

# Parish Messenger

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick

#### January 2022

## UU Church of Brunswick STAFF

Rev. Justine Sullivan, Interim Minister

Rev. Sylvia Stocker, Minister Emerita

#### **Toben Cooney-Callnan,**

Director of Religious Exploration

#### **Nell Britton**

Director of Music

#### Shirley Bernier,

Office Administrator

Tony & Mary Sulkoski, Sextons

#### **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.

#### How to Reach Us

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick

(mail) PO Box 129 Brunswick ME 04011

1 Middle Street, Brunswick (207) 729-8515

UUBruns@gwi.net

Rev. Justine Sullivan, Interim Minister

Non-Holiday Office Hours: Tues thru Fri from 10-4

### Rev. Justine's Message

We are each made for goodness, love and compassion. Our lives are transformed as much as the world is when we live with these truths.

Desmond Tutu ...continued on page 3

## **Services in January**

Jan 2 — Setting our Intentions for the New Year. Rev Justine Sullivan leads a meditation of letting go and bringing forward. Music by Nell Britton.

**Jan 9 — Principles, Passion & Purpose.** Led by members of the Working for Justice Steering Group.

The WFGSJ works to encourage and provide social justice opportunities that are personally transformative for the congregation and contribute to needed change in the larger community.

#### Jan 16 — Growing Beloved Community in Times of Hate.

Led by Rev. Justine Sullivan. In honor of Martin Luther King we will talk about the beloved community. The service will be led by Rev. Justine Sullivan with a time for all ages by DRE Toben Cooney-Callnan and music by Nell Britton and the choir.

Jan 23 — Reproductive Health is a Matter of Social Justice In honor of the anniversary of the landmark Roe v. Wade decision, UU congregations across the country have been asked to focus on reproductive rights on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. The service will be led by Rev. Justine Sullivan with a time for all ages by DRE Toben Cooney-Callnan and music by Nell Britton.

Jan 30 — A Forgiving Community. Led by Eduardo Pazos. The role of forgiveness and forgiving each other as a way to continue in our paths for healthy spiritual development and liberation.



Eduardo Pazos is an Assistant Dean of Student Affairs for Inclusion and Diversity and Director of the Rachel Lord Center for Religious and Spiritual Life at Bowdoin College. He has been living in Maine for five years. Eduardo is married to Nichole, a Topsham native and has two daughters Eden (7) and Elena (4). He has worked in higher education for over a decade and also served as a pastor for different church for about 5 years.

Outside of work, Eduardo is a member of the Brunswick School District's Steering Committee for Diversity and Inclu-

sion, loves to go on (short) hikes with his daughters, and enjoys cooking for friends and family. Eduardo was born and raised in Chihuahua, Mexico and immigrated to the US when he was 18 to attend college.

#### FROM OUR INTERIM MINISTER

...continued from page 1

The Church has always been political. Martin Luther sparked a revolution when he posted his complaints about corruption in the Catholic Church on the church door. The Pilgrims, our religious forebears, crossed an ocean to escape the grip of the Church of England which in their view had become too hierarchical and vulnerable to corruption. And of course, Jesus over 2000 years ago challenged the powerful church leaders (who were aligned with Empire) when he preached a radical message of Love, and he was executed for the threat he posed to the status quo.

To be an intentional community joined by shared values is a radical and a political act, but we must avoid being partisan. That last part is temptingly difficult just now as it seems that one of the two major political parties in the United States has lost its way, following those who would divide us by fear. I checked in with a family member who is a member of the Republican party, and he concurs that his party has lost its way but let us remember that it wasn't so very long ago in our American history when it was the Democratic party that clung to White Supremacy Culture and some even used religious arguments to justify the kidnapping and enslavement of other humans. It was the Republicans, a new party inspired (as its name suggests) to save the Republic from the baser elements that threatened its destruction that

emerged and brought us through the great upheaval of the Civil War. Neither political party can lay claim to unassailable virtue.

And that is why we need courageous souls to speak and work and fight for the principles promised in our founding documents but so far not yet realized. In South Africa Nelson Mandela sacrificed mightily (spending much of his adult life in prison) to end Apartheid, and it was Desmond Tutu, a black South African man who rose to the level of Archbishop in the Anglican Church, who helped awaken the world to injustice there. Martin Luther King and the Black church in this country broadened the coalition of those working for Civil Rights for African Americans and they also provided both inspiration and comfort to those fighting for their own survival. In Central and South America, the Catholic Church has been a vital part of liberation movements.

The Church in all its many forms and theologies is a needed part of the struggle for justice. Not because we church people are always right or because we have God (however we might understand God) "on our side" but because we are open to new discovery, to new ways of understanding the Holy, to new ways of being more fully present to the divinity in all beings. That inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness, the inherent worth and dignity of all – our willingness to ask ourselves that question

over and over again, what is the right thing to do here? What does Love or Spirit or our UUCB mission call us to do in this moment?

Theology for me and I imagine for all Unitarian Universalists – is not merely abstraction but it is meant to guide us in our daily actions, both individually and collectively. Fear and uncertainty can separate us from one another and from our own sense of what is right. Love exposes the lie, reminds us that we belong to each other, and we are called to be kind, generous, even joyful – not as an act of denial of what is but as an act of defiance, a refusal to accept the world as it is but to hold onto the dream of what could be. So as we enter this new year, one with continuing uncertainty and worry about the global pandemic and civil unrest, let us hold each other close and let us also hold our Unitarian Universalist principles close, and may our actions and our words be guided by the call of that larger Love that holds us all.

Peace and Love to you and may 2022 hold bright blessings for us all,



Reverend Justine Sullivan Interim Minister, UUCB

Parish Messenger January 2022 3

## FROM OUR RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION DIRECTOR



Back in October I received an email from a 7th grader at First Parish UU Portland telling me that, while she appreciated the K-8th grade Zoom Religious Exploration Meetings, she was hoping that there would be a space where she could connect with other UU youth her age. I loved this request but, as I set out to make it happen, I had a lot of concerns. Attendance for both outdoor, in person meetings and Zoom meetings has been low. Will there be enough youth in that age range interested? Would this work as a shared ministry opportunity for UUCB and First Parish? What's the most responsible way to bring youth together as

COVID transmission rates continue to climb? We'd never had a Junior Youth Group at First Parish or, to my knowledge, at UUCB so we had to at least try! For our first meeting, we met over Zoom. We took a little time to get to know one another and we played some silly games. Middle school age is a time of change and can make youth a bit shy at times so it felt like an absolute win to see these UU middle schoolers quickly reach a point of laughing and smiling together.

For our second meeting, we met at Mackworth Island in Falmouth. When it comes to RE meetings, my motto has been "have more activities planned than you will ever need," but I decided to try something different for Jr. Youth Group. I let them set the pace. A couple of youths walked together at the head of the group. One hung back with the adults. Two kind of just did their own thing. Occasionally, someone would see something cool and we'd all stop and check it out together. It was all going really sweetly and naturally so I tossed out the idea of building a fairy house together. For those who haven't been, Mackworth Island has a huge collection of fairy houses made by folks passing through. At first it seemed like everyone had a different idea of what they wanted to do but then something really special happened. Two youths started using fallen trees to build a large structure. One by one, we all caught on to what they were doing and joined in. The other youth leader and I stepped back and let them make a plan and figure out how to make it work. Before long, they were all proudly smiling at the structure they started.

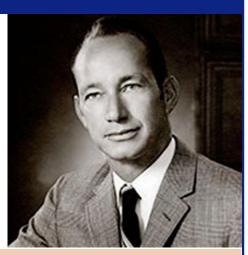
As we walked back to where we were meeting parents, we talked about how we had left a mark for the fairies and how the next group that came along could add to it. Maybe they'd keep it as it was. Maybe they'd change it. Either way, we were building something together. I left that meeting feeling so much more alive and connected than I did when we started out. Isn't that what life is? Showing up shy and maybe a little worried about how things are going to go but showing up anyway - for the chance to build something together.

### FORMER UUCB MINISTER DIES

Rev. Dr. John Cummins, former minister of UUCB from 1949-1954 died on December 11, 2021 in his hometown of Minneapolis, Minnesota. He was 95 years old.

John was Minister Emeritus of the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis where he served as minister for many years. John was a lifelong leader in liberal religion, social justice and nonviolent action.

You can see his obituary and see his memorial service here: https://www.startribune.com/obituaries/detail/0000411676/



A little UUCB history: In the fall of September 1949, the Rev. John Cummins became the settled minister of the Universalist Church of Brunswick. He had attended Bowdoin College and Harvard Divinity School. Cummins soon afterwards married a young woman from the church, Drusilla Congdon, who was a teacher in the public schools and taught in the church school. The Cummins formed a couples club in 1950 called the Merrimates. It was an active social group that planted gardens around the church, put on dinners and was responsible for the popular annual Easter breakfasts. They also took on the project of converting the cellar into a Community room with a concrete floor, new rest rooms and a kitchen located at the opposite end of the room from where it was later moved.

#### PASTORAL CARE NOTES



Longtime member **Bob Whitney** recently died at the Maine Medical Center in Portland. Our love and support go out to **Faye** and the family. Faye has her son staying with her for a while.

**Ross Crolius** asked for thoughts and prayers for his wife, **Nancy**, who suffered a serious stroke the week of December 13. She is at the Maine Medical Center but hopes to be transferred to a nursing facility soon.

At the one-year anniversary of **Val's** death, **Mike Heath** expressed hope that the first year truly is the hardest. He is grateful for the blessing of support and love from friends and the UUCB Community.

Healing thoughts go out to **Laura Jackson** who fell while skating with her grandchild. She received a concussion and now has several staples in her head.. She is recovering at her son's house for a couple weeks.

#### Pastoral Care Associates

Irene Austin
Julie Dahmer
Jane Danielson
Sally Horne
Sue Loebs
Mary Larson
Gus Manomaitis
Susan Snow
Susan Thorner
John Trumper
Betty Wurtz

If you have a joy or sorrow
to share, please reach out to
Rev Justine or to the
pastoral care team at
uucbjoysandsorrows@gmail.com

Parish Messenger January 2022 5

#### MEMBERSHIP



## You and UU Class

Saturday, January 22, 2022 10:00am - 12:00pm Class will be held at the church

Please join us for an in person orientation class hosted by the Membership Committee and led by Rev. Justine Sullivan and members of the committee.

The classes are for:

- those new to Unitarian Universalism
- people considering membership at UUCB

**To enroll,** please contact Shirley Bernier, church administrator, at <u>uubruns@gwi.net</u> or 729-8515 by Friday, January 21.

For more information, please contact Leigh Peranteau at 207-725-4874 or leigh763@yahoo.com

An enlightening and meaningful experience awaits!

#### MARCH TO THE MITTEN TREE



## Sunday, December 19

The mitten tree was another success this year - we collected almost 100 items - a few people who couldn't make it to arranged for me to get their items yesterday and today. So, I've given a big bag of things to Carol Briggs for the Teen Center, taken some to the Gathering Place, have given some to the New Mainers, and will deliver a big box of children's items to the Adventist Clothes Closet tomorrow - Tedford suggested that we donate them there. Lots of heads, fingers, and toes will be warmer thanks to the generosity of the UUCB community.

#### **BOARD UPDATE**



At our meeting in November, the Board felt that it would be a good idea to share the writing of the "Board Update" article in the Parish Messenger among all the board members. We felt this would offer the readers a variety of slants from current event interpretations to personal insight. For some reason, I

volunteered to start the process off.

When I moved to Maine in 1986 there was a lot of snow that first winter...lots of it and I now had a heap of shoveling to do and many opportunities for X-country skiing. Most winters continued in much the same vein until the winter of 1995-1996. After a huge snowfall in December 1995, I finally decided to bite the bullet and invest in my first snowblower! In January of 1996 I learned how to operate the machine and then.....no snow the rest of the winter! And so it goes this year. After all, what is the point of having cold weather if there isn't any snow to enjoy and play in!

"Built in an age, the mad wind's night-work,
The frolic architecture of the snow." (Emerson)

The **COVID Task Force** is continuing to meet the challenges of the ongoing pandemic and making changes in the operating procedures of the church as needed to minimize risk and to maximize a sense of warmth, spirituality and connection to UUCB.

The **Communications Committee** has been making great strides with the new equipment that has been installed for streaming. A Signup Genius account for AV booth operators has been set up at three levels: Lead Tech, Tech, and Trainee. We need to recruit people to fill each these roles so Jud can step away from direct involvement as soon as possible. In order to provide better and more efficient communication within committees and with the congregation as a whole Google Groups and/or shared drives have been set up for several committees and work is progressing on setting up all-church email and a shared church calendar.

The **Safety Committee** has been reinvigorated and is beginning to work on defining its role as far as safety, security and emergency management for our church and congregation are concerned.

The **Building and Grounds Committee** will be working with the Safety Committee on several projects including the installation of the new exit door on the Middle Street side of the building. That work was put on hold during the initial phases of the pandemic but is now being more aggressively pursued. B and G is also looking into the possibility of using the land on the south side of the church for limited parking.

Treasurer's Report In a church year that began mid -pandemic with a deficit budget, it's encouraging to see robust pledge payments, keeping the church's cash flow strong. As we return to in-person worship, contributions to Charities with Soul have increased as well. We are about to enter budget season, when the Finance Committee and the Board will draft the Church's needs for next year and from there set a target for the Annual Pledge Drive. An energetic Pledge Drive Team has some creative plans to help us return to a balanced budget; stay tuned!

The Board is in the process of developing a new column in the Parish Messenger. Coming in March look for "At Your Service" a new trial program to encourage, foster and deepen community connection. This new column will provide a place where services may be offered to other members of our congregation. It will be similar to Craig's list or Angie's list with the exception that no merchandise will be for sale and services are not available to the general public. The coordinator for the service will be Sienna Dode. More details in the February Parish Messenger!

From the UUCB Board of Trustees Cuffy (Catharine) Chase, Vice Chair



Parish Messenger January 2022 7

#### **CONCERTS FOR A CAUSE**

#### WELCOME THE NEW YEAR WITH JUD CASWELL!



## Saturday, January 8 7:30 pm Doors open at 6:30

SEATING IS LIMITED, so get your tickets early.

One of the leading singersongwriters on the current scene, Jud Caswell is a master multiinstrumentalist, playing guitar, banjo, cittern, whistles and Irish drums. His interpretations of songs from modern acoustic to traditional folk and Irish are

done with precision and care. He draws inspiration from the land like Mary Oliver, pushing gently into the specific until it unfolds into the universal. His words and warm, tender voice portray his landscapes like Wyeth, with a reverence for humble beauty.

Jud's originals have won some of the most prestigious songwriting contests in the country, including the legendary Kerrville New Folk competition. His songs have been taught at Berklee, recorded by Judy Collins, and named "#4 Song of the Decade" by New York's WFUV. Since the beginning of Covid, Jud has also released two albums. "Live at the Seagull Shop Restaurant." went to No. 1 on the Folk Alliance International chart. In June Jud released "Morning Cordial Vol. 1." The single, "The Great Divide," from the album was the #2 song of October on Folk Alliance International's Charts.

Profits raised from this season's concerts will support the **Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program** and **Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project.** 

ALL PEOPLE 12 YEARS OR OLDER MUST SHOW PROOF OF COVID VACCINES OR NEGATIVE TEST AT THE DOOR. MASKING IS REQUIRED.

**Tickets:** Adults: \$15 in advance, \$18 at door, Students & Children: \$10 Also available at the church office, Gulf of Maine Books or <a href="https://www.ticketstripe.com/caswell">https://www.ticketstripe.com/caswell</a>.

## Save the Date February 12



Pat Colwell and the Soul Sensations bring down the house featuring the music of Etta James and a Motown/ Memphis Soul Music mix. The Soul Sensations' danceable repertoire, outstanding female singers, a full horn section and unique showmanship make for an unforgettable show that that will knock your socks off! In addition to Etta James, the band covers Soul Classics from Sam and Dave, the Supremes, Wilson Pickett, Marvin Gaye, the Temptations, The Staple Singers and The Queen of Soul—Aretha Franklin.

Parish Messenger 8 January 2022

### WORKING FOR JUSTICE

#### **Charities with Soul**

### January's Charity: Unitarian Universalist Service Committee



The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is a nonprofit, nonsectarian organization advancing human rights together with an international community of grassroots partners and advocates.

We focus our work on intersecting roots of injustice to defend rights at risk due to criminalization and systemic oppression of people based on their identity. We support self-determination and defend the rights of people displaced due to climate, conflict or economic hardships; and we respond to humanitarian crises as partners with people whose access to aid is most limited.

Striving to center the voices of people most affected by injustice, UUSC creates eye-to-eye relationships with frontline grassroots movements across the world that support marginalized communities in determining their steps for the future.

Our mission: UUSC advances human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies. Our work is grounded in the belief that all people have inherent power and dignity.

> Our Charities with Soul are supported exclusively with contributions to the "plate" passed every Sunday during the service or virtually.

#### Teen Center

The Teen Center year 2021 is coming to a close. It's been a very challenging, productive, and rewarding year in spite of COVID.

The Back-To-School letter donations so far this year have reached \$23,216 and the Center has until the end of the 2021/2022 school year to reach their goal of \$30,000. The November Charity with Soul contributions netted \$800 and UUCB also donated some of the hats and mittens from our Christmas Mitten Tree collection. Jordan gives you a big THANK YOU.

Transportation has been an issue for the teens getting to the Center from schools. So the Teen Center Advisory Committee and People Plus are investigating the purchase of an 8-passenger van. The van would be used to transport the teens from schools

or on field trips, and People Plus would use it for Lunch-Outs and activities.

Because of an increase in COVID cases the Center could not have their Christmas party. They'll have their Yankee Swap and party in the new year. Before the Center closed for the holiday season, Jordan and her team handed out half of the teen's Christmas stockings (candy and gift certificates) with the rest to come after the Center reopens in January.

We want to thank all of you again for your support. Because of you our teens have a safe and caring place to go!



Parish Messenger January 2022 9

### WORKING FOR JUSTICE

#### **MUUSAN**

Your UUCB/MUUSAN team is working hard to represent the upcoming 2nd session of the 130th Maine Legislature. We are following the carryover bills from each of our four issue groups: Climate Change, Democracy in Action, HealthCare and Racial, Native & Immigrant Justice. We are looking at any new bills being introduced as well. We will have a list of priorities soon and will share action alerts with you as we did last session. If you want to receive these alerts contact Lynn Ellis at lynnsellis62@ gmail.com to be added to the Legislative List for UUCB.

What we do know is that all issue groups will support the passage of LD 1626 An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act. For more information go to the following link and read the plan of action http:// www.muusan.org/stand-with-wabanaki.html

To read the full bill go to this link: https://legislature.maine.gov/bills/getPDF.asp? paper=HP1210&item=1&snum=130

Here at UUCB we are having a letter writing "party" after church on January 9, to ask our legislators and Gov. Mills to support this Wabanaki Tribal Sovereignty legislation.



**<u>Legislative Action on Sundays:</u>** Also, following each Sunday service – beginning on January 9 – the team will plan to meet with church members in the May Sarton room or the sanctuary depending on total number of people, to answer questions and outline action steps.

AND PLAN TO ATTEND THE NEXT MUUSAN state network meeting on Saturday, January 8 from 10-12:30. We are fortunate to have guest speaker Rep. Rena Newell, the Passamaguoddy Tribal Representative in the Maine House of Representatives. Representative Newell is the former Tribal Education Director for the Passamaguoddy Tribal Government and is deeply involved with efforts in the legislature to expand upon Tribal-State coordination, as well as Tribal sovereignty. To Register go to this link and sign up:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ tZAqcO2rqj0oE9xO1LTdHPhfdmIwr9d1p0qr

## **Indigenous Awareness**



The most Important thing Mainers can do right now to support INDIGENOUS AWARENESS Maine's tribes is to become informed about and support the passage of LD 1626 - legislation pending in the Maine legislature.

This legislation would help restore Wabanaki rights for self-determination – rights recognized by every other state in the country. For information about the legislation and actions you can take, go to the Wabanaki Alliance website at <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a href="https://wabanakialliance.com">https://wabanakialliance.com</a>. Look for the Take Action Tool Kit <a -action/ Other guidance about contacting legislators with user-friendly links can be found on the MUUSAN website (muusan.org). Scroll down the right side of the webpage and click on Stand with Wabanaki. All you need to know is there.

#### WORKING FOR JUSTICE

### UUCB Sandy Hook Vigil—Dec. 14 2021

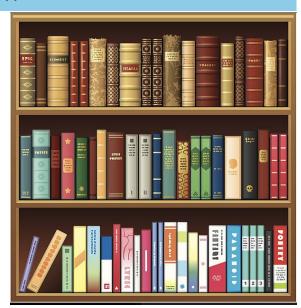


#### **UUCB LIBRARY**

# UUCB LIBRARY WAITING TO BE USED

We've reorganized the books and changed the check out process. Just remove the card from the inside front cover pocket, put the date and your contact info and drop the card in the metal box. Read, enjoy and return in 30 days. Just place the returned book in the return pile and we will refile and return to the shelf. There are many new books (top two shelves deal with the subject of racial injustice) and some old favorites.

Your librarians, Lynn Ellis and Jim Michaud



## MINISTERIAL SEARCH TEAM UPDATE



We may seem very quiet to you during the month of January, but we will be working hard on a confidential part of our process: reviewing applications, checking references, and doing video interviews of prospective ministerial candidates.

Thanks for your continued support!

Irene Austin, on behalf of the Ministerial Search Team