



# THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

May 2019

## Sunday Service Calendar

Services are at 10:30 am

### May 5:

*How the Light Gets In* led by Lane Fisher  
*In our different ways, every one of us has suffered the pain of brokenness—of having less ability than we wish, suffering injury, or failing to meet our own standards. This Sunday we'll reflect on how we might "embrace brokenness," as Parker Palmer puts it, and what we might gain by doing so.*

Musician – Ian Brenner-Simpson

### May 12:

Worship Leader - Rev. Mark Worth

Musician – Colleen Fitzgerald

### May 19:

Worship Leader - Rev. Margaret Beckman

Musicians – Julie Gardner & Chris Poulin

### May 26:

Worship Leader - Rev. Margaret Beckman

Musician - Colleen Fitzgerald



## Working Together

Members of our congregation gathered in April to prepare delicious meals to deliver to the local community. Above photo, pictured from left, Anne Price, Elizabeth Allaby, Marcia Mason, Pedrick Sweet, Jess Morehouse, Gil Tenney, Johanna Sweet. See more on page 4.

## 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, May 2019



The very end of May is the unofficial beginning of summer. Of course, here in Maine, it is also the official beginning of black fly and mosquito season. May 30th is Memorial Day, celebrated on the last Monday of the month.

For me growing up, Memorial Day seemed to be all about family. We went as a family to the cemeteries where our ancestors were buried and trimmed and raked and replaces flowers and fooled around and generally asked questions about the people whose names we saw on the graves stones. Now, there is a grave marker for both of my parents and I remember them along with all my ancestors.

It's only as an adult that I learned that Memorial Day is really about our military service members who died in the service of our country. It's hard to put all that in its proper perspective when we are living at time when "patriotism" is confused with "nationalism" and there is some pretty rough discourse about just who is and who is not a 'real American.' Let's do our very best to avoid and disclaim that kind of rhetoric this month as we



remember and honor those who have died and those who live with deep and searing grief.

Here is a snippet of an essay, maybe a sermon, from Rev. David Pyle to help us remember and honor and be a bit more loving toward all our neighbors this Memorial Day. "The Meaning of Memorial Day" (excerpt) by Rev. David Pyle, Chaplain, U.S. Army Reserve and member of the UUA Congregational Life Staff, New England Region.

*It began as "Decoration Day", a day when families and friends would go to cemeteries and place flowers and flags upon the graves of those who had died in the Civil War. From those graves they heard, and they remembered the cost of war. I want to return to that spirit, so that the memory of the true costs of war is fresh in our minds, renewed annually... so that perhaps we can honor our dead by sending no more to join them.*

*Keep your Memorial Day plans, if you have them, but remember the "reason for the season". We do not honor the casualties of war with flowers and speeches, but by truly and deeply remembering the cost of war when we contemplate sending our service members of today into harm's way. We honor them by remembering that war is a hell that should rarely, if ever, be unleashed.*

*Remember.*

Namaste,  
*Margaret*

*NOTE: Lane Fisher—who served as our first collaborative intern in 2016-17, earned her M.Div. degree from Starr King in 2018, and is on the cusp of entering UU ministry—will respond to any needs for pastoral care while Rev. Margaret is on vacation (May 5-13). The best ways to reach her are to call 207-338-1008 or to e-mail [lanefisher@myfairpoint.net](mailto:lanefisher@myfairpoint.net). If you don't make immediate contact, a text message to 207-930-5573 is helpful.*

## President's Desk

The centerpiece on the coffee table Sunday, April 14 featured knitted caps and knitted dolls. Jill Schoof and I, along with others in Castine were motivated to create the hats and dolls by a need to do something for the children on our southern border who have arrived in our country with nothing to call their own.

Jill and I along with Lynn Parsons and Margaret Beckman are a part of the Castine Compassionate Coalition (CCC) which is a group of Castine people who came together in June of last summer in response to the plight of many of these children who became separated from their parents on the southern border of our country. The goal of this spontaneous gathering was to seek ways of providing material and financial support to those trying to relocate and reunite parents and children. This group has been meeting regularly since early July of 2018 and focused, until now, on raising money for family resettlement after the children and their parents have been reunited, applied for and been granted the first step toward asylum, and are now attempting to make their way to a new life with a sponsor somewhere in the United States. We did contribute a substantial amount of money through a special project of the International Rescue Committee, (IRC) but wanted, also, to respond to this crisis in more personal ways.

Three of our group were fortunate enough to be in Tucson in February and met with Micaela Angle, the Development Coordinator for the Tucson Branch of the IRC. What follows next is, in part, the report of their visit written by CCC member Alice Alston.

*Micaela took us to visit the primary facility in Tucson where families arrive from border entry points and are provided services as they begin their journeys to sponsors. This facility is an old Benedictine*



*monastery that includes space to house and service up to 300 people. Families are there temporarily as they prepare to move to locations all over the country where they will be welcomed by sponsors and continue the process toward refugee status. There were a number of families there when we arrived. We noticed a number of young people. Teresa, a staff person, said that they were expecting 200 more to arrive that afternoon. Check out the website: [https://tucson.com/news/local/former-tucson-monastery-begins-taking-in-asylum-seekers-sooner-than/article\\_995f772a-9d21-546f-afda-4ad50bda738f.html](https://tucson.com/news/local/former-tucson-monastery-begins-taking-in-asylum-seekers-sooner-than/article_995f772a-9d21-546f-afda-4ad50bda738f.html)*

*We came back and reported to our group in Castine and are hoping to respond in some practical ways. Micaela has said that at this particular time short term in-kind donations can be very useful for families as they are released from detention and travelling or staying in Tucson. They are coming from very warm countries often with only the clothes that they are wearing. One of the resources that we saw in Tucson was a large space with donated clothing. We immediately thought of contributing knitted caps for those who are moving to cooler climes. Actually, Tucson when we were there in early March qualified*

Continued on next page

## President's Desk—continued

for just that! Micaela responded to this suggestion with enthusiasm with her only qualification that there are lots of heads to be covered.

Micaela also suggested that we might purchase backpacks, noting that these could be filled with school supplies or hygiene items (soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, deodorant, etc.). She also noted a need for blankets or jackets until the weather warms up. Her last suggestion was to include gift cards to purchase food or other essential items: for example, from Safeway (the major supermarket in Tucson) or perhaps Walmart or Target. Our Coalition (CCC) is now considering ways to respond to these needs and plans to reach out to various groups in

Castine to join in these efforts. Micaela noted that a number of churches and at least one Girl Scout Troop in Tucson have responded and encouraged the group in Castine to join this cooperative venture.

We are currently developing a plan to encourage wider community participation in an effort to raise funds for the items Micaela mentioned above. Stay tuned!

If you are interested in joining the CCC please let me know or join us every other Wednesday at 11:00 at Emerson Hall starting Wednesday, May 1.

Take care, Brooke Tenney

## Meals for Our Community



Members of our congregation came together in April to provide meals for members of the local community in need of food.

Below is a thank you note we received from Tammie Cox for our efforts!

A huge round of thanks to the Castine Catholic and Unitarian Universalist churches for their wonderful contribution. We served 87 meals together. A new recipient who has COPD and is confined to his home where he lives alone was extremely grateful. He said he had not had a homecooked meal in some time and normally eats microwave dinners. So thank you to all and God Bless.

Tammie Cox  
 Neighborhood Navigator  
 No Neighbor Left Behind Program

## Religious Education

This week, I dropped off approximately 100 cans of food at The Tree of Life Food Pantry in Blue Hill. I was greeted and helped by an Ellsworth UU who was volunteering at the thrift shop. (Our paths cross, as we work to help others.) Thanks so much to everyone who helped make the Easter “Can Hunt” a reality. The children had fun and learned that Easter is not just about the Easter bunny hiding eggs. Thanks to our Easter rabbit, Tom, who hid the cans well.

### What Will We Be Doing in May?

May 5th, the first Sunday of the month, begins the month of Ramadan for Muslims all over the world. We will learn about the traditions of this holiday through the eyes of a seven-year-old Pakistani/American girl named Yasmeen, who watches the moon grow (from first crescent) and then shrink again to a crescent and finally disappear.

On the second Sunday, we will be honoring our mothers by making something special and for the remainder of the month, we will be focusing on flowers and using them to make our church more beautiful.

### Book Recommendation

Through the years, I have come across children’s books that I would truly classify as a “book for all ages.” Wonderfully enhanced by the illustrations of Loren Long, Matt de la Pena’s book, *Love*, is one of these.

The first page begins:

“In the beginning there is light  
and two wide-eyed figures standing  
near the foot of your bed,  
and the sound of their voices is love.”

The author continues by depicting the many ways children (with the help of adults) experience the universal bond of love and how, as a young person, about to set out on their own—you won’t just leave with good luck,

“You’ll have love, love, love.”

Kay Hansen, Religious Educator

## Welcome New Members

We welcomed new members into the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Castine on Sunday, April 28. Keith Hegal, Monique Brown, Meghan Messeman, Jean Lamontanaro, Elizabeth Allaby (Unable to attend on April 28th)



## Invitation to the Ordination of Amy Renee Fiorilli

Amy Fiorilli was our Collaborative Congregation Ministerial Intern in 2017- 2018. Amy has now finished her Master of Divinity degree from Meadville Lombard Seminary and completed her preparation for Unitarian Universalist ministry. She will be ordained by the congregation of the UU Church of Ellsworth, Maine on June 1st. Amy and our friends of the Ellsworth UU congregation warmly and enthusiastically invite everyone from both Castine and Belfast UU congregations to come and celebrate with Amy.

Let's show up in full force and joy for this life-changing event in Amy's life and call to UU ministry.



*The Unitarian Universalist Church of Ellsworth  
Invites You to Join in Celebrating the Ordination of*

**Amy Renee Fiorilli**  
to the Unitarian Universalist Ministry

**Saturday, June 1, 2019**

**2:00 PM**

U.U. Church of Ellsworth  
121 Bucksport Road  
Ellsworth, Maine 04605  
Reception to Follow.



Artwork by Lisa Williams and Amy Thompson

## The Collaborative Ministry Team Film Night

### ALMOST SUNRISE

at the Alamo Theater, May 23, 5:30–8:30 p.m.  
5:30 social time, 6:00 film, discussion time following

*Almost Sunrise* is a story of resilience and recovery.



A feature-length documentary, the film follows two Iraq veterans, Tom Voss and Anthony Anderson, as they struggle with depression upon returning home from military service. Fearful of succumbing to the epidemic of veteran suicide, they both seek a lifeline and embark on a 2,700-mile walk across America as a way to confront their inner pain. The film captures an intimate portrait of two friends suffering from the unseen wounds of war as they discover an unlikely treatment: the restorative power of silence and meditation. A cinematic experience that juxtaposes the internal struggles of its characters against the wide-open spaces of America's heartland, *Almost Sunrise* is also the first film to explore "moral injury:" the profound shame that many veterans feel when their experiences of war violate their moral beliefs, and a possible critical factor in veteran suicide.

Our CMT Discussion will be facilitated by our own Reverend Al Boyce. Al has an interest and growing expertise in the subject and impact of moral injury.

Please plan to attend this important film and discussion – bring your friends. Donations to cover the cost of the screening and the theater rental will be gratefully received at the door.

## Reflections from Our Congregation

### Where Is Our Holy Church?

When I was growing up in heavily Catholic eastern Massachusetts in the 1940s, I tended to assume that “The Hunchback of Notre Dame” had something to do with college football. Only after I saw the classic Charles Laughton-Maureen O’Hara movie did I learn differently. Only later, as an adult, when I visited the cathedral for the first time, did I come to understand the cathedral’s importance for Catholics and Christians in general.

The Unitarian Universalist tradition has no comparable structure. We have no “holy church”, as the hymn on page 113 of our hymnal suggests. The hymn reflects the protestant rejection of catholic ritual: the belief that religious practice is a matter of the intellect rather than the emotions. No incense, no stained glass. (Some early hard-liners even rejected music.)

Instead, the author of the hymn suggests that buildings are not needed, so long as people of all classes and races, “in search of beauty, truth, and right” may gather together.

Like so many of us, Anne and I watched in horror last month’s Paris conflagration. Our family has visited the church at least twice, and the city itself far more often. It was, for me at least, an emotional moment that lasted well into the next day, and even as I type these words three weeks later. Why?

Unlike the tragedies of 9/11 in this country or the carnage that followed more recently in Sri Lanka, only one courageous French fire-fighter was injured. France is one of the most secular nations in Europe, yet thousands turned out in the twenty-four hours that followed to weep, pray, and sing. How do we account for this?



Photo from Wikimedia Commons.

It could be, as some have suggested, that Notre Dame de Paris is a symbol of France itself, not unlike our Statue of Liberty (ironically, a gift from France). But although we were not there, I have the suspicion that there were more than French Catholics among those keeping watch that day and night. To agnostics and atheists, to Buddhists and Baptists, Notre Dame de Paris remains a symbol of reassurance, of humanity’s capability to overcome disaster.

Lynn Parsons

## The Opportunity Column: Celebrating Success

*This column is a place for sharing the success stories of those who have struggled with poverty and have overcome obstacles to build a better future. The following is a story written by Barbara Norrie about her experiences.*

My earliest memory of childhood is of me standing on the back of a couch, as a toddler, acting as a buffer between my arguing parents. My mother is a Filipino immigrant, who came to the states when she married, before I was born, bringing along my half-sister from her native island of Sanaa. These fights, fortunately, didn't continue for long, as they decided to divorce by time I began Head Start.

My mother had primary custody, and I visited my father on the weekends, until early adolescence. My mother was 39 when I was born and my father was 49. Not only was there a huge cultural gap in the family, but there was a generational one as well. My sister is 17 years my senior, graduated from high school, enlisted in the Navy, and started her own family in Pennsylvania. My mother is a hard worker and loved me, but I suffered some physical abuse.

In 6th grade, I began to experiment with drugs and alcohol, after ironically winning a D.A.R.E. Drug Awareness essay contest in 5th grade. I managed to do well in school, but was rebellious at home. When the tension became unbearable I was passed back and forth between mom, dad, and my sister, labeled as a "problem child."

By my freshman year of high school, I'd become a runaway, and was sent to a group home for girls in Plymouth, Maine. In retrospect, I cannot say I blame either of my parents—I would have been at a loss too. I think my academic thirst was my only anchor during those years. I loved reading, writing, and learning in general. My afterschool exploits became more destructive.

The touchstone moment of my "fall from grace" was shortly after getting my Pharmacy Technician Certification and dropping out of New England School of Communications after attending for one semester.

I got into an extremely abusive and controlling relationship with the man who became the father of my first two children. I was heavily addicted to opiates and began using intravenously. The state stepped in when my oldest son was a year old. After I gave birth to my second son, my parental rights were terminated and my children were taken from me.



Without them, my womb and heart were empty. There was no fight left in me. I stayed in the abusive relationship, and tried to dull the pain with drugs. For years this went on and my addiction progressed. It took me further down the path self-destruction. When my sons' father went to jail, again. I decided that I would find a "nice-guy." I got pregnant by someone I'd considered a good friend for many years. I knew I would be under scrutiny by Child Protective Services (CPS), and decided to change my life, so I could at last become the mother and woman I was meant to be.

I relapsed in August of last year, and that was my "bottom." I began my journey to recovery at Open Door Recovery's Hill's House program—a residential treatment facility for pregnant and parenting women. I have been here with my youngest son Jeffrey for 9 months. I have also been clean for 9 months. My son and I are getting ready to move into a home of our own. I thank God every day for the gifts I'll be able to walk away with. I have my son and my sobriety, and I have found purpose in being a productive member of society again. My dream of being a journalist has been revived with my work as a special reporter for the Ellsworth American. I have a long road ahead, but with faith and determination, my story doesn't have to end here.

Barbara Norrie