

## 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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For questions or comments about *The Common* or to submit items for this newsletter, please contact Jean Lamontanaro at [jean.lamontanaro@gmail.com](mailto:jean.lamontanaro@gmail.com).





## Lakeside Reflections, March 2020

Oh, my broken and hurting heart. What shall I do?

Lately, so many of us feel utterly exhausted by the events and directions of our country and our world. I am frustrated. I am angry. I despair.

I give in to unkind thoughts and language of which I am not proud. I try not to rant on Facebook – not always successfully! I struggle to maintain, or more often regain, a sense of trust and confidence in the future; of humanity's ability to come together to solve problems to make the future for our children more livable.

Someone said (probably in a meme on Facebook or Instagram), "Sometimes I get to the point of frustration, that I just become silent." Other times, I just want to sit down and cry. Crying can be good for us. It helps wash the toxins out. Silence can give us the space we need for spiritual reflection. So, no shame about crying or falling silent – for a while. Then, we find a way to get up and get going once again. We engage with others and our world – for ourselves, for each other, and for our future. We vote this week. Voting is a civic right and duty. It is a privilege of a free and democratic society. I love voting. This year, it's critically important and frustratingly complicated.

I just read this little bit of wisdom from Marchaé Grair, Director of Public Relations and Outreach [uuthevote.org](http://uuthevote.org). In her difficult moments, she reaches for strength and learning. She makes a commitment to engage in conversation, not persuasion, but conversation, with those around her.

Deep listening required me to relinquish my assumptions and embrace my curiosity about others.

I had to focus on the potential of our conversation instead of the biases I may have brought to the conversation.

I had to enter the conversation with both the hope that a transformative conversation could happen and the humility to realize that one conversation is but a piece of anyone's potential transformation.

**I am revisiting what I learned about deep listening as I organize for my values during the 2020 election.**

In a time when it feels critical for me to share information about the issues and candidates I support, it's tempting to start talking at the people whose hearts and minds I want to change instead of talking with them.

But organizing is like spiritual direction because any transformation starts with a posture of deep listening.

Good advice, I think. Rather than rant against those whose actions and policies I abhor, maybe I can start the long process of unification by listening to someone I trust and who shares my overall vision for a beloved world, but sees the way to achieve that world differently. Promising to engage in deep listening to those at the far opposite end of the spectrum from where I am seems like a bridge too far – at least for today. Let me start a bit closer to my comfort zone and try my best to learn to be a better listener and maybe we can come closer together one-by-one.

I don't have any sage advice these days. I do have one directive: Vote. And I grant all of us permission to cry or fall silent - and then get up and get going – beginning again in love.

Namaste, *Margaret*

## From your Collaborative Ministry Team intern

One of the things I've been grappling with in the past month is the tension between control and letting go. This morning I received a beautiful lesson in navigating this delicate balance, courtesy, of course, of my dog, Langston.

Langston and I were out on the Little River Trail in Belfast; to be precise, we were out on the frozen reservoir, where I was letting him run free. He stayed pretty close, chasing after treats and immediately returning. Suddenly, something caught the attention of both of us. Two dogs were running down from the trail and towards us across the ice, their human calling them to return. As the dogs moved quickly towards us, I grabbed Langston and was able to hook the leash, which was hooked to my belt, to his harness. Then I let go, and let him go out as far as the leash would take him.

To give context to this incident, I must note that Langston, who was not socialized as well as he might have been as a puppy, and who was attacked on multiple occasions in his youth, tends towards reactivity. If you sniff his butt before he's ready, he'll snap. Earlier this week, when we had passed another dog on a trail, I decided to try the "I will hold you tight to comfort you until this other dog passes" approach, and it didn't work. He squirmed and barked and cried and would not be distracted, even by a handful of treats. So this time I decided to try the opposite approach. He was attached to me, so I had some control if things got nasty, but beyond that, I let go.

The dogs arrived. Langston sniffed at one, pulling his leash as taut as he could, but besides that we all stood still. The owner of the other dogs continued to call them from the woods, and their ears were cocked, listening. The hair on Langston's back stood up, and I cooed at him, "Good boy. It's okay." After a few tense moments, the other dogs ran back across the ice and into the woods, towards their clearly concerned but invisible owner, and Langston trotted back towards me. I distracted and rewarded him as the other dogs, now leashed, wound their way down the trail and out of sight.

"That was good," I told Langston, recalling a couple similar experiences, where I had no choice but to hold on to the leash, try to stay calm, and let the scene play out. It didn't always end so well, but no one had ever gotten really hurt this way. And in fact, this was how Langston had befriended the dog who lives across the street. There had been a moment of "Oh @#\$%," as the neighbor dog came up to us, but that was followed by what I might dare to call faith – not an assurance that things would work out, but an acceptance that they *might*, but only if I stopped trying to control them. And sometimes, like today, they do.

Ariel Aaronson-Eves  
Collaborative Intern Minister  
UU Congregations of Castine  
Belfast, & Ellsworth

**One of the things I've been grappling with in the past month is the tension between control and letting go.**

# Mid-Winter Feast

Celebrating Women's Suffrage – 100 years



**Try One or ALL:**

**1920 Maine Chowder**

**Great Bowls of Fire Chili**

**Very Vegetable Stew**

With assorted breads, salad, and homemade desserts.

**March 7, 2020**

**5:30 p.m.**

**Emerson Hall, Castine**

**RAFFLE  
And  
TRIVIA**

**\$20.00 adult, children under 10 free with an adult**

For reservations: 326-0992 or [elaine4347@gmail.com](mailto:elaine4347@gmail.com) by March 4, please.

Proceeds to benefit students in Philippines: school tuition, books, uniforms, and more!

## General Assembly



### We're Going to GA on the BUS!

The Collaborative Ministry Team of the UU Church of Belfast, the UU Church of Ellsworth, and the UU Congregation of Castine plans to charter a bus to help get folks to General Assembly in Providence this year! The bus will leave from the East Belfast Elementary School (where you can leave your car!) at 8 am on Wednesday, June 24, arriving in Providence around 1:30 that afternoon, and will depart Providence on Sunday, June 28, at 2 pm, returning to Belfast around 7:30 that evening. Tickets for the bus cost \$134/per person, roundtrip. Please pay by check payable to UUCB with the memo 'CMT bus.' Contact your minister if you need scholarship support.

Sign up here and pay by March 15. More details are available on the form; if you have any questions, contact your minister, CMT members, or [aaaronson-eves@ses.sksm.edu](mailto:aaaronson-eves@ses.sksm.edu).

LINK: <https://forms.gle/CN4ZdTwKyD6RziGb7>

Registration, Housing, Program and more at <https://www.uua.org/ga>

REGISTRATION is open NOW.

Housing reservations open Monday morning – March 2nd!

## Northern New England District Meeting

CALLING ALL MEMBERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND OUR DISTRICT MEETING AS A VOTING DELEGATE

### Northern New England District 2020 Spring Assembly and Annual Meeting

Friday, April 24, 2020 to Saturday, April 25, 2020

Sponsor: Northern New England District of the UUA, UU Church of Nashua New Hampshire, Nashua, NH

[Register today!](#)

Registrations will be \$15 for the entire event, Friday evening and all day Saturday. This will include breakfast and lunch on Saturday. There will be free childcare all day on Saturday. Scholarships will be available for both registration and housing.

We'll have a number of opportunities to discuss the recommendation to dissolve the district before voting on it Saturday afternoon.

Worship will be led by the NNED Board, with music led by UU musician Matt Meyer.

Saturday programming will include workshops led by our New England Region Staff and others.

On Friday evening we'll have a fun UU Trivia event for any who'd like to participate!

LOCATION – UU Church of Nashua, NH  
58 Lowell St. Nashua, NH 03064



## Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network



### MUUSAN Legislative Agenda, The Second Regular Session of the 129th Legislature

Each legislative session, members of MUUSAN work through issues and actions of interest that are in alignment with Unitarian Universalist Principles.

This is a short session, and MUUSAN has been hard at work.

Climate Change = 5 bills endorsed  
 Democracy in Action = 3 bills endorsed  
 Health Care = 2 bills endorsed  
 Racial, Native & Immigrant Justice = 11 bills endorsed

Find out more about the Issue Groups and specific bills on the MUUSAN website.

How can you help? Contact your legislator, write letters to the editor, testify! Contact [admin@muusan.org](mailto:admin@muusan.org) for more information. Everything you want to know about MUUSAN - [www.muusan.org](http://www.muusan.org).

To find information about any Bill in the current session you can use the [State of Maine Legislature Bill Status Search](#).

### People's Veto Referendum

*This information was excerpted from an email from the League of Women Voters of Maine.*

When you enter the polling booth on March 3rd – Maine's first presidential primary since 2000 – you will also find on the ballot a People's Veto Referendum to repeal legislation that tightened rules for vaccinations of school children and health care workers. For those of you unfamiliar with Maine's experience with citizens' initiatives (CI) and people's veto referenda (PVR), it is a perfect time to dive into the Citizens' Initiative Study documents, now available online:

[Study Report](#) (start your reading here)  
[Study Report Appendices](#) (interesting material, but not essential reading)  
[Consensus Question Packet](#) (best read after looking at the Study Report)

The study documents won't help you decide which way to vote on March 3rd (for that check out the Secretary of State's [Citizens' Guide](#), pages 2-8); but they will help you understand how a PVR gets on the ballot, how to be sure you understand what yes/no votes on PVR mean, and what happens after the vote. In addition, the LWVME documents will give you a solid grounding in the history of citizen-initiated legislation in Maine, with some great illustrations of how the LWVME has used the process to promote clean elections and ranked-choice voting and how others have used it to change tax policies, expand health care benefits, and expand or restrict civil and voting rights.

These documents are the product of the LWVME Citizens' Initiatives and People's Veto Referenda Study, commissioned in 2017 at the LWVME Convention.