

Parish Messenger

Unitarian Universalist Church
of Brunswick

February 2022

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UU Church of Brunswick STAFF

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Interim Minister

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Rev. Justine Sullivan,
Interim Minister

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Tues thru Fri from 10-4

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.*

Services in February

Feb 6 — Do We Need Another Hero?

Rev. Justine Sullivan will lead worship with a time for all ages by DRE Toben Cooney-Callnan and music by Nell Britton.

Feb 13 — All We Need is Love: Growing Beloved Community in a Time of Hate Rev. Justine Sullivan will lead worship with music by Nell Britton and the UUCB choir.

Feb 20 — Building the New Temple.

Rev. Justine Sullivan will lead worship with music by Ambrosia and Nell Britton.

February 27 - African American History is American History.

Rev. Justine Sullivan will lead worship with a time for all ages by DRE Toben Cooney-Callnan and music by Nell Britton and the UUCB choir.

Join us in the sanctuary or watch us live on youtube at [UUCB AV](#).

REV. JUSTINE'S MESSAGE

The new year is now well underway; Christmas seems a distant memory. And yet we still have about half of winter to go. Kay Montgomery writes:

February is not for the faint hearted, I think.

It is so exceedingly ordinary, having neither the romance of spring nor the bravado of winter.

We find ourselves in that in-between time, a wonderful time to both review and look ahead. In the past six months, you all have accomplished so much – moving to multi-platform worship (with both in-person and online versions available) - the most visible of your accomplishments. But you have also continued to hold one another through this time of seemingly unending restrictions on what used to be normal life. You have continued to prepare for a new settled ministry. Your search team is well underway; the beautiful packet of information they created (with your full participation) has attracted many fine ministers, and now the search team is deep in discernment, and soon they will know who it is that they will recommend to the congregation for a vote to call.

One important note about voting for your next called minister. According to UUCB bylaws, in order to participate in the vote to call a new minister, a person must be a church member for at least 90 days. So if you have been on the fence about joining officially, and you want to be a part of that vote to call, you would need to join by early February (as the vote will likely take place in early May).

How to join? The simplest way is call or email me to set up a time to have a conversation about what it

means to be a member, and then sign the book and let us celebrate you in worship (that last part is optional but it is always joyful). Don't delay. And if you're not sure if you are an official member, check with the office. Shirley can let you know your status.

A couple of weeks ago, we had that rather frantic moment of deciding to cancel worship because of last-minute notice of a Covid exposure, and it was stressful – for me and, I imagine for many of you. That Sunday morning, I was watching one of the pre-recorded services from last year and preparing to enter the Zoom coffee hour. I had let Callie out by herself because we live in a quiet area with no cars. Well, many of you already know what happened next – Callie came home with a snout full of porcupine quills. I dropped everything, bundled her up and off to the emergency vet clinic in Portland, and as I pulled out onto our little dirt road, I called Dale and was quite upset, worried for my sweet little dog (she and I are both city girls, as it turns out and so this was a new experience for us both). I was a bit tearful on the phone with Dale and getting myself a bit worked up, and then I caught up to the sanding truck that was on the road ahead of us. This is a narrow dirt road – two cars can barely pass each other, and there was no way I could have gotten around this truck, and I felt frustrated, anxious, pressured. I pounded the steering wheel and wished he would hurry up! And then, there was nothing to do but shift into first gear and wait for the truck to finish its work. The road was icy and slick; the sand would make it safer for us all, but even more important to me at that moment was the slowing down. I found myself wondering if

someone had sent me that sanding truck to get me to slow down. Taking those extra breaths, reminding myself that all was well. Callie would be fine (and she is). She wasn't whimpering or pawing at her face; she had accepted her lot, and perhaps she joined me in that long sigh as I put the car in a lower gear, and the rest of the ride to Portland was much more peaceful. I turned on some music, focused on getting us there safely and said a prayer of thanks for that truck that helped me return to the present moment.

In this time of so much uncertainty (endless uncertainty, it seems) we all need to find the gifts, find the beauty that comes unexpectedly. On cold days, I look out at the cove that we get to live near, frozen over in places. I marvel at the quiet, the bright sun that warms us even on the coldest of days. I still can't get over how many stars I can see from here in the dark sky, and I am reminded that we do have what we need to persevere, to flourish even. We just need to keep doing the things we have been doing to stay safe, but let us remember to make time to pause, to breath, to notice the beauty around us – even if it comes in the form of a slow-moving sanding truck.

Blessed be.
Justine



Reverend Justine Sullivan
Interim Minister, UUCB

BOARD UPDATE



For me, winter can be a bit of a slog. I sometimes wonder why I continue to live in such a cold, dark state. But then I take a hike to the ocean at Morse Mountain in Phippsburg on a frigid but sunny day in mid-January. As I start the two-mile hike to the

Atlantic, I feel the biting cold on my face. I can remember when I was 23 and my fingers and toes didn't get cold, but 30 years later I feel them ache. This makes the wilderness survival training I learned as an Eagle Scout kick in. Maybe 10°F is too cold for this hike. Is it safe? Should I turn back? Slow down Dave... Think it though. Do you have the right equipment? Yes – good boots, lots of layers, a warm hat, and thick wool and Moose hide mittens you got at that little corner store in the county. What's your emergency plan if you twist your ankle? Well, the hike is on an old but cleared road and you have a cell phone and hiking partners. Lastly, is this hike important? Of course it is. You've been looking forward to the time in nature and time with your son and wife. So, my final assessment was that while I wish it wasn't so cold, I took reasonable precautions, and the hike was important enough that it was worth doing.

The mid-winter is very busy for our Search Team as they talk to and meet with prospective ministers. I feel blessed to have such a great team of dedicated people working on our behalf. While they work on this confidential part of the process, it is a good time for us to wish for them the strength, patience, and endurance that they will require to complete their work.

Each year the UUA sends us a survey to fill out as part of our congregational certification process.

As you all know, Reverend Justine and the Board decided to cancel one service and hold the following week's

service virtually due to a possible Covid exposure. We needed to stop and take time to think through how best to move forward. Here's a bit of a window into our decision making process as we think about our Sunday services and how they should be held:

- ◆ **The Covid Task Force looks at the status of the pandemic in Cumberland County.**

Right now it's worse than we'd like, but better here than in much of the state.

- ◆ **The board assesses our preparedness.**

All visitors to our church attest that they are feeling well and have been vaccinated, and they agree to wear masks. We trust our members and friends to be truthful about this. We have air filters in key areas and leave the sanctuary windows open when there are large groups.

- ◆ **We consider our backup plan.**

We have the technology available to allow us to hold the service virtually as long as we have a few days to prepare. In the case of January 9, we found out about the possible exposure Saturday night, so didn't have the time to make the switch from a live service to virtual, but we don't expect that to be a usual occurrence.

- ◆ **Lastly, we assess the importance of holding the service live.**

For some of us, seeing each other is something we look forward to all week and is an important part of our well-being. So, while there is some risk in meeting live, we have taken many precautions, are offering live streaming for those that don't feel well or safe enough to attend, and feel that it is important enough that it is worth holding live services whenever possible.

I know that you are each making a similar personal assessment about everything you do – including attending Sunday services. We are happy to see you in person and also happy to see you on the live stream. Make the decision that feels right for you.

PASTORAL CARE



Ross Crolius reports that his wife, Nancy, has now been moved to the New England Rehabilitation Hospital after three weeks at Maine Med, following a severe stroke. She is getting physical and occupational therapy and they are taking things one step at a time. Ross also expressed appreciation for the caring and responsive staff there.

Peg Dunston and Stan Eller report with joy and thankfulness that Stan underwent successful retina repair surgery on January 12, which was performed without complications or covid-related delays. Recovery is proceeding well, so far. Stan would appreciate our continued prayers for the full restoration of his vision.

Pat Moore had successful heart surgery in Portland on January 14 and is recovering well, out of the ICU. When she is discharged, she will stay in Portland for a few weeks to be closer to family and to any follow-up care she needs before returning to her home in Bath.

Debbie Zorach slipped on the ice and bruised several ribs. She will be fine but it will take a while. She has asked the Care Network for some practical help but she would also appreciate phone calls.

Ward Clark also slipped on the ice this week, badly bruising his forearm. In the process, he unintentionally tested out the fall alert feature of his new Apple watch. Ward says he had one day of pain but is now well on his way to healing.

Pastoral Care Associates

Irene Austin
Julie Dahmer
Jane Danielson
Sally Horne
Sue Loebis
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 uuchjoysandsorrows@gmail.com

MINISTERIAL SEARCH UPDATE



Your Search Team has been quiet, but very busy! We had a strong interest in our church on the part of searching ministers. We think that is largely due to the wonderful leadership we have had with Sylvia and Justine, and our applicants mentioned that a standout for them was the social justice work our congregation has done. And thanks to all of your input, they also were impressed with our Congregational Record. After many, many hours of reading application packages, discussing them, then many more hours on Zoom interviews with candidates, then follow up reference checks, and more discussion and discernment, we are happy to say we are very encouraged by our results and are planning our pre-candidating weekends. Search is a long, thoughtful process, and we are excited to be entering the next phase. We thank you for your continued trust and support.

Irene Austin, on behalf of the Ministerial Search Team

CONCERTS FOR A CAUSE

Jud Caswell

Jud performed for the Concerts for a Cause series on January 8, 2022 and by all accounts it was a great success! In spite of Covid being rampant, a good crowd of Caswell fans attended, feeling comfortable with the Covid requirements imposed by the Concert Committee. And they were NOT disappointed! Jud sang many of our favorites, including "When the UU Church Burned Down" and "Singing Joy and Peace Through the World." He also played a new song which he had never sung in public. It was a very special night.



Pat Colwell and the Soul Sensations Concert Cancelled

Due to the increase in Covid infections nationwide and in response to a recent Covid scare here at UUCB, the Covid Task Force has decided to cancel the February concert with the Soul Sensations, especially since the band has 7 singers and horn players. Pat Colwell understood the situation and said that the band would be happy to play at some future date.

SAVE THE DATE (AND CROSS YOUR FINGERS)



Pretty Girls Sing Soprano

Saturday, March 12

7:30 pm

Doors open at 6:30

**SEATING IS LIMITED,
so get your tickets early.**

Pretty Girls Sing Soprano will perform live at UUCB for the Concerts for a Cause series on March 12, 2022 at 7:30 pm to raise money for this season's charities.

Since their inception Pretty Girls Sing Soprano have quickly turned heads and gained a loyal following with their tight, clever and

original harmonies. Ingrid Ayer-Richardson, Susan Mathews and Deana Gurney have combined voices to share their love of acoustic and acapella music. The Pretty Girls will sing to your soul and leave you with a smile as they perform a variety of songs from bluegrass, folk, traditional to country and rock-n-roll. If you enjoy good music with top-notch vocals you need to check out Pretty Girls Sing Soprano.

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

WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Charities with Soul

February's Charity: The Emergency Action Network



The Emergency Action Network is a grassroots non-profit that harnesses the generosity of community members to meet the immediate needs of Brunswick's most vulnerable youth and their families.

In 2016, two Brunswick School Board members centered their focus on the many families with children who were living in deep poverty in Brunswick. The Emergency Action Network (TEAN) was formed and, using social media, TEAN began educating and engaging community members to gather urgent, basic necessities such as clothing, shoes, winter outerwear, school supplies, and hygiene products as well as collecting monetary donations to fill these needs when necessary. In partnership with the Brunswick School Department to protect confidentiality, TEAN has since met over 3,000 individual needs with the help of our 1,400+ community allies.

TEAN also collaborates with other local organizations such as Tedford Housing, Midcoast Hunger Prevention,

and ArtVan to collaborate on larger-scale initiatives such as a Summer Camp Scholarship Program and a free holiday shopping market.

TEAN greatly expanded its scope of work when 100 asylum seekers arrived in Brunswick in 2019. With the help of community allies, TEAN outfitted every home with furniture, appliances, home essentials, cell phones, and more. TEAN continues its ongoing work to help these families access clothing, food, medical care, legal support, transportation and educational opportunities.

In an era when safety nets for children and families have been decimated and childhood poverty is rising, it has become increasingly necessary for communities to organize and support their most vulnerable neighbors. TEAN is in a unique position to act as an umbrella organization for community members and organizations to work in concert to fill the urgent needs we see everyday in Brunswick.

We are very grateful to the Unitarian Universalist Church for its generous support of TEAN this month.

TEAN members hard at work during their winter outerwear drive



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

WORKING FOR JUSTICE

MUUSAN

MUUSAN is a statewide advocacy and public policy network anchored in our Unitarian Universalist faith and animated by its principles. We work with partners and collaborators with the goal of active legislative ministry.

How do faith, church and politics intersect? How does our UUCB congregation connect with legislative ministry? Let's look at it from the lens of the three As: Accountability, Action and Advocacy.

Accountability: Our UU community benefits from our spiritually-grounded, transformative, justice-based work providing a space to authentically explore and address issues of systemic privilege and oppression. Within the presence of our work for justice we inevitably help to change culture and policy that results in solutions to our most pressing problems. This is accountability to the affected and accountability to be effective.

Advocacy: is defined as any action that speaks in favor of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports or defends, or pleads on behalf of others. Unitarians and their beliefs were a major influence in the founding of the US political system and were and are a major influence on US religion and culture. Ours is a theology of engagement. We draw inspiration and truth from experiencing each other and the world around us.



Action: Join us in our work to change policy through the legislative process of the passage of bills that address the most critical issues of our time. We have healthcare inequity, an opioid crisis, environmental pollution, a public health crisis of gun violence, and so much more. If you'd like to get involved send an email to:

lynnsellis62@gmail.com.

Indigenous Awareness



MIDCOAST
INDIGENOUS AWARENESS
GROUP

The most important thing we can do to support Maine's tribes is to become informed about and express our support for LD 1626, "An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Task

Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act". The Maine UU State Advocacy Network website [MUUSAN](#) offers an especially helpful overview of this legislation now pending in Maine's legislature. You'll find clear and user-friendly links and guidance for how we can each take action to express support of its passage. Please take a minute to go to the [site](#), scroll down the right side of the page and click on *Stand with Wabanaki*. What you need to know is there; all of our voices are needed.

Immigrant Justice

Asylum Seekers continue to arrive in Portland and are being helped in a difficult search to find housing in communities throughout Maine. Because of the lack of available, affordable housing locally, Brunswick, Bath and Topsham communities are not currently involved in settling new families. This could change.

To learn more about the increasingly rich and vital multicultural community growing in Maine, seek out *Amjambo Africa* – a free online and hard copy publication. (<https://www.amjamboafrika.com/>).



WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Habitat for Humanity



The Habitat Restore in Topsham is putting the final touches on the store reorganization that was begun during the holidays. This involved moving 75% of the items on the floor to other space in the building, restructuring the shelving and creating new shelving ...and then moving everything back to their new locations. The showroom floor is now more user friendly and is featuring more furniture as well as appliances and building materials.

In December Habitat for Humanity 7Rivers ME was the Charity with Soul for our congregation. They received \$951 from the plate and other donations for that month. Katie Luce from that organization let us know that UUCB support will *"certainly fund the completion of a critical home repair/modification."*

In February, Habitat for Humanity 7Rivers ME will present to UUCB a **Volunteer Appreciation Award**. For the past several years UUCB has had 5 regular volunteers at the Restore itself (Carol Briggs, Cuffy Chase, Mike Heath and Gretchen and Dexter Kamilewicz). In addition members of UUCB have participated in the annual Walk to Build as well as other fund raising efforts. UUCB volunteers were also involved in the reorganization of the store in December.

The Restore is always looking for volunteers so if you have a few hours a week that you don't know what to do with, please contact Gretchen or Cuffy for information on how you can join our fantastic Restore team!

Teen Center

Jordan Cardone, the Teen Center director, planned to open the Center on January 10th but due to the surge in the omicron virus she is keeping it closed for another week and reviewing the decision weekly.



Meanwhile Jordan and her staff have focused on funding the program. They are writing grant applications, planning another Gelato Fiasco fundraiser, and an auction. They are also planning a capital campaign for an 8-seater van to bring the teens from school to the Center, which will be shared with People Plus for field trips and lunch outings. The Back to School letter has now brought over \$28,000 – the target of \$30,000 expected by the end of June.

WANTED: Summary of Community Solar Power Options



Would YOU be interested to research and summarize the community solar options currently being offered to local organizations and individual households in Maine? WFJSG would like to make this information available to the UUCB congregation and can help connect you with other local groups, churches and individuals who are doing or have done this kind of research. If interested and for more information, contact Cathey Cyrus at wdclark@gwi.net.