



The Flaming Chalice

The newsletter of The Unitarian Universalist Community Church
69 Winthrop Street ~ PO Box 8 ~ Augusta, ME 04332-0008

Fall 2021

Worship at UCC

Upcoming Special Services on Zoom

Join us for these traditional special services reimagined and crafted for these unusual times.

For more information on all services see the weekly E-blast.

Small Group Ministry, Sunday, November 14

The UCC Small Group Ministry Program will host a service entitled "Recoventanting in a New Reality: We Were, We Are, We Can Be." The service will feature reflections from each of the small groups along with special music from Gary Chapin.

Harvest Communion, Sunday, November 21

Our annual Harvest Communion service is a time to pause in gratitude for all that is our life. With the symbolism of cider and pumpkin bread, we partake in the story of community, abundance, and renewal. There will be a social after the service. Please check the E-blast for more information.

Music Sunday, Sunday, December 5

This traditional December service has become a favorite among members and friends. Bring your family, friends and neighbors for this holiday treat. This service brings us together to sing and enjoy a morning of music highlighting the Unitarian Universalist Community Church music program.

Grief and the Holidays, Date to be determined

The season of lights, carols and parties, all is not always merry. Many of us carry grief, stress, estrangement, financial crises, and illness. This service in Mid-December offers a quiet reflective space for healing and wholeness. This vespers style service is led by Minister Chloe and the Pastoral Ministry Team.

Christmas Eve Service, Friday December 24

Our annual Christmas Eve Service offers people of all ages the opportunity to reflect on the spirit of the season. Join us as we center peace, joy, and rebirth with familiar hymns in this traditional candle lit service.

All services are held in the

[UCC ZOOM ROOM](#) ← ← click this **UPDATED LINK to join**

Meeting ID# 823 807 0673 - Passcode: 6971

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

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

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

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

Minister's message

Happy fall! I am enjoying the fall colors and the cool air. I love walking in October and November in the evening right before sunset. It's a beautiful time of year.

I am settling to the UUCC. I have appreciated the warm welcome I have received from everyone. Some of you I have met in-person behind the Judd House, others at your homes, others in my office masked, and others on zoom. I am always excited to meet more UUCC-ers. Please reach out if you want to chat.

We are starting the interim ministry process. The purpose of interim ministry is to have an intentional time of reflection between ministries. Carie had a good twelve years at UUCC, and I know many folks are still dealing with grief from her departure. I hope that by being here I will help you grieve, show you a different style of ministry, and guide you in considering what you may want in your next settled minister. By taking this intentional time of transition, UUCC is positioning itself for a successful future settled ministry.

I am not the only one doing interim work! We also have a Transition Team consisting of seven UUCC members. They include Karen Allen, Harold Burnett (chair), Nancy Fritz, Kathy Kellison, Don Naber, Martha Pelletier and Susan Shaw. This team will be working with me to take the congregation through the five process tasks of interim ministry. These include:

1. Coming to Terms with History (Focus point: Heritage)
2. Discovering a New Identity (Focus point: Mission)
3. Shifts of Power/Leadership Changes (Focus point: Leadership)
4. Rethinking Denominational Linkages (Focus point: Connections)
5. Commitment to New Leadership and to a New Future (Focus point: Future)

Over the next couple of months, you will be hearing more from the Transition Team. I ask that you be open to sharing with them. The information they collect will help us all shape the future of the UUCC.

As a note, I wanted to clarify that I am not yet ordained so I do not use the title Reverend. Although I am a fully qualified minister in the eyes of the Unitarian Universalist Association, COVID-19 has delayed my ordination. You may refer to me as "Chloë" or "Minister Chloë."

I close with an "Autumn Prayer" by Christine Robinson.

"God of the Autumn, help us to live
with the grace of falling leaves
the enthusiasm of the flaming Aspens
with the serenity of the old trees, whose roots reach
deep into the earth.

God of the Autumn, help us to know
that living and dying are one
that life is precious, and beautiful, and limited.
that nothing good is ever lost.

God of the Autumn, help us to see
in the ways of nature a way for ourselves. Amen."

May you see in the flaming aspens and falling leaves a way for ourselves.

Blessings,
Chloë

P.S. Feel free to contact me for any reason. I would love to hear more about you and your relationship with UUCC. You can email me chloeucc@gmail.com or call my office 207-623-3663.

Update from Transition Team

During the last few months a small Transition Team has formed to support Chloe in preparing the congregation to call our next settled minister. Martha Pelletier, Karen Allen, Kathy Kellison, Don Naber, Susan Shaw, Nancy Fritz, and Harold Burnett have all volunteered.

As many of you likely know, following a ministerial departure, the UUA recommends that each congregation formalize a two-year interim period, to work with the interim minister to review our past, reflect on and, as needed, mourn the former minister and the times we shared, review who we have been and are as a congregation, before a small group begins the formal and nearly year-long search process.

The successful search ends with the committee's chosen applicant sharing a week with us, leading to a Sunday service and congregational discussion and vote to call he/she/they to become our next settled minister. The search is entirely confidential and no one outside the search committee will know who was screened or interviewed. The congregation will have ample time to confer with the committee's choice during the candidating week, and will have the ultimate say as to whether to actually call that person. But that's still a long way off.

Our first task will be to share and hear stories of who we are and the roads we each have traveled during our time at UU Community Church, to synthesize an accurate congregational profile. Such will, in part, help Chloe understand who we are individually and collectively, by sharing those things that brought us here, enlivened us, deflated us, and inspires us to continue worshiping and being in community together. We are planning to use the month of November to begin that process with at least a series of moderated listening circles. With the obvious COVID limitations, we are imaging utilizing existing constituent groups, like Small Group Ministry, for example, to help facilitate some of this process though others will be able participate through small Zoom gatherings and paper surveys. As our planning is just getting underway we expect that other opportunities will arise also. If you have any questions please feel free to call Harold, at 242-9111, though I know our others will be happy to help as well. Thanks.

Submitted by:
Harold Burnet, Transition Team Chair

A message from the Committee on Ministry

The purpose of the Committee on Ministry (COM) is to strengthen the quality of ministry within the congregation. The COM focuses on all aspects of the congregation's shared and professional ministry. (From the Bylaws)

Unitarian Universalism is considered a faith of covenant, not creed. What does it mean to be a covenantal faith? For the past several months, the COM has engaged in study, workshops and discussion of the role of covenanting in our congregation's ministry.

If you have been part of a Small Group Ministry you are likely familiar with your group covenant. A covenant is a commitment – a promise we make to one another. Developing our covenant helped us define who we are, who we want to be and how we will do our work together. We read our covenant at the start of each meeting to remind ourselves of how we aspire to be in relationship with each other and with the congregation.

Many UU Congregations have developed written covenants that define healthy relationships that both nurture and challenge their community as they live the UU Principles. We come to our church as individuals and we grow into community -becoming a congregation. The COM thinks it essential that all of us at UUCC explore how we wish to be in community with one another.

What is each of us willing to commit so that our community is vital and strong, providing opportunity for growth as we live our UU values and principles?

COM Members: Erin McGrath, Kathy Kellison, Michaela Loisel (Chair)

Chaplain's Note from Claire Curole

Reflection from Chaplain Claire:

I want to extend particular thanks to Stef Barley, Jeff Janell, and Cheryl Ring for volunteering to serve on my Ministerial Fellowship Team, the lay committee supporting my continued process with the UUA. Thank you! - Claire

We never expected it would last this long. The COVID-19 pandemic has been weighing on our souls and scrambling our plans for a year and a half now. I am starting to get used to the uncertainty: I trust that probably nothing is going to go exactly according to plan these days.

I had originally hoped to spend a week in mid-October on retreat with ministerial colleagues across the New England Region. But COVID surged again in late summer, and a multi-day trip across state lines for an indoor gathering seemed... less than prudent. So instead I spent this unseasonably warm, beautiful week at home, wrangling grapevines into wreaths for the upcoming Winter Wonderland fair.

For many of us, pandemic living has required a deeper intimacy with the places we live and the people we share them with. This summer brought changes to the outside of our house - building a patio and firepit, planting a garden - and some reckoning with the accumulation of *stuff* inside the house as well. I think I've finally found all the boxes from when I moved to Maine sixteen years ago... but they aren't all completely unpacked yet.

Over the years, like most crafters, I've accrued a "stash" of things I want to make into other things: craft supplies of almost every kind, unfinished projects, and various items "too good to throw away" that some part of me imagines I'm going to upcycle eventually. A lifetime's worth of unfinished projects and possibilities. *Stuff. More stuff than I will ever use.* I don't want to waste anything, though. This year I made a commitment to myself not to bring home any more craft supplies - at least not before "shopping in the basement" to see whether something I already have is suitable, some unfinished project ready to be wrapped up and released into the world. So when I got home one late summer evening to discover that my beloved had spent the afternoon clearing the tangle of wild grapevines that had overgrown about a quarter of our town lot, I knew what I'd be contributing to the craft fair. I spent most of my free time in September pulling vines from a pile on the patio, cleaning them of stray leaves, and winding them into wreaths to dry.

I love the smell of drying grapevines, similar to hay, but sweeter: if smells had a color, the smell of grapevines would be reddish brown, warm and spicy. Vines are a natural material, with a will of their own: winding them into wreaths or baskets is an exercise in persuasion and relationship, with unpredictable and perfectly imperfect results.

I thought a lot about improvisation and imperfection while making the wreaths; and about stewardship of resources: putting to good use what we have here and now, neither wasting resources nor excessively hoarding them. Sometimes that means figuring out what to do with things that I wouldn't choose, but already have: the glittery bits left over from long-ago Christmas ornaments, when I have reservations about the impact of micro-plastics; lengths of ribbon too short or too narrow to realize a grand vision alone. The results are not what they would be if I'd gone out and bought a bunch of stuff. I give - to you and to the world - what I have.

But isn't that what needs to be done in the world? To see where we are with ourselves and one another, because we are (still, always) in this together? To take time and take stock of what we've brought with us thus far; to figure out what is of current use and what holds potential for the future or connection to the past; what belongs somewhere or to someone else and is ready to move along; and what is ready to be done with.

Disruption is messy, uncertain and uncomfortable, at best. But tilling the garden prepares it for seeds to grow in the spring, and clearing out old boxes makes room for new possibilities to emerge.

May we each - and all - find amazing and unexpected possibilities in this time of transition.

- Claire Curole, Affiliated Community Minister

Fall Board Highlight



Happy autumn, friends of mine. I hope you have had the great fortune to get out into the beautiful days of early October. We have been blessed. As it gets cooler in the later days of the month we can look forward to the harvest of quieter times for our lives and spirit (maybe!)

The Board has reinstated the ***What's on your Mind*** program. The goal of the series is to allow members and friends of the congregation to 'really' meet the Board, ask questions, and register concerns. (Now that we have started the series again this fall, we hope more of you will have a chance to join us.)

The series is meant to serve as a tool to better communication, develop best practices and open doors. We've heard you and of your needs! We are open to, and curious about your suggestions for how we can best serve. Upcoming sessions are November 7th and December 5th. Sessions start at 11:30 am, right after the coffee gathering that follows the Sunday service. You can find us on the regular Church zoom room. (<https://zoom.us/j/8238070673>, then enter passcode: 6971, Join by phone: dial 1 646 558 8656, at first prompt (meeting id: 823 807 0673#)). The schedule for the winter has yet to be determined.

The Board continues to work hand in hand with the COVID-19 Advisory Group (see a further discussion of their work in this Newsletter). The Board--with scientific information from the Advisory Group that supports the decision--presented its plan in September in a letter to the congregation. Admittedly a tough decision to make, although a clear and necessary one, the Board used the CDC metrics to decide to **delay the physical reopening of the church to services and meetings of more than two people**. The most significant component from the Board/Advisory Group Reopening Plan that would have impacted reopening follows:

Plan is subject to change or suspension if COVID-19 metrics show significant person to person transmission of COVID-19 in Kennebec County or the State – using an upper limit of 10 new cases per 10,000 people based upon Maine CDC 14-day average – monitored by COVID-19 Advisory Group on a weekly basis.

The response has been both sadness and relief. We continue to follow the metrics very closely, but I think we all know cases in Maine and Kennebec County have generally taken off and have not been good. **Kudos** in the meantime to the Worship Arts Team for keeping our community together via Zoom during the general COVID-19 and now DELTA variant crisis. They are deserving of our appreciation and virtual hugs!

Lastly, the Board met on October 17th for its **Fall Board Retreat**. The Board Retreat was facilitated by our longtime advocate, Hilary Allen from the New England Region Office of the UUA. After some story telling exercises meant to facilitate healing practices for Board members (after a long couple of years), the Board was joined by Kathy Kellison from the Committee on Ministry and Harold Burnett from the Interim Transition Team. The goal was to clarify roles, responsibilities and other areas of shared interim ministry in a session called: *Yours, Mine Ours!* It was important to discover as a group that we believe interim ministry to be defined as:

1. Ministerial leadership serving as a transition to settled ministry
2. Utilizing a protocol for assessment, reflection and a time out
3. Looking back, working on issues, and then looking ahead
4. Realizing that, like any relationship, jumping from one into another is not particular healing. Rather there is mourning to be dealt with and excitement to be dealt with

The next retreat session looked at how the various leadership groups overlapped; where policy, vision and covenant belong. It was not until we brought in the congregation into a 'its own circle of the Venn Diagram' that we knew the true vision of our shared ministry made sense.

Training the Board and other UCC leaders is another way to bring the congregation into a smooth interim process. We look forward to the natural flow of the ongoing process.

Thinking of you all fondly,

Kathy Ann Shaw
Board President

Updates from Lifespan Faith Formation

Hello Everyone,

As we experience this time of Interim Ministry in our Church, let us remain open to the process of “*not losing*” something, but “*making space*” for something - with open minds, curiosity and anticipation. We welcome our Interim Minister Chloë Briedé who brings positive leadership, support and dedication to lead us into this journey of exploration and discovery. Thank you Minister Chloë and the support of the Transition Team!

There is much to explore and discover in our wider UU Association as well!

Come and learn with me in a once a month series from November to January. We will learn about *Covenanting for a Beloved Community, Community of Communities, and the 8th Principle*. What is it all about!? What are these new and dynamic ideas inspiring systemic change by dismantling racism and oppression in ourselves and our institutions!?

As UU's we continue our work and be inspired by ***Siding with Love***

Note these UU General Assembly Themes for the last 3 years

- 2019: ***The Power of We; What do we want our Faith to be?*** UUs are invited to engage in discernment about the future of the faith; “Power of We” is about learning together to create deep connections. We are the next generation to carry Unitarian Universalism forward, so when we express our opinions today, we do it to shape our future selves.
- 2020: ***Rooted, Inspired, & Ready!*** We are in touch with our theological roots, we are engaged in transforming our faith, and we are fired up to take action in the wider world.
- 2021: ***Time to Circle 'Round in Community***. We circle 'round in care and healing; for liberation and justice; and for love and courage.

Wheels of this UU Movement and Transformation are in motion. Come and learn more with me. Stay tuned as more information will be posted in our church wide E-blast for dates/times of these virtual workshops.

I am excited to co-lead with Interim Minister Chloë on the UU Intergenerational “Guest at your Table” series. The theme for this year is: ***Now is the Time for Courageous Change***. This is an educational and fundraising program developed by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). Each Sunday Service we will be introduced to one of 4 leaders of grass root Human Rights Organizations that UUSC partners with. We will learn their story and in turn, nurture connections to our UU principles and build awareness about social justice and human rights. This series will begin on Sunday 11/21 and close on 12/5. You will receive a care package from me with materials and resources to go deeper about each story and take action.

In other news, I am coordinating with the Augusta Family Violence Project for our annual “Adopt a Family.” More information to come within the next 2 weeks. I will make an announcement through our Wednesday E-blast.

Please contact me if you have future programming ideas and interests! lifespanff@augustauu.org ; (207) 242-6415

Autumn Blessings,
Monique Bergère McAuliffe

"There is something so special in the early leaves drifting from the trees – as if we are all to be allowed a chance to peel, to refresh, to start again."
- Ruth Ahmed -

Updates from Music Director

MUSIC AT THE UCC Fall 2021



Here we are navigating another season during the pandemic. Fall is my favorite time of year, I love the colors, the smells and the addition of warm fuzzy clothes!

The UCC choir began meeting in person at the end of August. Our rehearsals are taking place on Wednesday afternoons, outside, with masks and we are distanced at 10-12 feet. We have had several members join us and we are enjoying our time together. We are at the mercy of weather and change the time of rehearsal due to the changes in daylight.

The choir is maintaining its commitment to two services per month, through video submission to our Zoom services. Karen Allen has been editing our choir videos for us. Thank you, Karen!

Joan Atkinson, one of our fabulous UCCOO violinists, will be joining the choir for its 10/31 video. We are so thankful and excited to have her join us! Joëlle Morris will be offering another fabulous vocal solo for Harvest Communion on 11/21. The UCCOO and choir plan to join forces for a special music video for Music Sunday, which will take place on 12/5. The Music Sunday video project is still in the planning phase and will be open to the entire congregation. Keep your eyes peeled for emails regarding this community collaborative project!

Expect to see choir videos at our Zoom services on 10/31, 11/14, 11/21 and Music Sunday 12/5. If you wish to join the choir for our outdoor rehearsals, please email Bridget for more information.

The UCC choir and UCCOO are eager to share music with you that will lift your spirits and invigorate your hearts and minds. We are always welcoming new members! If interested, please email Bridget Convey at:

musicdirector@augustauu.org

All are welcome!

Bridget Convey,
UCC Music Director

Updates from Church Administrator

By Lynn Smith

Here we are again at the start of a new church year!

The fall season has been unbelievably beautiful and restorative to my spirit. Yet...like many of you, I am more than disappointed that we STILL cannot meet in person due to the rising Delta variant case numbers. I kept telling myself, "If only I can make it until the fall..." I am disappointed for sure - but also very grateful that the hard decisions of keeping us apart have also kept us all safe.

As I read all the newsletter submissions, I am in awe of the outstanding efforts and sacrifices being made by the members and friends of this community who CONTINUE to do the hard work to "keep doing church" even as we are surrounded with so much uncertainty. Our Interim Minister, our Staff and all our committees and groups are working hard – really hard.

I am also energized by being a part of a strong community that is resilient, adaptive, kind, loving, compassionate and forgiving. I know there are many of you who may not be on a committee or presently serving in a leadership role but are still giving of yourselves to care for your fellow members and friends of this community. People are helping others in need, taking meals to families that are struggling or ill, checking in with or picking up food and/or medications for a house-bound member or friend, sending out a card to

acknowledge a hardship, loss or joy that cannot be shared in any traditional way at this time. The list of ways you are helping go on and on...

While we are doing things differently and with separation fatigue, we ARE still doing the work of this church, we are still a loving and dedicated community and I am honored to be a small part of it all. Thank you to each and every one of you for all the ways you are helping to support our community.

I continue to work with many of you in varying degrees to support the work of this church. In addition, I continue my work with the Communications Work Group as we monitor and address the ever-changing communications needs to keep us all informed in these trying times. Thank you Helen Zidowecki and Kathy Kellison for your unwavering commitment to continue to serve this community as part of this important group.

I am very excited to have the NEW Technology Work Group begin researching and suggesting new technology systems to support, not only my work as the Church Administrator, but also to provide our church a more streamlined, efficient and more modern system that will help us ALL do our work better and connect in deeper and more meaningful ways so we can continue to grow as a church community. Hey – we mastered Zoom – who knows what else we can do!! Thank you to Jill Plourd, Linda Findlay and Diana Scully as they begin this very important technology work.

More change is coming as we settle in with our Interim Minister, Chloë, and embark on yet another journey together. Interim ministry ... here we come!!! I am so glad to be on this journey with all of you.

COVID-19 Advisory Group Message

Through the summer, the COVID-19 Advisory Group worked on developing a plan for the safe reopening of the church for in person services. Working with members of the Board of Trustees we sought and received outside expert advice on dealing with the delta variant of COVID-19. The Board approved the reopening plan at their August meeting. For details see: <https://www.augustauu.org/assets/Reopening-Plan-2021.0820.pdf>

In late August, the UUA released updated guidelines for in person gatherings which were largely in agreement with the reopening plan adopted by the Board in early August. There were three (3) areas where the UUA's guidelines were more conservative than those we had developed. The Advisory Group reviewed these issues and resolved the differences as follows:

- Maintain our current recommendation for physical distancing of three (3) feet rather than six (6) feet for masked indoor gatherings
- Recommended against requiring universal masking for outdoor gatherings
- Recommended masks & twelve (12) feet of physical distancing for outdoor singing.

The Board adopted the Advisory Group's recommendations at the September meeting. For details see: <https://www.augustauu.org/calendar-and-communications/other-communications/>

As of mid-October, the number of daily new cases of COVID-19 in Kennebec County and the State significantly exceed the metric of 10 new cases per 10,000 people established in our reopening plan and we have not been able to safely resume in person, indoor gatherings. The Advisory Group continues to monitor the weekly Maine CDC data and publish it in the E-blast each week.

As long as the weather permits, we encourage groups to meet outdoors without masks and maintaining six (6) feet of physical distance between attendees. This is a great way to maintain our sense of community and connection with each other.

We look forward to the time when the COVID-19 numbers in Maine decline significantly and we can resume in person, indoor gatherings. Until then, please stay safe, take care of yourselves and others.

The COVID-19 Advisory Group is composed of: Betty Cairn, Terry Cairn, Harry Grimmnitz, Don Naber, Cathie Nielsen, Marty Soule

Communications Work Group

This is a Newsletter of Change and Connection!

A flaming chalice represents the light of liberal faith over the generations. This Flaming Chalice newsletter can hold us, keep us connected and informed about our community, even -- or maybe especially -- when we are not meeting regularly in person.

Items in this article that focus on how we share information are:

- October Directory: Keeping information current
- The monthly Soul Matters Packet
- Several areas of regular update on the UCC website

Ongoing events are included in the weekly E-Blast that is distributed on Wednesday afternoons

THE OCTOBER 2021 UCC DIRECTORY

An updated Oct. 2021 directory has been distributed. This publication keeps communications flowing to you, including E-Blast and specific congregational notices! As you change your mailing or e-mail addresses or phone numbers, remember to inform the church office! And even with this new edition of the Directory, please check your information and alert Lynn immediately if there are changes. Contact Lynn if you did not receive the Directory electronically or would like a printed copy (207) 622-3232, Admin@augustauu.org.

SOUL MATTER PACKETS

Since September 2013, UCC of Augusta has used theme-based ministry to provide for deeper interaction with a monthly theme throughout the congregation. At the beginning of each month, a UCC Soul Matters Packet is prepared from materials from the Soul Matters Sharing Circle, a group of over 130 congregations to which we subscribe, and from other sources. Over the last year, the UCC packets were prepared by Rev. Carie and Helen Zidowecki. For more information, see [Theme-based Ministry at UCC](#) on the website.

We are reviewing how we use the Soul Matters Packets. Please send your comments to Chloe (chloeuucc@gmail.com) or Helen (hzmre@hzmre.com) *****Your input is valuable as we plan for the year.*****

1. Are you familiar with Soul Matters Packets?
2. Have they been helpful in connecting you with the theme of the month?
3. How and when have you used the Packets?
4. What suggestions do you have regarding the packets?
5. Would you be interested in assisting with Soul Matters Packets?

Themes for 2021-2022:

The Soul Matters packets for September: "Embracing Possibility" and October: "Cultivating Relationship" have been distributed.

The packet for November: "Holding History" will be written with UCC history in mind.

Other themes for the year are:	December:	Opening to Joy
	January:	Living with Intention
	February:	Widening the Circle
	March:	Renewing Faith
	April:	Awakening
	May:	Nurturing Beauty
	June:	Celebrating Blessings

The UCC WEBSITE is updated regularly but there are two areas that we want to call to your attention.

Worship Service information and Congregational notices, such as those related to Covid-19. To access these areas on the website, go to www.augustauu.org and follow the notations below. There are major banners at the top of the page (Home, Worship, etc.) Clicking on one of those opens a detailed menu on the left margin.

Worship Services are accessible in various ways.

- Home Page: The immediate upcoming service is on the Home Page of the website with a description of and notes about the service. A one page Order of Service is now available for the upcoming Sunday by noon on the Friday before the service. Look directly under the description of the service for the link to the Order of Service. The Order of Service contains titles of readings and links to readings and or videos including postlude and prelude music as well as Choir and congregational music videos.

(Note: There may be a few services for which there may not be an Order of Service, such as services with other congregations.)

- For information or prior services, go to Worship banner and scroll down the menu on the left to Upcoming Services. Prior orders of service can be found under the dates for those services.

The video of a service may be available for watching when possible. Check the E-Blasts for a link to the service from the previous Sunday. (For example: the October 20th E-Blast had the link for the service on October 17.)

Special Notices to the congregation are listed on the Home Page, lower left section, with a link to get more detailed information about the notice. An example is items related to Covid-19. The title of the communication is noted along with link to full text.

Keeping the website updated and relevant is an ongoing process. The intent is to have the website as an information and connections vehicle for the congregation as well as sharing who we are with the larger community. Please contact the Communications Work Group if you have any updates to help keep the website relevant or provide better information to members and friends or the wider community.

Communications Work Group: Lynn Smith, Administrator; Kathy Kellison, Helen Zidowecki

Worship Arts Team

PAST

The summer was spent with Bettina Lehovec covering our services. The services were well attended. Bettina presented a variety of topics and had a great rapport with the church community. Hopefully someday we will meet her in person as a guest minister.

Chloe Briede came on as our Interim Minister in late summer. She is fun to work with, has new ideas and takes the care of our church community seriously.

PRESENT

The Soul Matters Sharing Circle subscription was renewed again this year. The cost for Fiscal Year 2021-22 is split between the Worship, Small Group Ministry and Religious Exploration/Lifespan Faith Formation. The Sharing Circle offers many resources to aid in service preparation and in Soul Matters packet preparation. Members of the church congregation are encouraged to read the monthly Soul Matters packets as they provide for deeper reflection of the theme of the month. Our worship services will be woven around these themes. The themes focus on our relationship with our times, on some of the central work and spiritual practices needed during this period of radical change, challenge, crisis and opportunity.

November's theme is "Holding History". December is "Opening to Joy". January is "Living with Intention". Vesper services have been initiated to allow individuals to meet in community while outdoors. Notices will be in the E-blast.

“Joys and Concerns” will now be part of the Zoom service on a monthly basis, usually in the middle of the month. This will give the opportunity for another way to connect as part of the community.

Please contact the worship team with any ideas, questions, or concerns to help us stay connected during these pandemic times.

FUTURE

Future services will continue on Zoom with Martin Peters as our much appreciated technology person. The church has been wired, TV'd, and has a camera, we are ready for a hybrid service. We will need to get a “Black Box”, a device that will enable us to stream our services. This can happen with a few weeks' notice. Looking forward to meeting in person in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Claska Burnett
Chair, Worship Arts Team

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee has oversight of multiple areas of the church's fiscal health and is composed of:

Harry Grimmnitz – Chair
Harold Burnett – Member at Large
Nancy Fritz – Invested Funds
Wick Johnson – Planned Giving
Martha Naber – Treasurer
Catherine Palmer – Fundraising

Finance:

- The budget deficit of \$9000 approved by the membership at the June, 2021 Annual Meeting has been reduced to a \$988 surplus due to the fiscal generosity of the congregation.
- As of October 1st we are 25% of the way through the fiscal year. Pledge income is at \$51,165 (35% of pledges) & we have received \$85,087 (35% of total expected income). Total expenses fiscal year to date are \$43,384 (18% of projected expenses).
- The church has spent \$11,086 of the \$14,000 authorized by the Board in last year's budget for the Reopening & Physical Meeting Space project, including the technology upgrades.
- The committee reviewed the rental agreement with Capital Area New Mainers Project for the Drew House and recommended several minor changes to the agreement and, with Board approval, the rent has been increased from \$800 to \$1000/month.
- The committee reviewed the rental agreement with our tenant in Judd House and recommended several minor changes to the agreement.
- The committee reviewed a significantly revised Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement with MUUSAN that clarifies each party's responsibilities and provides increased legal protection to UUCC. This revision was the result of the commendable, combined efforts of our Treasurer & Church Administrator.
- In accordance with our Policies & Procedures document, the committee has developed a Financial & Criminal Background Check form to be used annually for all individuals who routinely handle UUCC funds.
- The committee is undertaking a thorough review of the duties and expectations of the church Treasurer's position. We expect to make recommendations to the Board of ways to reduce the ever expanding burden of this job to make it more manageable & sustainable.
- Beginning in December, the committee will begin formulating the budget for FY 22-23.

Fundraising:

- Catherine Palmer has agreed to chair this subcommittee.
- The Hannaford card account continues to be a major fundraiser and expects to transfer \$1000 to the operating budget account by the end of October.
- The annual pre-Thanksgiving Pie Sale is being organized by Catherine Palmer & will be scheduled at Longfellow's Greenhouse in November.
- The annual Holiday Crafts Fair is being coordinated by Nancy Fritz & Martha Naber for December.

Invested Funds:

- The combined income from the UUCC endowment & the Ballard Trust for FY 21-22 will be \$24,080.
- The committee agreed to add an annual fund raiser for the Rev. Carie Johnsen Social Justice Fund to coincide with Martin Luther King Day each January.

Stewardship:

- Wick Johnson stepped down as stewardship chair for personal reasons. He continues to chair the Planned Giving subcommittee.
- The Board has been tasked with finding a new stewardship chair.
- Wick Johnson has briefly presented a UUCC Guide to Holistic Stewardship document that he developed. Further review and discussion is scheduled for the November meeting.

Submitted by:

Harry Grimmnitz,
Chair, Finance Committee

Peaceful Heart Sangha

Peaceful Heart Sangha is continuing to meet twice weekly via zoom on Monday evenings from 6:30-8 and Thursday mornings from 8-9:30. We enjoy sitting and practicing with each other in the new format.

We continue to practice sitting meditation and enjoy a mix of special readings, recitations, audio/video sharings, musical offerings, deep relaxation, and special time for sharing from our hearts.

We stop, calm, rest and heal together so that we can more wisely sort through what is most important for us to be doing at this moment in our lives. At the same time, we nourish our needs for beloved community and connection during the pandemic.

We have had a few in person outdoor gatherings including one for Sitting and Walking Meditation with a time for sharing. We have also started having weekly outdoor gatherings on Fridays from 7:30-8:30am to practice Bamboo Stick exercises at the boat landing in Hallowell.

Please feel free to join us for sangha anytime! Write to peacefulheartsangha@gmail.com or martysoule@gmail.com for zoom details.

History Committee

With the anticipated reopening of the church facility within the next few months, you will find some changes in room arrangements and designations. The History Committee worked with the Reopening Work Group and the leadership to create signs for various spaces. These will provide some notes to explain the designations, especially for spaces with names from historic Unitarian and Universalist congregations in Augusta.

Various timelines of our history is given on the UUCC website. We will be updating these notes in the next few months, especially as we look at our history in connection with our interim period.

To become involved in various aspects of the work of the History of UUCC, contact Richard Bridges, Chair, at (207) 626-8134 or Auglaw@roadrunner.com. We welcome to join Heide Munro and Helen Zidowecki on the History Committee.

Small Group Ministry Updates



Our church community, like most others in America, has been staring in the face of an existential crisis over the past couple of years. The most obvious cause, of course, has been the Covid-19 pandemic. Once thought tamed, the Delta variant has given the virus renewed strength, resulting in a slowdown in physically opening our church, and countless others, for in-gatherings. The other reason, which the pandemic has only accelerated, is the continued un-churching of America. And the UU church is no exception to that trend, either.

Small Group Ministry offers both some hope and inspiration in how to maintain strong personal and spiritual bonds in this new fraught world. In its upcoming service on November 14th, we will be addressing this with “Reconvening in a New Reality: We Were, We Are, We Can Be”. Our five extant groups will each share stories of their own spiritual evolutions over the years. Some groups are newer than others, some have adjusted differently to the Zoom culture, some meet during the day and some in the evening. No matter their differences, though, they all share the common bonds of commitment, integrity, and confidentiality to their participants and to the congregational community.

Covenanting is an essential element in Unitarian-Universalism, as it is with SGM. In fact, each group is encouraged to reaffirm its group’s covenant on an annual basis. But because of the pandemic and the societal rifts that it has exposed, this covenanting has become even critical. As the groups share their struggles and triumphs, our congregation will be able to perhaps rediscover why our UUCC community is such a vital and vibrant entity, worth preserving and persevering.

The Small Group Ministry Committee would love to talk to you if you are interested in either joining an existing unit or even starting a new one. For more information, please contact Michael Conley at estherpearl67@gmail.com or directly at 207-248-7941.

Read, Learn, Share Book Group

We are a group of enthusiastic readers who love to discuss books. We meet on the first Thursday of the month from noon until 1:30 from October through June. We will be in the UUCC Zoom room until we can gather indoors. Anyone who is interested is invited to join us whenever a book grabs your attention. The regular attendees create the next year’s list over the summer. We all submit titles and choose the eleven we will read by a ranked choice vote.

Our books for this year are:

- November: [A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy Who Helped Win WWII](#)
by Sonia Purnell
- December: [Piranesi](#) by Suzanna Clark
- January: [Becoming Nicole](#) by Amy Ellis
- February: [The Midnight Library](#) by Matt Haig
- March: [Nine Continents](#) by Xiaolu Guo

April: The Ninth Hour by Alice McDermott
May: You'll Never Believe What Happened to Lacy: Crazy Stories About Racism by Amber Ruffin
June: Benevolence, A Family, A Farm, And Unshakable Feeling by Meredith Hall

All of the titles are available through interlibrary loan.

For more information, contact June Zellers jzellers@roadrunner.com or Kathy Kellison at kell6787@gmail.com.

GODDESS/EARTH CIRCLES

NEWSLETTER: GODDESS - FALL/OCTOBER 2021 (Helen Zidowecki)

The meetings of Goddess/Earth Circles have been held generally on the fourth Sundays at 1pm, unless otherwise noted. Our plans to meet in the church yard over the summer were thwarted by heat and weather, so that zoom continues to be our primary meeting venue.

In addition to Summer Connections on July 25, August 22 and September 26, we offered special sessions on August 29 and September 12 for reflection on the situations for women in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of US troops and the passage of abortion legislation in Texas. We considered UU writings, the meaning of womanhood and how these relate to Goddess spirituality.

Since spring 2021, we have been addressing two themes as we move toward the October 31 Women or Wisdom Celebration:

- Enhancing our description of Phases of Lives of Goddesses and Our own and
- Reflecting on the Women of Wisdom writings 2016-2020.

Following is our invitation to the Celebration.

Goddess/Earth Circles
WOMEN OF WISDOM CELEBRATION OCTOBER 31, 2021, Noon-2PM
UCC Zoom (Meeting ID 8238070673; passcode: 6971)

Finding ourselves in **Phases of the Goddess and Our Lives September 2021**
Reflecting on **Women of Wisdom (WOW) Annual Books 2016-2020**
As We

Honor new Crones/Women of Wisdom and Remember those who have died.

We share our Wisdom Statements for 2021! -- Short paragraph for the celebration, longer statements compiled into WOW Book 2021 after the ceremony.

<>JOIN US! Women of all ages, regular participants of Goddess/Earth Circles or not.<>
Include symbols of Sanhaim (witches, cats, owls, and the sorts)

The Phases of the Goddess and Our Lives is available on UCC website [at https://www.augustauu.org/minister-staff-and-church-life/goddess-continuing/](https://www.augustauu.org/minister-staff-and-church-life/goddess-continuing/)

For more information, contact Helen Zidowecki (hzmre@hzmre.com, 207-582-5308)

Our November 28 session will focus on the Goddess and Gratitude, as well as planning for Solstice (assisting with Sunday Service mid-December and a session on December 26).

An introductory series on Wicca will be offered starting in January and throughout the spring, lead by Mary Shifman. Full details will be available soon. Let us know your interest and questions.

You are welcome to join us. Material from the gatherings is available. Contact Helen Zidowecki (582-5308, hzmre@hzmre.com). Also see the material on the UCC website (Church Life, Goddess)

Social Justice Work – Putting our Faith into Action

Our Unitarian Universalist faith calls on us to do our part to make the world a better place. The Seven UU Principles express our values and help us focus our actions accordingly.

Many UU Congregations have adopted what is known as the 8th Principle: ***We, the member congregations of Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.***

This principle calls on us to actively work to dismantle racism as individuals and as a congregation. This work is not easy and requires us to examine our beliefs (conscious and unconscious), actions and habits and to de-center our whiteness. Many of us at UUCC have begun the process of understanding the impact of our predominate white culture and how it hinders us from being the inclusive community we aspire to be.

In the near future, we will be asked to affirm the 8th Principle. Our UUCC Social Justice group is supporting this action and will work to ensure its adoption and the work that will follow.

We hope you will join us.

Debbie Mattson & Michaela Loisel Co-Chairs Social Justice Committee

MUUSAN

The Maine State Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network (MUUSAN.org) is a group of volunteers from UU congregations around the state. It is active primarily during the legislative session when members appear before committees to testify about pending bills. The MUUSAN Steering Committee chooses bills from each of four issue areas: Health Care, Climate Change, Racial, Native and Immigrant Justice and Democracy in Action as worthy of support. Members then move ahead with creating and providing testimony to lift up UU principles and values.

The UUCC serves as fiscal sponsor to MUUSAN under the terms outlined in a Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement that is executed annually. The sponsorship allows MUUSAN to receive tax-deductible charitable donations and apply for grants. As part of the agreement, the church provides administrative assistance to MUUSAN for which we are paid 125.00 per month and a low market office space rental in the Judd House for \$50.00 per month.

Our collaboration with MUUSAN is a vital part of the social justice work undertaken by our congregation. Visit the website (MUUSAN.org) or reach out to Kathy Kellison or Michaela Loisel for more information about how you can get connected.

Unitarian Universalist Community Church
P.O. Box 8
Augusta, Maine 04332-0008

Newsletter Submissions

Submission Deadline for WINTER newsletter is December 13th
Submissions received after this date may not be able to be published.

Please submit all articles as an attachment in a Word document using Arial font size 11. Don't forget to give your article a title and sign it. Send an email to newsletter@augustauu.org with the article as a word attachment! ***Photos of church activities are welcomed! *** You will receive a confirmation e-mail of receipt of your submission.

Interim Minister: Chloë Briedé
Board President: Kathy Ann Shaw

Coord of Lifespan Faith Formation: Monique McAuliffe

Choir Director: Bridget Convey

Contact information for Committee chairs and other leaders can be found in the UUCS directory or obtained by contacting the Church Administrator.

Church Administrator: Lynn Smith
Phone: (207)622-3232 or email:
<mailto:admin@augustauu.org>

Office hours: 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. (Tues, Wed & Thurs)
No office hours: Monday or Friday

Minister Chloë **VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS**

Email: chloeucc@gmail.com
Office: (207) 623-3663

For pastoral emergencies please call her cell phone (757) 234-1303. She will return your call as soon as possible.

Minister Briede's office hours:
Monday No office hours - Sabbath
Tuesday Noon – 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday Noon – 4:00 p.m.
Thursday Noon – 4:00 p.m.
Friday No office hours – Writing day
<Other hours available by appointment