



THE COMMON

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF CASTINE

May 2021

A Month of Sundays for May 2021

MAY 2nd

The Future of Our Faith Community, Part One
“And You Shall Dream Dreams”

Rev. Margaret Beckman

Juliane Gardner & Chris Poulin - Musicians

MAY 9th

The Future of Our Faith Community, Part Two
“Our Ministry of Philanthropy”

Rev. Margaret Beckman (and guests)

Colleen Fitzgerald - Musician

MAY 16th

Collaborative Worship Service —

Savoring and Serving

Guest Worship leader -

Rev. Mariela Pérez-Simons

Covenant Release Ceremony

with Collaborative Ministry Intern

Bettina Lehovec

Just as seeds need soil and rain, our souls need nurture to grow into our best selves. What helps us to flourish and what gets in the way? Rev. Perez-Simons will share her theological framework: Savoring and Serving as a way of healing ourselves and the planet, as a spiritual practice, as a social responsibility, as a way of honoring the life-force that moves through us and calls us to give back generously to the whole web of life.

MAY 23rd

Our Half-time Ministerial Intern, Vanessa Williams, will lead our worship. This is her final time with us in her present role. In September, Vanessa returns as the Full-time Collaborative Ministry Intern.

Colleen Fitzgerald - Musician

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.

Lakeside Reflections, May 2021



“As the energy that arose during the spring equinox builds, the wheel of the year moves to the “cross quarter” (<https://www.pagangrimoire.com/wheel-of-the-year/>) holiday known as Beltane or May Day. The festive holiday marks the beginning of summer. Beltane falls halfway between the spring equinox (<https://www.pagangrimoire.com/ostara-celebrate/>) and the summer solstice on May 1st in the Northern hemisphere.” (<https://www.pagangrimoire.com/what-is-beltane-celebrate/>)

Earlier this year, several of us gathered on zoom for a book discussion group facilitated by our Ministerial Intern, Vanessa Williams, and our Lifespan Faith Development Specialist, Jessica Rollerson. Our book was **Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times** by Katherine May (Riverhead Books; 1st edition. November 10, 2020). The author recounted her experience visiting Stonehenge at the winter solstice and her conversation with a Druid, one of the celebrants. One element of that discussion – and our book group discussion too – was the potential value of ritual and celebration on a six-week rotation. Of course, most of are well familiar with the four major earth-based holidays: Winter and Summer Solstices and the Autumnal and Spring Equinoxes – each measuring a three-month season. We are less familiar with the “cross quarter” holidays: Samhain, Imbolc, Beltane and Lughnasadh that fall midway between the four major holidays.

One of the purposes of ritual is the intentional marking of the passages of our lives. When we observe a ritual, we pause, we slow down, we notice, we express gratitude for all that the moment provides. Perhaps as Unitarian

Universalists, our rational self overshadows our spiritual self too often for our own good. The Druid at Stonehenge invited Katherine May (and us) to let go of the rational in favor of the deeply spiritual; to slow down and rest and observe and give thanks – every six weeks or so. Whatever happens in our lives, sometimes we need a small or large ‘reset.’ If we are in a less happy time – no problem, the wheel turns in less than six weeks. If we are in a more happy time – no problem, we don’t need to expend the extra energy of happiness forever, just until the next turn of the wheel. In Pagan religious and spiritual practice, each of the eight holidays that mark the turning of wheel has special meaning and practices to accompany the season and the energy of that point of the earth’s trip around the sun. We may not need or want to become intimate with the specifics of Pagan ritual and practice, though there is strong merit there, to gain a benefit from creating our own ritual of pause that is a reset and an acknowledgement of the turning of the wheel in our lives. Pause. Slow down. Observe. Give Thanks. Resume with renewed spiritual health.



Happy May Day! Happy Beltane! Happy Spring finally coming to New England and the promise of Summer becoming real! May you pause and celebrate and dance and make merry and give thanks for all that is our lives.

Namaste, *Margaret*

For more information about Beltane, consult your Google sources. Here is a good one: <https://beltane.org/about-beltane/>

From Your Collaborative Intern

Dear People of the Belfast, Ellsworth and Castine Congregations,

It is time to say goodbye. I feel tears pricking my eyelids as I type these words. Yet we know this is part of the internship journey — making connections, sharing for this little bit of time, and letting go.

What a year it has been! I arrived in the midst of pandemic lockdown and will leave just as things are opening again. I've met a few of you at outdoor work days and hikes, but the vast majority of our relating has been over Zoom. We have been delighted, together, to discover the strengths of this online platform. The level of intimacy that is possible in our little squares. The vibrant worship services. The inclusivity of online worship.

And we have grieved, together, the lives lost to the pandemic, the emotional toll of social distance, the ravages of police violence and unnecessary Black deaths. We've worked to open our minds and hearts, challenging one another to grow in our awareness of racial inequity, classism, and white privilege.

You have formed and shaped me as a minister and a person. In small groups and classes, in board/council and committee meetings, in worship planning and social action, in fundraisers and stewardship drives, you have taught me what it means to be a community of faith.

You have opened your hearts and welcomed me with generosity and kindness. Your encouraging words, your inspiring examples, the lessons learned, go with me. I will call on those in future times of doubt. I will remember your faces, shining so brightly over Zoom, and hold tight to the love that we have shared.

I hope you take my love and care with you, too.

I leave you with this blessing from the Irish poet John O'Donahue. It seems just right, read back and forth, a blessing for you and a blessing for me, a kind of covenant we make together even as we say goodbye.

For Celebration

**Now is the time to free the heart,
Let all intentions and worries stop,
Free the joy inside the self,
Awaken to the wonder of your life.**

**Open your eyes and see the friends
Whose hearts recognize your face as kin,
Those whose kindness watchful and near,
Encourages you to live everything here.**

**See the gifts [this year has] given,
Things your effort could never earn,
The health to enjoy who you want to be
And the mind to mirror the mystery.**

With love,
Bettina



Collaborative News from Your CMT

Join us on May 16 for our last collaborative service of the year. We'll release our intern, Bettina Lehovet, from covenant, and celebrate our bonds as collaborating congregations.

Special guest worship leader Reverend Mariela Pérez-Simons will speak to us about "Savoring and Serving Life."

Mariela says: "Savoring and Serving is a theological and social framework to help us find a healing balance in life. Savoring and Serving as a way of healing ourselves and the planet, as a spiritual practice, as a social responsibility, as a way of honoring the life-force that moves through us and to give back generously to the whole web of life."

Rev. Mariela Pérez-Simons (she/her) is a Cuban-American UU minister who teaches about religious naturalism, soul, social change, and emotional intelligence. Rev. Mariela was born and grew up in Cuba under a dictatorship at a

time when religion was forbidden, which instilled in her a commitment to the freedom of individuals to seek truth and meaning on their own terms and create change in the world. She and her family became political refugees in the United States in 1995. Rev. Mariela earned a Masters of Divinity from Meadville Lombard Theological School where she received the Charles Billings Prize in Preaching (given to a graduating student for excellence in preaching) and The Faculty Prize for Religious Leadership (given to a graduating student whose tenure at Meadville embodies the values of liberal religious ministry.) Her website is www.revmariaela.com



Your Collaborative Ministry Team

Ferry Beach 2021!

Ferry Beach dates have been booked for 2021. Join folks from our sister congregations in Belfast and Ellsworth for a fun, rejuvenating time together, Tuesday through Friday, August 24-27th. Spots are still being limited due to Covid precautions. We are allowed 10 attendees at this time (with a waiting list if necessary) though that may be increased in a few weeks. If you want to register please reach out to Rev. Margaret Beckman for a registration form and more details minister@uucastine.org. Hope to see you on the Beach!

Religious Education

Hello Friends!

It feels like the world is beginning to turn again! Folks are getting vaccinated and some are feeling anxious to gather together. Others are watching the number in Maine and feeling just fine staying safely at home. I would like to know how the parents of our RE children are feeling. If you would, please email me and tell me, what would you like to see happen this summer? Will your child join us if we meet in person? What would you need in order for that to feel safe? My email address is jessicarollerson01@gmail.com.

Jessica Rollerson

Designing the Future of Our Faith Community A New Parish House

Come one and all to a special informational session on Zoom to imagine our future!

We will look at early concept drawings for a possible new Parish House!

Sunday, May 2nd after the morning service and “coffee hour” time – just stay on zoom or join the zoom meeting at 11:30 a.m. (Zoom Invitation and link is below)

We will talk about why a new Parish House will better serve our congregation’s needs both now and in the future.

We will talk about the concept drawings that bring us into a more visual understanding of what is possible.

We will discuss advantages and concerns that people bring up.

We will ask that everyone maintain an open mind and share their thoughts and feelings.

There will be other times to share information and have conversations during May.

We will schedule a formal congregational meeting later in May so we can decide together next steps and seek approval to fund requirements to get ready for any plans that are accepted for a Parish House project later this year or 2022.

Click on the link below to download and open the concept drawings (it’s a pdf. that you can open and read and/or print)

[Architect’s concept drawings](#)

https://mcusercontent.com/d90041a4b7b2b9f2067776e69/files/d7c0e0d6-b2c4-48da-8099-8dc9b2acf22a/UUCC.PARISH.HOUSE.12APR2021.COMBINED_COLOR_4_15_2021.pdf

To attend this information session, just plan to remain in the Sunday morning ZOOM space after the worship service.

OR

Join the ZOOM space at 11:30 using the same zoom link as we do for the morning service.

Here it is Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83288766157?pwd=Z0ZhTzFadHkrZ3ZjSXBsUENkQ3loZz09>

Meeting ID: 832 8876 6157

Passcode: 284299

Dial by your location

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