



# Parish Messenger

Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick

**December, 2020**

## Our Minister's Message



*This is what I can ask for you: That in the darkness there be a blessing.  
That in the shadows there be a welcome. That in the night you be encom-  
passed by the Love that knows your name.*

*~Jan Richardson*

Dear Ones of UUCB,

It's beginning to look a lot like ..... Well, the expected ending to that phrase is "Christmas." It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, and it is; there are lights on trees and ads for toys on TV and eggnog on prominent display in the grocery store. So yes, it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. But it is also beginning to look a lot like things have looked before, with a return of high alert on COVID-19 and with public health officials imploring us to stay home, stay masked, stay safe. Ugh. More of the same. When will it end?

This time of year, the holiday season, is supposed to be full of joy, the return of loved ones, catching up with friends, breaking bread together, laughing all the way. Now, we know that holidays have always also been a complicated time, with expectations of making merry weighing down on those who struggle with sad memories or recent loss. So in some ways, this universal experience of loss

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*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*

The Unitarian Universalist  
Church of Brunswick  
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Brunswick ME 04011

1 Middle Street, Brunswick

(207) 729-8515

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Rev. Justine Sullivan,  
Interim Minister

### Services in December

Sundays at 10:00 on YouTube.com

**Dec. 6 — Advent** Rev. Justine Sullivan

**Dec. 13 — Hanukkah** Rev. Justine Sullivan

**Dec. 20 — Christmas** Rev. Justine Sullivan

**December 24 — Christmas Eve Services**

4 PM — All Age Christmas Eve Service

5:30 PM — Multi Congregation Christmas Eve Service

**Dec. 27 — Accepting Ourselves and Others** Sienna Dode



**Online Worship Services Every Sunday followed by the virtual Coffee Hour**  
[www.uubrunswick.org](http://www.uubrunswick.org) and select "Online Worship"; [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search  
"UUCB-av", or follow the link in your "This Week" email

## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

*Continued from page 1*

and longing at the holidays offers us insight into the lives of those for whom the holidays are tough. May we find connection and camaraderie and even joy in this shared experience of longing and of waiting for better days. Until then, please, please do everything you can to stay safe so that we can all be together again.

In the meantime, you and I will keep finding ways to connect. Saturday, December 5th at 7PM, Jud Caswell and I will offer a "Live from your Living Zoom Room" Coffee House. Contact Jud to sign up for a slot and do plan to attend. Jim Spicer is coordinating a re-invigorated Chalice Circle program. Contact Jim or me to get more information and to sign up. Chalice Circles are small groups that gather (usually once a month) to share deeply on topics related to our spiritual lives. They will meet on Zoom until such time that it is safe to gather in person.

Our Religious Exploration program is holding classes on Zoom on Sunday mornings and we gather in person outdoors about once a month. Recently, members of the UUCB youth group went for a gentle hike – we talked and laughed and even sang together a bit – all wonderful. We are all figuring this out as we go, always putting safety first. We will get through this, my dear ones!

As we enter this holy season – Solstice, Advent, Hannukah, and Christmas, let us be mindful of the gifts we have, and let us share from our abundance with those who have less, with those who are struggling, with those who are waiting, as we all are, for the return of the light.

Peace and Love to you and all the blessings of the season,

**Justine**

*Interim Minister, UUCB*

## RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

For the past couple of months, the UUCB Youth Group has been meeting on Zoom with Rev. Justine and me. It's been amazing to have a chance to see the faces of our brilliant youth and to learn from and about them. Yet, as most of us have probably come to realize, Zoom has its limitations when it comes to feeling connected to people. I tend to need to have my heart in the same room as others in order to feel fully connected to them. So, while I love the Brady Bunch feel of seeing all of our faces tiled together on my computer screen, I've been missing the realness and spontaneity of being together with the youth.

The UUA guidelines suggest that outdoor meetings be limited to kids and youth from ten families or less. Luckily for us, our youth group size falls within those limits and, this past Saturday, November 21st, Rev. Justine and I were able to get together with the Youth Group for a masked, social distance hike at Crystal Spring Farm. It was really nurturing for my soul to get to see everyone in person! It was so great to see the youth literally get "out of the box" and have their hearts in the same space together- and in a place of such natural beauty no less.

As a spiritual leader, part of my job at UUCB is to keep our

children and youth safe, which has meant doing things a lot differently than we have in the past and, oftentimes, a lot differently than I would prefer.



Yet, this past week between having the opportunity to interview several of our kids about gratitude and going on a hike with the Youth Group, I've begun to realize how much more sacred connection feels when we have to really work for it. Don't get me wrong, I wish that we could all be together weekly, but the limitations to those kinds of meetings have really helped me to hone my gratitude for each and every interaction that we get to have together.

*Toben Cooney-Callnan, DRE*  
*He, Him, His*

*Office Hours — Tuesdays and Thursdays 9am-5pm*

# CONGREGATIONAL HEART BEAT

## Joys, Sorrows and Concerns

Even when we can't be together physically, we still care for one another. If you have a joy or a sorrow to share with the congregation, you can reach out directly to me RevJustineSullivan@Gmail.com or to the pastoral care team at uucbjoyandsorrows@gmail.com.

This month we don't have any joys or concerns to share, which tells me that perhaps the email method of contact is not working so well.

If we were together in person, we would share these moments in our lives while entering the sanctuary for worship or at coffee hour. Or maybe I'd notice something in your body language and I would ask if everything is ok, or there would be an extra long hug in the receiving line – so many ways that we humans let each other

know that we need some extra care or that we have good news to share.

We are figuring out how to do this in an online world; let's keep trying to welcome the newcomer and hold each other in community. Reach out. **Come to "Coffee with the Rev" on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11AM on Zoom.** Ask for time with me; I want to know what is on your heart and your mind.

I will be offering a **"Blue Christmas" service of healing and meditation on Friday, December 18 at 7PM on Zoom.** We will sit quietly, share some readings and some music, and those who wish to do so, will have an opportunity to share what is on their heart. Do come.

— Rev. Justine

## Pastoral Care

Even when we can't be together physically, we still care for one another. If you have a joy or a sorrow to share with the congregation, you can reach out directly to me RevJustineSullivan@Gmail.com or to the pastoral care team at uucbjoyandsorrows@gmail.com, or you can reach out directly to any member of the pastoral care team:

### Pastoral Care Associates

Irene Austin	751-7091	ireneannaustin@gmail.com
Julie Dahmer	865-9688	jcdahmer@gmail.com
Jane Danielson	865-7094	Janedanielson90@gmail
Sally Horne	443-1327	sally.xwindfarm@gmail.com
Mary Larson	406-4266	marniel@windstream.net
Gus Manomaitis	389-204-6284	agmanomaitis@hotmail.com
Susan Snow	406-2196	mollysue719@gmail.com
Susan Thorner	373-1766	susancthorner@gmail.com
Betty Wurtz	406-4960	bettywurtz@gmail.com

## Christmas Eve Candles

Members of the Worship Committee will be giving out Christmas Eve candles this month for all people who will be attending our virtual services on Christmas Eve. That evening, you will be invited to turn off your lights at home, light your candle and join us all "together from afar" as we sing Silent Night at the end of the service.

Candle pick-up will be in front of the door at UUCB on **Saturday and Sunday, December 5 and 6 and Friday, Saturday and Sunday December 11, 12, and 13 from noon to 2 PM.**

Please come by for your candles and if you can, donate to the Mitten Tree!

## Join In the Virtual Coffee Hour!

Join us online! Sunday worship is at 10 on YouTube and Coffee Hour, follows immediately on Zoom.

At Coffee Hour there is an opportunity for us to share briefly in word our joys and sorrows and be together for fellowship and discussion.

## BOARD UPDATE



Board Chair, Glenn Williams

Copy deadline for the  
January 2021 PARISH  
MESSENGER -  
Saturday, Dec. 26

### 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

### COVID Response Team

The COVID Response Team (formerly called the UUCB Reopening Task Force) has been working diligently, utilizing current information available to make informed recommendations for the safest possible use of our building. This includes careful study of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems to determine how best to minimize the number of harmful particles in our air. The group developed the following interim report.

#### Guidelines for Use of UUCB in the time of COVID

The COVID Response Team issues this report summary (full report reviewed by UUCB Board):

Considering present data, the Holiday season, the rapid rise in infections, and acknowledging expressed interest in congregating, we recommend that UUCB not open any spaces for group use until an uncertain date in 2021.

Thinking ahead about building use, we explored multiple resources in order to determine potential safe use of the MMB room and the sanctuary. We consulted the following:

- a. current (November 2020) Maine CDC guidelines
- b. UUA Guidelines (updated October, 2020) [uua.org/safe/pandemics/gathering-guidance](https://uua.org/safe/pandemics/gathering-guidance)

- c. Reston, VA. UU virus guidelines published in October, 2020 (available at the UUA site.)
- d. resources on air exchange/refresh rates, and air purifiers.

When UUCB opens the Merrymeeting Bay Room, we recommend specifications/rules we reported to the Board, and summarize here (details available as needed.)

- Schedule in advance
- Wear masks at all times
- No eating
- Bring your own beverages
- Limit 8 in designated spaces in a large circle, (or 10 at 5 tables)
- Enter thru back door
- Sign in & collect phone #'s for contact tracing
- Use 1 bathroom only
- Visit no other spaces/rooms.

We will delay use of indoor spaces until all data clearly point to keeping all of us safe.

Note: RE is functioning on Zoom and outdoors. Virtual services continue, and planning is underway for additional virtual activities. (see notes in this PM).

### Transitions Team

The Transitions Team is up and running. Justine points out that it will soon be time to start thinking about selecting the Search Committee for our new Settled Minister. The UUA has clear guidelines for this process, and the Board will take it up at our next meeting. Stay tuned.

— Glenn Williams, Board Chair

## UUCB NEWS AND NOTES

### The Mitten Tree Returns!

Winter's on its way, and so is the need for mittens, hats, scarves for so many! The Worship Committee goal is 100 donations! Donations are requested for curb-side drop off of new warm mittens, gloves, hats, and scarves – and this is year we are also asking for masks and socks. All sizes are needed. Children, teens and adults will welcome your help.

Items may be dropped off in front of the door at UUCB on Saturday and Sunday, December 5 and 6 and Friday, Saturday and Sunday December 11, 12, and 13 from noon to 2 PM. Members of the Worship Committee will meet you, masked, at your car window to receive your donations. Help us meet our goal and help keep others warm! Collected items will be donated to several area agencies.

At your drop-off, we will be giving you small candles for each member of your family to be used in our Christmas Eve service. That evening, you will be invited to turn off your lights at home, light your candle and join us all “together from afar” as we sing Silent Night.

Contact Mary Larson 406-4266 or [marniel@windstream.net](mailto:marniel@windstream.net) with any questions.

— Mary Larson

### SANDY HOOK VIGIL

Remembering all those who lost their lives to gun violence  
**Monday, December 14 at 5pm.**

Gather in front of the UU church on the corner of Pleasant and Middle streets. We will socially distance and wear masks.

Candles will be provided.

Hosted by UUCB Working for Justice & Brunswick Area Moms Demand Action



### Gun Violence Prevention Banner

The Gun Violence Prevention group of Working for Justice commissioned this banner that measures 5 ft x 3 1/2 ft to be used in our annual Sandy Hook vigils and other actions related to ending gun violence. Created by Artists' Rapid Response Team (AART).

### Clynk Bags

As I announced in a recent all-church email, we have reestablished our CLYNK Bag program for returnable bottles and cans, which is a fund-raising mechanism supporting UUCB. We have CLYNK bags available at church which have a bar code label tagging the beverage container refund money to us after bags are placed in collection facilities at Hannaford markets.

While not a major source of income, it does encourage proper disposal of bottles and cans, and is helpful for the environment in that way. Some have expressed concern about the downsides of using plastic bags. CLYNK indicates the following about what happens to the bags after the collection process: “Our bags are 100% recyclable, which means they won't end up in a landfill. Right now they are used to make durable, long-lasting replacement railroad ties.”

A supply of bags is now in the lobby of the church, and you can contact Shirley to schedule a time for pickup.

— Glenn Williams

## DECEMBER CHARITY WITH SOUL

### Giving to the Charity with Soul

Our Charities with Soul are supported exclusively with contributions to the "plate" which is being passed (virtually) every Sunday. You can make 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!

### Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program

MCHPP offers dignity and empowerment by providing all members of our community with access to healthy food. We want all people to safely access food without barriers in an inclusive and respectful environment. We may have closed our doors to the public during the pandemic, but we work hard every day to ensure those in need have access to our food. Over the last several months we have expanded our food delivery services to households in Perryman Village and Bay Bridge Estates, and we began hosting our Harpswell Mobile Pantry weekly rather than monthly. By working with dedicated volunteers as well as local stores and farms we are able to feed so many in the community. Monetary donations help us purchase much needed food and develop innovative strategies for supporting the community.

Contact: Heather Arvidson, Volunteer and Client Services Manager; [www.mchpp.org](http://www.mchpp.org) (207)725-2716 x 305



### Teen Center Update

#### Halloween pumpkins

The teens had fun in November decorating left-over Halloween pumpkins and baking the seeds -- coated with butter and salt! They also watched "Dracula" - the black and white version - where the format intrigued them more than the movie itself; too many "Friday the 13th" movies, maybe!

So far the "Back to School" fundraising letter has brought in \$13,425 - only \$1,206 short of the \$15,000 goal.

#### Christmas Wish List

Instead of filling bags with movie tickets and candy as Christmas gifts, this year the staff at the Center is "adopting" some of the kids. They include: 2 9th-grade boys, 2 6th-grade girls, and 2 8th-graders -- a boy and a girl. Gift cards from any of these stores would be



welcome:

- Dunkin Donuts (a teen request)
- Hannaford
- WalMart
- Hot Topic store – (a popular teen request - gift cards perhaps available online)
- Sally's (hair product store in Topsham and the request of a teen who loves to color her hair!)
- The Mix for Art stuff (4 of them "very into" art)
- Light House Deli (2 of the kids live next door, and the family does not have a working vehicle)
- Other local ideas: Bull Moose, Wilbur's of Maine Candy store ...

Thank you for helping out!



*Off Boothbay*  
by Sharon Brown

(see page 8 for more Art Gallery news)

## WORKING FOR JUSTICE

### Immigrant Justice

English language tutors are needed now more than ever.

As local asylum seeker families work to move forward with their lives towards greater independence, the ability to communicate in English is crucial to their success, yet the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 severely limit everyday opportunities to practice English in conversation. Of special concern are the language needs of children for whom remote learning restricts their opportunities for direct contact with their classmates and teachers.

We are all mindful in this pandemic of the need for tutors and students to stay safe, and with the support of technology and careful attention to recommended precautions, this is possible. Midcoast Literacy is actively recruiting, training and matching tutors with students. If you would like to explore this opportunity, contact [admin@midcoastlit.org](mailto:admin@midcoastlit.org).

If you are interested in working with children, contact [k.clark@midcoastliteracy.org](mailto:k.clark@midcoastliteracy.org). For work with adults, contact [d.lader@midcoastliteracy.org](mailto:d.lader@midcoastliteracy.org).

Supporting our new neighbors in language learning gives them a life changing skill; meaningful, personal relationships are the additional gift for everyone involved.



### Many Voices: Widening the Listening Circle

In November we concluded activities supported by the \$3800 grant from the Maine Community Foundation for 2019-2020. The three events in this series brought the voices and experiences of people of color and indigenous people of Maine to the greater Brunswick community. All events were free and the first two were open to the public. Resources for further action and study were made available at the conclusion of each event.

The first in the series was “Deeper than the Skin”, a musical presentation on race in America with Reggie Harris and Greg Greenway. The concert drew a crowd of over 120 people. The second event, a Saturday morning workshop conducted by Maine-Wabanaki REACH drew an equally impressive crowd of 70 people. This workshop presented the history of Maine’s Wabanaki peoples through a powerful mapping exercise and narrative that involved all participants. The third event, Shay Stewart-Bouley’s “Authentic Dialogues” workshop scheduled for April 15, had to be canceled due to COVID-19. We were able to re-schedule her session for October 28 as an online Zoom event. To avoid potential technical problems, we limited the publicity for this event to our congregation and encouraged members and friends to personally invite others they knew from outside our congregation. We had 67 people attend.

We collected feedback from participants at all three events and found they were extremely well received. Many said their understanding of race in America had been broadened and they were inspired to seek other resources and opportunities to expand their racial awareness and advocate for racial equity in our community.

### Indigenous Awareness

Those following the progress of LD 2094 – An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act are aware that the Maine legislature may soon convene. Voices are needed to ensure full attention is given to the task force’s recommendations.

A helpful presentation of the issues can be found in the August 2020 article, “Judiciary Committee Advances Long Sought Bill Recognizing Sovereignty of Maine’s Tribes” by Alyce McFadden found at [mainebeacon.com](http://mainebeacon.com), a website of the Maine Peoples Alliance.

MUUSAN’s issue group on Racial Native and Immigrant Justice is organizing support for this bill. If you are interested in learning more or getting involved, please talk with Rob Stuart, [frenchbooks@icloud.com](mailto:frenchbooks@icloud.com). Rob is overseeing the UUCB Working for Justice focus on LD 2094.

## WFJ — MAINE UU STATE ADVOCACY NETWORK

MUUSAN met on December 14 to review steps for 2021 Legislative Action. UUCB members Lynn Ellis, Rob Stuart, Betsy Williams, Stephen Wood, and Faith Williams attended the meeting via Zoom.

MUUSAN is a statewide advocacy and public policy network anchored in UU principles. The four current issue areas are:

- **Democracy in Action**, including efforts to strengthen our democracy by informing and engaging voters, protecting voting rights, promoting civil discourse, instituting Ranked-Choice Voting, supporting Clean Election laws and reducing the importance of money in campaigns.
- **Health Care**, including advocacy for universal health care, monitoring legislation that affects our healthcare system, promoting public health interventions and common sense gun safety legislation.
- **Climate Change**, including support for fossil energy conservation, development of solar and other renewable sources, and educating legislators and the

public about the urgent call to slow climate change (with special attention to our own precious Gulf of Maine).

- **Racial, Native and Immigrant Justice**, addressing systemic oppression by advocating with and on behalf of racial, ethnic and indigenous populations and responding to the need to interrupt disparities in Maine's legal and economic systems.

Lynn is co-chair of the Health Care issue group; Rob, Betsy and Faith are involved with the Racial, Native and Immigrant Justice group. We are still in need of a representative from UUCB for Climate Change and Democracy in Action. If you are interested please contact Lynn Ellis at [lynnsel-lis62@gmail.com](mailto:lynnsel-lis62@gmail.com).



## THE UUCB ART GALLERY

### Featured Artist: Sharon Brown

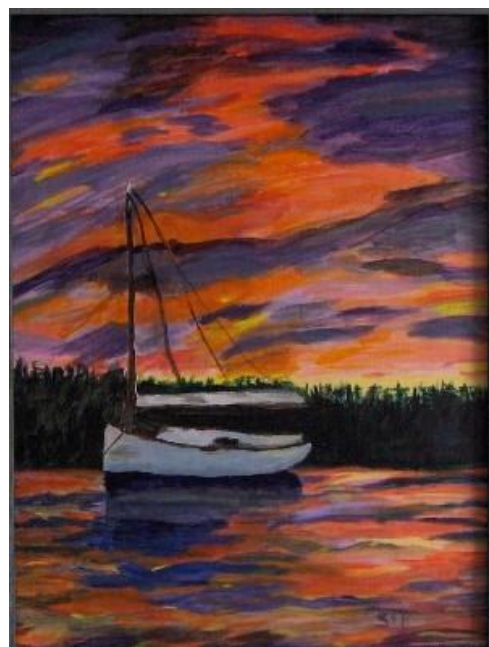
Sharon Brown is a long time member of UUCB. You can contact Sharon by email: [seacat44@gwi.net](mailto:seacat44@gwi.net).

Sharon says:

*"I started painting in the 80s with oils and then changed to acrylics. I paint for personal joy and relaxation and like to paint water scenes as when painting them I have a sense of peace and tranquility. I also like cows."*



Lobster Shack



Sailboat at Sunset