



# Parish Messenger

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick

October, 2020

### A Word from Our Interim Minister



*It is a serious thing just to be alive on this fresh morning in this broken world.”*  
— Mary Oliver

Transitions are hard, aren't they? A few weeks ago, I finally took the roof box off my car, a signal that I was here and ready to settle in. But my phone GPS kept telling me how long it would take for me to get "home" if I left right now.... 2 hours and 22 minutes to Northborough.... Yes, it is creepy that our phones know where we've been and where we go, but it's also a marker of this shift. Now when I get in my car, my phone tells me how long it will take for me to get to 1 Middle Street, Brunswick or back to my place on Brookmere Way. My phone

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### HOW TO REACH Us

The Unitarian Universalist  
Church of Brunswick  
(mail) PO Box 129  
Brunswick ME 04011

1 Middle Street, Brunswick  
(207) 729-8515

UUBrunswick@awi.net

Rev. Justine Sullivan,  
Interim Minister

Shirley Bernier,  
Office Administrator

The Church Office remains  
closed until further notice.

Shirley is reachable via email  
and will respond .

If the church reopens, office  
hours will be Tues. through  
Thurs. from 10-4

### Sunday Services in October

**Oct. 4 — UU The Vote:** Leaders from our UUA will share a worship service to inspire us all to get out the vote!

**Oct. 11 – Wider Wisdom: Listening to Indigenous Voices** An Indigenous People's Day service organized and presented by members of Midcoast Indigenous Awareness Group (MIAG).

**Oct. 18 — Cherishing our LGBTQIA+ Members:** A Love of Language or a Language of Love - Rev. Justine Sullivan will lead a service acknowledging the ongoing struggle for rights and recognition for lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA) people.

**Oct. 25 Samhain and Halloween:** Rev. Justine Sullivan will lead us in a celebration of Samhain and Halloween, marking the fall harvest and the time half way between the autumn and winter equinoxes.



MIDCOAST  
INDIGENOUS  
AWARENESS  
GROUP

Online Worship Services Every Sunday followed by the virtual Coffee Hour go to [www.uubrunswick.org](http://www.uubrunswick.org) and select "Online Worship" or go directly to [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search "UUCB Brunswick Service"

## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

### Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick

#### STAFF

Rev. Justine Sullivan,  
Interim Minister

Rev. Sylvia Stocker,  
Minister Emerita

Toben Cooney-Callnan,  
Acting Dir. of  
Religious Exploration

Stephanie Bernier,  
Music Coordinator

Heidi Neufeld,  
Choir Director

Shirley Bernier,  
Office Administrator

Tony & Mary Sulkoski,  
Sextons

**Copy deadline for the  
November PARISH  
MESSENGER -  
Saturday, October 24**



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knows that I am here now, that this is my new reference point, home base. And it feels good to have arrived and to be still arriving, still learning your names, hearing your stories. I worry that once we meet in person and our masks can come off, I may need to hear your names again, but that's a challenge I'll gladly tackle when the time comes. And it will, dear ones, there will come a time when we can all be together again.

I know that outside it feels like the world is crumbling around our ears. Fires and floods, violence and heart-break, and a global pandemic that has taken over 200,000 lives here in the United States - a death toll difficult to comprehend. And all of this, all of this loss and devastation being spun by those who are supposed to be leading and caring for us - for political gain, fanning the flames to raise our fears at a time when calm, decisive action is what is needed. So we must care for one another - as you all do so beautifully - and use our voices and every tool at our disposal in this fragile republic of ours to let

our leaders know that we expect more from them, that we elected them to protect and defend our Constitution and to help create a more perfect union. On Sunday, October 4th our worship service will be offered by "UU the Vote," a national program offered by our UUA. This is the time to make our voices heard and to exercise our most precious right, the right to vote.

We've had some cold evenings and chilly mornings here in Maine, and I expect that soon we will see fall color in the trees, something I missed while living in the South for the past two years. Transitions are hard, letting go of what was, without being sure of what will come next. And yet there is also beauty, beauty in discovering what is new and finding again that which is eternal and familiar, like the leaves of autumn and the frosty blades of grass. Let us continue. I remain grateful for your warm welcome, and I look forward to spending time with all of you - in all the ways available to us.

*In faith and service,  
Justine*

### Religious Exploration Is Back!

On Sunday September 20th the RE Program had its first in person gathering since February. Families came together for a story and Nature Walk at Crystal Spring Farms. It was a great turnout and an absolute pleasure to watch kids, parents, and teachers play together and reconnect (even if it was from behind a mask six feet away). The power of being in Nature together while we strengthen our connections in these uncertain times was definitely palpable at Sunday's event. The RE

Committee and I hope to offer as many of these socially distant outdoor activities as possible while the weather welcomes them. We will also continue to offer Zoom Meetings to nurture our connections even when our hearts can't be in the same physical space together. Thanks to everyone who participated for making the start of the year such a fun and heartwarming experience!

*In Faith,  
Toben*

## CONGREGATIONAL HEART BEAT

We received the following joys, sorrows, and concerns at the Pastoral Care Associates' email address: [uucbjoyandsorrows@gmail.com](mailto:uucbjoyandsorrows@gmail.com). As you know, we do not include joys and sorrows in our on-line services, as we do not want to share people's personal information in such a public place. However, we will continue to share news here, in the Parish Messenger.

### Joys

Julie and Doug Dahmer are thrilled to be first time grandparents! Livi Marie Dahmer was born on September 10 to son Derek and daughter-in-law Marian. We are grateful for the internet, which will allow us to "visit" with everyone until it is safe to fly to the west coast. .

### Sorrows and Concerns

We continue to hold Steve Wellcome in our prayers and thoughts as he moves through an amazing treatment

process. Sylvia and Steve are grateful for the love and support they have received from all of us.

At Coffee Hour each Sunday (on Zoom immediately following our worship service), there is an opportunity for us to share briefly in word our joys and sorrows. This is the one time in the week when we can be together in real time, so join us on Zoom. Each week there is a brief general discussion time, followed by smaller groups where a topic, related to the morning's worship service is discussed. Join us online! Worship at 10 on YouTube and Coffee Hour, immediately following on Zoom.

## BOARD UPDATE

### Getting in Gear

We had a wonderful Ingathering Service to mark the beginning of our new church year on September 13th. It was great to see so many of us together for our Water Communion, if only on our screens. As the title of Justine's reflection reminded us, *Something Happens When We Gather*.

A lot is happening at UUCB, and we continue to be creative in finding new ways to connect:

- Our virtual services will include an increasing variety of musical offerings. Derek will be providing accompaniment for the choir to lead us in hymn singing as well as for special choral pieces. Other musicians will join in contributing recordings for preludes et cetera, and you will see various combinations of singers. Thanks as always to Jud Caswell for making it all come together and to his family for their varied talents. (*Ed note: We are all enriched by the many and varied Caswell contributions!*)
- The Religious Exploration team is experimenting with outside activities to actually bring kids together.

- A reconstituted Modernizing Communications group will continue to explore new ways to share information and will be working on establishing streaming capability.



- Justine has begun to assemble the Transitions Team.
- The Reopening Task Force had its first meeting on September 18th. Headed up by Bill Clark, the group members are Mike Heath, Betsy Williams, Stephanie Bernier and Leigh Peranteau, with Justine an ex officio participant. Future requests for building use will be forwarded to the task force. As I noted last month, the charge for the group is as follows: *To recommend a strategy for determining when to reopen for services and other uses of the building, and to develop a plan for making reopening safe*. It is a complicated task, and it will take some time.

Who knows what next month will bring?

— Glenn Williams

## OCTOBER CHARITY WITH SOUL



IMMIGRANT LEGAL ADVOCACY PROJECT



This piece is called "Portland Expo...2019" by Norajeane Ferris. See more of their collection at [www.ilapmaine.org/expressions/2020/4/8/the-mix!](http://www.ilapmaine.org/expressions/2020/4/8/the-mix!)

### The Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project

The Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project (ILAP) helps low-income immigrants improve their legal status and works for more just and humane laws and policies affecting immigrants.

As Maine's only state-wide immigration legal services non-profit, we are committed to advancing justice and equity through direct legal services, community outreach, and advocacy. We support immigrants in seeking safety from violence and persecution, reuniting with family members, advancing towards economic security, and building new lives amid rapidly changing and increasingly hostile immigration laws and rules.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we've worked hard to ensure immigrants across the state remain connected to legal support and have access to reliable immigration information. Our staff and volunteers are committed to standing up for the rights of immigrant families and are actively working to build a state and a country where Black Lives Matter.

The UU Church of Brunswick joined ILAP's community of supporters last year, collectively making it possible for 5,000 Mainers to receive direct legal support. We are grateful for your continued support this year. All gifts will be put to work amplifying calls for justice and creating a world where everyone can live free from the fear of violence. Thanks for taking part in imagining that future.

Learn more about our organization at [ilapmaine.org](http://ilapmaine.org)! For the latest legal and advocacy news, [follow us on Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) or sign up for our "Golden Door" email update. Thanks!

### UUCB Our Mission is

*To be a spiritual community  
To welcome all  
To nurture one another  
To work for justice  
And to care for the earth*

### Giving to the Charity with Soul in the "Time of Covid"

Our Charities with Soul are supported exclusively with contributions to the "plate" which is being passed (virtually) every Sunday. You can help support ILAP and each month's CWS by making an online donation at [www.uubrunswick.org](http://www.uubrunswick.org) and click on "Donate Online". Enter your donation in the "Plate" option.

Half of the plate collection is given to the Charity with Soul and half supports other vital work of UUCB.

Thank you for your generosity, regularly!

## WORKING FOR JUSTICE

### Indigenous Awareness

Midcoast Indigenous Awareness Group (MIAG) is working with Cathey Cyrus to create the 10/11/20 UUCB worship service in acknowledgement of Indigenous Peoples Day. The service will center on the wisdom to be found in listening to Indigenous voices and will offer words and music from local Indigenous speakers, writers and musicians as well as others living beyond the immediate community.

MIAG is working hard to keep its website current with important legislative information and a calendar of Indigenous events occurring throughout the state. [www.miag-group.org](http://www.miag-group.org)



### Immigrant Justice

Midcoast New Mainers Group (MCNMG) continues its work with local asylum seeker families. There have recently been several new families settled in the Brunswick area. If you would like to be on the MCNMG wider volunteer list to help with specific tasks (transportation, sorting through donated clothing, delivering furniture, etc.) or would consider becoming a mentor, a literacy tutor or a member of a family support team, please be in touch with Cathey Cyrus at [wdclark@zwi.net](mailto:wdclark@zwi.net).

For information about the changing immigration status regulations, go to the Immigration Legal Advocacy Project (ILAP) website at [www.ilapmaine.org](http://www.ilapmaine.org)



IMMIGRANT LEGAL ADVOCACY PROJECT

### Planning Committee for Black Lives Matter/ Challenging our White Supremacy

The killing of George Floyd and other people of color this summer and the resulting protests have spurred a nationwide reckoning about racism and its legacy in our country's history and institutions.

The Working for Justice Steering Group is reinvigorating the UUCB initiative on Black Lives Matter/ Challenging our White Supremacy. We have formed a planning committee to present programs that invite reflection and discussion on systemic racism, and we encourage members in the wider UUCB community to join us. If you would like to participate in the planning process, please contact Jane Danielson, [janedanielson90@gmail.com](mailto:janedanielson90@gmail.com). Thank you!

### Save the Date!

Join Shay Stewart-Bouley for Authentic Dialogues:

### Talking about Racism and Moving to Action

Wednesday, October 28, 7-8:30 pm, via Zoom

Ms. Bouley, who blogs as "Black Girl in Maine", has adapted her well-attended program to Zoom technology to include the opportunity to listen to her ideas; to share thoughts in small groups and to engage with her in a question and answer session.

The number of participants is limited, and registration is required. UUCB members and friends are encouraged to **register before October 15th** when we will open the registration to a wider, but still limited mailing list. Register now with Betsy Williams, at [bwilliams120@gmail.com](mailto:bwilliams120@gmail.com)

This virtual presentation, initially scheduled last April as an in person event, is part of the Working for Justice Steering Group series "Many Voices: Widening the Listening Circle" funded by the Maine Community Foundation.

## WORKING FOR JUSTICE

### Teen Center Update

The month of September has been one of continuing to learn what to do to keep teens and staff safe during COVID19 virus once the Teen Center opens its doors.

Downtown Thursday lunches continue to be a big hit for the teens. On September 14th the center was closed so that staff and volunteers could organize the mailing of over 1700 Back to School letters. The donations from these letters are one of the ways that help keep the center funded. With school opening on September 21st, Jordan is allowing the teens to get used to the new kind of school year they will be experiencing because of the virus.

Jordan gave a shout-out to one of our own, UUCB member Joanne Allen. Joanne not only helped with the mailing but also provided some cool masks for the teens.



### GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

September is Suicide Awareness Month. In Maine 146 people die by guns in an average year. 89% of gun deaths are suicides. Many are children and veterans.

In 2014 at General Assembly, Unitarian Universalists affirmed a congregational commitment to gun violence prevention. UUCB took up that pledge and takes action through our Working for Justice Steering Group to continue awareness of this tragic crisis.

Member congregations were encouraged to take action, such as:

1. Urge the CDC to study and publish data on gun violence.
2. Work for gun safety, background checks and a ban on assault weapons on a national, state, and municipal level.
3. Reach out to partner with interfaith group and community activists.
4. Speak with police, local public health professionals, elected officials and candidates for office.
5. Speak out in local forums, town meetings and media.

UUCB's focus is primarily on action steps 2-4. We have joined with the local Moms Demand Action for Gun Safety in partnership and collaboration to engage in an annual vigil to remember Sandy Hook. Through this partnership we also work with members of the Maine Legislature to support bills that address such things as safe storage of firearms to protect our children, as well as closing the background check loophole and enacting a "red flag" bill or Extreme Risk Protection Order. We partner with MUUSAN (legislative advocacy group) and show up in the halls of the Capitol to provide testimony.

This year, we are raising awareness of the candidates in Maine who support common sense gun legislation. Go to [www.gunsensevoter.org](http://www.gunsensevoter.org) to see who is a gun sense candidate in your area.

Gun suicide claims the lives of 23,000 people in America every year. We must address this public health crisis to reduce gun violence in this country. If you would like to join in on these actions be in touch with Lynn Ellis, [lynnsellis62@gmail.com](mailto:lynnsellis62@gmail.com).

If you or someone you know is in crisis, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or text HOME to 741741 to reach the CrisisText Line for free from anywhere in the U.S.

