

Weekly E-Blast

Unitarian Universalist Community Church

Wednesday, March 24, 2021

Upcoming Services

Worship Themes: March = **COMMITMENT**

April = **BECOMING**

What does it mean to be a people of Commitment?

<p>THIS Sunday March 28, 2021 10:00 a.m. via Zoom</p>	<p>With sadness we share the news that Monique McAuliffe's aunt and best friend, Virginia Marriner has entered Gosnell Hospice in Scarborough. She has been a constant presence of love and grace in their family's life.</p> <p>Monique will no longer be leading service this Sunday. Please do take a minute to send her light and love as she journeys with Virginia to her final resting place. Cards may be sent to Monique McAuliffe, UUCC, P. O. Box 8, Augusta, ME 04332-0008.</p> <p>For service this Sunday the UUCC congregation is invited to visit the First Universalist Church of Auburn. Rev. Jodi Hayashida is prepared for our arrival. Rev. Jodi will be drawing on themes of Passover and Palm Sunday to weave a message relevant to our lives as Unitarian Universalists.</p> <p>March 28, 2021 @ 10:00 am – 11:00 am https://zoom.us/j/95268301718?pwd=NW9YZ3E0N09vSVJ0VXY1ZWl3dlk4QT09 Meeting ID: 952 6830 1718 Password: 165871 One tap mobile: +19294362866,,95268301718# US (New York) Dial by your location: +1 929 436 2866 US (New York)</p>
<p>NEXT Sunday April 4, 2021 10:00 a.m. via Zoom</p>	<p><u>A Theology of Rising Up</u> - Rev. Carie Johnsen and Monique McAuliffe</p> <p>Susan Burnett and Sarah Hodgkins will serve as worship associates. Special Music: Jesus Christ has Risen Today.</p> <p>Join us for this Easter Sunday celebration. We will explore the human response to rise over and over again resilient and wise through the stories of Jesus—humanitarian, activist, truth teller.</p>

UCC Sunday services and all virtual other events (unless noted) are held in the
UCC ZOOM ROOM ← ← click this UPDATED LINK to join

Other ways to join Zoom:

1. **Join from your internet browser by clicking this link or typing this into your browser:**
<https://zoom.us/j/8238070673>, launch Zoom, then enter **passcode: 6971**
2. **Select “Join Meeting” from the Zoom application on your computer or mobile device.**

UCC Meeting ID: 823 807 0673 – then enter **passcode: 6971**

3. **Join by phone:** dial 1 646 558 8656 (NOTE: toll charge may apply)

At first prompt (meeting id: 823 807 0673#)

At second prompt: press # (no personal id needed) <No passcode needed when joining by phone>

NOTE---*6 is mute AND un-mute on your phone. The host cannot mute or un-mute people who phone-in.

HOSTS: Once in your meeting, claim the host using the HOST KEY as you have done in the past.

Virtual Connections

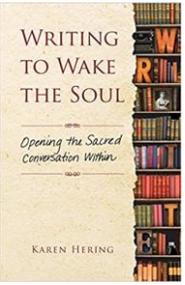
Goddess/Earth Circles Sunday, March 28, 2021, 1:00-2:30 PM via Zoom

Meet Changing Woman: Change and Growth is all there is!

With the Navajo tradition, we visit the cycles of our lives with wisdom from experience and anticipation from reflection. This blends with the celebration of Spring Equinox.

Weekly Events

<p><u>Monday</u> <u>Each week</u> <u>2:00 – 3:30</u> <u>p.m.</u></p>	<p align="center"><u>Read Aloud & Discussion</u></p> <p>The Monday afternoon reading and discussion group has changed our process. We have chosen to have each person who joins us, and who wishes to, bring a poem, an article, a book excerpt with something in it to spark a discussion. What has grabbed your attention or what is something you are wondering about? Our discussions are always lively and interesting. Join in! FMI: admin@augustauu.org</p> <p align="center"><i>UCC ZOOM ROOM</i> (← click this link OR see above for other ways to join)</p>
<p><u>Monday</u> <u>Each week</u> <u>6:30 – 8:00</u> <u>p.m.</u></p>	<p align="center"><u>Peaceful Heart Sangha</u></p> <p align="center">You may join us at 6:15 to settle in.</p> <p>The login and password information has changed. Please contact Marty Soule for updated login information at email martysoule@gmail.com. FMI: peacefulheartsangha@gmail.com</p> 

<p><u>Tuesday</u></p> <p><u>5:00 – 6:15</u> <u>p.m.</u></p> <p><u>LAST SESSION next week – Ends March 30th</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Winter Meditations with Rev. Carie</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">The last session of this program meets NEXT TUESDAY, March 30th. We will <u>begin at 5:00 p.m.</u> next week (instead of our normal start time of 5:30)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5:00 - 6:15 in the UCC Zoom Room</p> <p>After this last session, we encourage people to meditate in the open air with spring.</p> <p>Drawing from <u>An Almanac for the Soul: Anthology of Hope</u>, by Marc and Nancy Hiles, Rev. Carie will facilitate a weekly 20 minute guided and silent meditation. Participants will be invited to stay for an optional time of shared reflections. Rev. Carie will alternate hosting from sanctuary and home chapel. On occasions the meditation may be prerecorded. The mediation (not discussion) will be recorded and made available on the UCC Facebook page. Copyright permission obtained.</p> <p>The link to the Tuesday, March 23, 2021 meditation is below: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Czu7F0p7S7bO_HmDSel7z_w-cdhsdKa5/view?usp=sharing</p>
<p><u>Wednesdays</u> <u>Each Week</u> <u>5:00 – 6:00</u> <u>p.m.</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Gentle YOGA</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hosted by Debbie Mattson</p> <p>Please join us a few minutes before 5:00 to settle in so we can begin our class right at 5:00 p.m. Zoom Login: Click link below to join. https://maine.zoom.us/j/95825651125?pwd=UWJpOVFjVFJGb3dMWmZoOTRXa3VoUT09 Password 174192 - FMI: DebbieMattson@hotmail.com</p> 
<p><u>Thursdays</u> <u>Each Week</u> <u>8:00 – 9:30</u> <u>a.m.</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Peaceful Heart Sangha</u></p> <p>You may join us at 7:45 a.m. to settle in. Meet from 8-9:30</p>  <p>The login and password information has changed. Please contact Marty Soule for updated login information at martysoule@gmail.com. FMI: peacefulheartsangha@gmail.com</p>
<p><u>Every Other Thursday</u></p> <p><u>9:00 – 10:30</u> <u>a.m.</u></p>	<p><i>Writing to Wake the Soul</i> Every OTHER Thursday morning -- 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.</p>  <p>This is an open group and if you would like to participate in this event, please contact Debbie Mattson (debbiemattson@hotmail.com) for the login/passcode information. Hosting of this event is shared and zoom link changes week to week.</p> <p>We gather and write together to explore spiritual themes. The writing is used as a conveyance to connect more deeply with ourselves and each other. We are not writing to develop skill. Come and try it out; there is no obligation to come each time we gather.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>PLEASE NOTE: This group will now meet EVERY OTHER Thursday (instead of every Thursday). Upcoming meetings are scheduled on 3/25, 4/8 and 4/22.</u></p>

ALL church events and meetings are reflected on the UUCC calendar
Click below to view ALL events, including any group meetings or other business meetings.

<https://www.augustauu.org/calendar-and-communications/>

Notices



ONLINE AUCTION OPENS FRIDAY!

First, create your personal login here: <https://www.32auctions.com/users/new>

YOU'VE WAITED ALL WINTER!

Our week-long bidding begins at 6 a.m., Friday, March 26.

Please send this update to all your friends and family and tell them to get ready for a fun week of bidding!

The auction fundraiser will close at 5 p.m., Friday, April 2.

If all you want to do is look at the items for now, you can peek here: <https://www.32auctions.com/AuctionLink2021>

You will receive an email with a total of the items you won, and the amount you owe UUCC. We will give you your winnings on Saturday, April 3, at 10 a.m. Please come early to respect the volunteers. Cash, check or credit card (NO additional fee) will be accepted.

NOTE: To prevent online bidders from "stealing" their favorite item at the very last minute, our auction allows for three extra minutes of bidding, after 5 p.m. on April 2, to allow for everyone to increase their bid, too. However, when the highest bid remains the same for another three minutes, with no more activity, the bidding ends.

Contact Catherine Palmer at 207.458.7384, palmercatherinemaine@gmail.com
or Hannah Faulkner at 207.485.4335 (hannahbfaulkner@gmail.com)



Stickered CLYNK bags are available at the front of the church building.
Help support the church by dropping your bagged returnable bottles and cans to Hannaford.

So What is Square UP? How does it work?

During a typical worship service in the UUCC sanctuary, there is a time during which “the plate is passed” to collect donations of pledges, checks, and other offerings. It demonstrates our support of the financial needs for the church to live its mission in the world.

During a ZOOM worship service there is also an opportunity for those present to donate an offering to add to the financial resources of UUCC. One way to do this is to send a check to the church (with “offering” noted in the memo line). Another way is to use the Square Up option to use your credit card to complete a donation. There is a link to this option in the chat box during the service. When you click on the link it will take you to the site where you can donate to UUCC. Catherine Palmer is notified of the amount of the offering, but not the person who made it. She then lets the treasurer know of the amount to add to the operating account. One difference with this method is that there is not a way to add any offering you make to your yearly record of church charitable donations. You would need to keep track of this with your credit card statement for tax purposes. Thank you for considering this additional option to financially support UUCC.

News about the search for the UUCC Interim Minister

Our Interim Minister search started with the development of a Search Committee. The Committee exists of three board members and two congregants (see below). They will work with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Transition Office to review and interview candidates from the region and beyond. A comprehensive application is submitted by the Committee to the Transition Office by April 22nd, after which interested candidates are presented to the Committee for review. The finalists are ultimately interviewed to begin on August 1st for a term of two-years.

Interim Minister Search Committee Members:

1. Harold Burnett, Congregant
2. Terry Lee Cookson, Board Member, COVID-19 Task Force member
3. Dennis Maddi, Congregant
4. Kathy Ann Shaw, Board President,
5. Jill Watson, Board Member (former Board President)

Questions? Please contact Kathy Ann Shaw, board President at kathyannshaw@roadrunner.com.

EMBODY OUR PRINCIPLES WITH MUUSAN

Since before this legislative session even started, MUUSAN and the League of Women Voters have been on a mission to pass one of the most important voting rights bills: ONLINE VOTER REGISTRATION. The public hearing for this bill, also known as LD 1126 was just announced for MONDAY APRIL 5 at 10:00 AM.

Online voter registration is a safe, efficient and convenient way for eligible individuals to register to vote. It’s time for Maine to join the 40 other states that use online voter registration, but we need your help to make this a reality.

CONTACT your legislator. Use www.MUUSAN.org to find contact information for your State Senator and Representative and urge them to support LD1126. It only takes a few minutes to send an email.

TESTIFY at the public hearing. Doing so lets your legislators know how important this issue is to you. For tips on writing and presenting testimony, contact Sue Ellen Bordwell from the Yarmouth UU Church at:sevordwell@gmail.com

PHONE BANK with us. On THURSDAY MARCH 25 we'll be calling supporters encouraging them to contact their legislators to ask for their support for LD 1126. Sign up through the League website: www.lwvme.org.

For more information, contact Michaela Loisel (michaelatloisel@gmail.com) or Kathy Kellison (kell6787@gmail.com).

FREE BOOKS

UCC/Minister FREE Books - Come to browse. Fill a bag or two to take home. With the activity of reorganizing spaces and Rev. Carie's leave taking, an abundance of books have been shelved in the minister's study. We hope you will take the opportunity to browse the shelves and take home one or two to ten or boxes of books to supply your summer and winter reading shelves.

The books include:

- Books that have been a treasured part of UCC over the years.
- Historic Religious Exploration materials, UU writings and material.
- Contributions from Rev. Carie's library

With Covid restrictions, we are asking folks to reserve time on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday from 9-4. You can come in your family pod or alone to browse the library. Contact Lynn Smith to reserve your time: 207-622-3232 admin@augustauu.org> Masks are required. Bring your own bag please.

If you need an evening or weekend time, please contact Rev. Carie (508-221-5295 revcariejohnsen@gmail.com) or Helen Zidowecki (582-5308, hzmre@hzmre.com) to set an appointment.

The Free Library will open on March 30th. We will close the library on April 16th. All remaining books will be donated to the Kennebec Historical Society for their annual book sale.

Board of Trustees

Questions and Answers from Zoom Meeting "What's On Your Mind" held on March 7, 2021

Q: What's next in finding a new minister?

Answer: a committee comprised of board and congregational members has been developed and is working to the UUA Transition Team to welcome a 2-year Interim Minister in the Fall. A full description of the process including a list of the committee members, was outlined in the last eBLAST and is repeated here as well. A participant thanked the Board for including that information.

Q: Is there a list of volunteer tasks for the renovation plans toward reopening the church campus?

Answer: There is a list of projects area by area that can be made available and will be shared in the next newsletter. Work groups will be limited to two people/area due to COVID concerns.

Q: What's happening with the historical Ballard Trust stained glass window?

Answer: We are exploring a light box, and that there will be a ceremony to share the importance of the Ballard's contribution. It was mentioned that Brunswick uses light boxes for the windows salvaged after a fire and they might be a useful resource.

Q: When is the next "What's on Your Mind" zoom meeting with board members?

Answer: April 11 (please note that this is *not* the standard first Sunday of the month because that is Easter), at the church zoom room

Comment: There was "an amazement" expressed about how close we are in so many ways even though we can't be together and gratitude for people hanging in there, and for the Board opening the door a little wider.



So, What's On Your Mind?

The UCC Board wants to hear what you are thinking, your ideas, your concerns, your suggestions about how UCC is doing. Please join board members on the first Sunday of the month right after the church service to talk about this.

We will meet again on April 11th at 11:30-12:30 on the ZOOM church site.

Do you have questions about how UCC operates? Do you wonder "Why?" about something? Are there things you would like to learn more about? Bring all this and what you want to discuss with board members.

We will not be making decisions during these times, but will listen intently and take all comments and ideas back to the board. See you there!

Board Highlights: At the March 11, 2021 meeting the Board:

- Heard from the treasurer that the annual appeal raised \$11,896.00, including the \$5000.00 anonymous matching gift.
- Approved the final copy of the stewardship letter to be sent this week.
- Accepted a gift of two heat pumps and their installation from Hal Booth with gratitude.
- Voted to proceed with hiring Bettina Lahovec of Belfast to be our contract minister to lead Sunday worship between Rev. Carie's departure and the arrival of our interim minister.
- Discussed technology needs connected to returning to use of our church buildings.
- Voted to accept the report of the personnel work group creating a job description for the Coordinator of Lifespan Faith Formation.
- Heard a report of the renovation work underway in our buildings.

A message from our COVID-19 Advisory Group

<Reprint from 3/17>

Despite today's sub-zero wind chill, spring is just around the corner. Within our church community there is a lot of energy and activity directed toward preparing our facilities for the day when we can return to in-person gatherings. It has now been one full year since the pandemic was declared and Maine saw its first case of COVID-19. On March 13th the COVID-19 Advisory Group met via Zoom to take stock of where we are and where we need to go to maintain everyone's safety. In order to better align our meeting schedule with that of the church Board, we decided to change our monthly meeting to the first Wednesday evening each month at 5:00 PM.

Maine has done a far better job controlling the virus than most states. However, we have still recorded over 47,000 cases of COVID-19 and 725 of our neighbors have died as a result of this infection. As of March 12th, the number of new cases of COVID in Kennebec county was 32 per 10,000 people. This is dramatically better than the peak in January, but still 4 times higher than the metric we set for small groups to meet indoors. We will continue utilizing this metric to guide our recommendations on when it will be safe for us to allow small groups to begin meeting indoors. As the weather warms up, small groups certainly may resume meeting outdoors behind the Judd House.

Every day, our medical and scientific knowledge about COVID-19 increases dramatically. This allows us to refine and sometimes completely change our recommendations about what we all need to do to remain safe and protect others from this virus. We now know for certain that this disease spreads by breathing in the virus from the air, not from touching a contaminated object. According to Dr. Nirav Shah of the Maine CDC, with over one year of experience with COVID-19, there have been **NO (NONE, ZERO) DOCUMENTED CASES OF PEOPLE BECOMING INFECTED BY TOUCHING CONTAMINATED SURFACES**. With this knowledge, the COVID-19 Advisory Group is **REMOVING** the requirements that individuals or groups entering church facilities must disinfect all surfaces before and after using indoor spaces.

The brightest news regarding COVID-19 is the arrival of three (3) highly effective and extraordinarily safe vaccines. As of this writing, 24% of Maine's population has received at least one shot of COVID-19 immunization and the vaccine supply is getting larger and more robust. We realize that many people have struggled to find a way to get immunized. Three (3) helpful phone numbers for accessing immunization clinics are:

- (833) 633-0808
- (877) 780-7545
- (207) 204-8551 (Be advised that this is not a toll-free number.)

We urge anyone who continues to have problems signing up for their COVID-19 immunizations to contact Rev. Carie and we will find ways to help you get your shots.

The question was raised about utilizing proof of immunization (so called "immunization passports") as a way to allow small groups to begin meeting indoors before the Maine CDC metrics reach our established thresholds. There was a lot of discussion about this topic. The most troubling issue centered upon the lack of equity in such a plan. It clearly excludes people who have been unable to access immunization or who cannot be immunized for a variety of reasons. The Advisory Group recommended that the church Board is the appropriate venue for this discussion and referred the question to them.

Please stay safe, keep wearing your masks when out in public spaces and maintain that six (6) foot physical distance when in groups.

--- The COVID-19 Advisory Group

Dr. Don on COVID-19 COVID Vaccine Myths and Misinformation (Suggested by several)

There is more myth and misinformation than I had anticipated; this is the second (of three?) articles.

3. **MYTH:** The COVID-19 vaccine has frequent serious side effects.

THE FACTS: The COVID-19 vaccine can have side effects. Except for a rare few, the overwhelming majority are very short term and not serious or dangerous. Most vaccine recipients experience pain where they were injected, some have body aches, headaches or fever for a day or two.

The main concerning side effect have been those very rare cases of severe allergic reaction, or anaphylaxis after vaccination. This has occurred only in a small number of cases — 11 cases per million doses administered for the Pfizer vaccine and 2.5 cases per million doses administered for the Moderna vaccine. “This is slightly more common than is seen with the flu vaccine,” Houston Methodist Chief Academic Officer Dr. Dirk Sostman said. However, “these reactions can be treated and there are no reports of anyone dying from them.”

As a precaution, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people who have previously had a severe allergic reaction or an immediate allergic reaction to any vaccine ingredient not get that vaccine. Individuals who have had other kinds of severe allergic reactions should be monitored by vaccination site staff for at least 30 minutes after vaccination. As many of you know, everyone vaccinated is being monitored for at least 15 minutes.

4. **MYTH:** If you don't have a reaction to the vaccine, it's not working.

THE FACTS: Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are quite “reactogenic” meaning they stimulate a strong immune response that can cause temporary but uncomfortable sore arms, fevers, chills, and headaches. In some, second doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccination series are causing stronger reactions and more side effects than the initial dose. This may be a concern not only for those experiencing side effects, but also in those worried a COVID-19 vaccine isn't working because they didn't have a reaction.

Dr. Gregory Poland, an infectious diseases expert and head of Mayo Clinic's Vaccine Research Group, reminds us that everybody is different. “Each of our bodies releases different amounts of chemicals, or immune signals. One body might release more than what's needed, causing more of a response, and someone else's body might release exactly the right amount. It's an indication that your body is revved up, prepared to do battle against what it thinks is a foreign invader.” If people have less of a reaction, it does not mean they aren't developing an immune response, Dr. Poland emphasizes.

5. **MYTH:** The COVID-19 vaccine contains controversial substances.

THE FACTS: The first two COVID-19 vaccines to be authorized by the FDA contain mRNA and other, normal vaccine ingredients, such as fats (which protect the mRNA), salts to stabilize vaccine pH, as well as a small amount of sugar to aid in vaccine preservation. These COVID-19 vaccines were not developed using fetal tissue, and they do not contain any other materials, such as implants, microchips or tracking devices. The same is true of the J & J vaccine which contains non-infectious viral DNA instead of mRNA.

6. **MYTH:** Now that we have a vaccine for COVID-19, we can make vaccines for the common cold, HIV and other diseases.

THE FACTS: The thousands of viruses that cause various diseases are very different. Many, like the influenza viruses change (mutate) year by year, making it difficult to develop one vaccine that works for a long period of time. The common cold can be caused by any one of hundreds of different viruses, so a vaccine for just one of them would not be very effective.

Developing vaccines for some disease-causing viruses is tough. For example, the viruses that cause HIV can become dormant and hide in our cells making them undetectable by the immune system, which makes creating a vaccine extremely difficult.

More Myths to be considered: the COVID-19 vaccine can affect women's fertility; if I've already had COVID-19, I don't need a vaccine; researchers rushed the development of the COVID-19 vaccine, so it cannot be trusted; getting the COVID-19 vaccine means I can stop wearing my mask and taking coronavirus precautions (and more??).

Send your questions, comments or suggestions to naber@zwi.net

Ad-hoc Covid-19 Advisory Group

This group has generously volunteered to be available to support members with personal safety, health or travel questions, concerns, or anxieties. Feel free to reach out to one of them directly.

Betty Cairn, RN	StonehengeMaine@yahoo.com	207-215-6394
Terry Lee Cairn, ND, MSOM, Lac.	tlcnaturalhealth@yahoo.com	207-557-2557
Harry Grimmnitz, MD	hgrimmnitz@gmail.com	207-685-9270
Don Naber, Ed.D	naber@zwi.net	207-887-1104
Cathie Nielsen, MD	cathieenielsen@gmail.com	207-441-0248
Marty Soule, PA-C	martysoule@gmail.com	207-685-9270

UUCC Pastoral Ministry Team

We are here for you. Feel free to reach out in times of need for compassionate listening, for casual conversation, to share some good news, to share your struggle or just to say hello.

Rev. Carie Johnsen, Minister	508-221-5295 (c)	revcariejohnsen@gmail.com
Martha Pelletier, Chair	207-685-9592 (H)	Mjpell14@roadrunner.com
Helen Zidowecki	207-582-5308 (h)	hzmre@hzmre.com
Tracy McNaughton	207-623-3110 (h)	

Caring Cooperative support includes rides, meals, errands, get well and condolence cards as well as companion visits.

If you would like to request or suggest meal support: contact Martha Pelletier 685-9592.

If you would like to request or suggest cards: Contact Angie Blevins, 592-5655



UUC Small Group Ministry

Looking for greater human and spiritual connection during this most disconnected of times? Small Group Ministry offers this vital need in our spiritual community, and so much more! For more information, contact Michael Conley at 207-248-7948 or at estherpearl67@gmail.com.

UUC Office Hours – NEXT WEEK

UUC Administrator Hours

Tues, Wed & Thurs. 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Church Administrator: Lynn M. Smith,
admin@augustauu.org or 622-3232

Rev. Carie

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS

If you would like to schedule a visit, appointment or meeting with Rev. Carie, please call (508) 221-5295 or use her local # (207) 623-3663 (both lines will reach her!) or email her at RevCarieJohnsen@gmail.com.

She is happy to meet outdoors, by phone, or zoom.

Staff Contact information:

Church Administrator, Lynn M. Smith, admin@augustauu.org, Phone 622-3232

Coordinator of Lifespan Faith Formation, Monique McAuliffe, LifespanFF@augustauu.org

Music Director, Bridget Convey, musicdirector@augustauu.org