

# UUCB Pastoral Newsletter in Response to Covid-19

## April 5, 2020



### Thought to Ponder:

“I wish it need not have happened in my time,’ said Frodo. ‘So do I,’ said Gandalf, ‘and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.’” —J.R.R. Tolkein

### GREETINGS from Sylvia

Covid19 has quickly brought many changes to our lives. Soon after we closed our church on March 12, it seemed as though the entire state shut down, except for essential services. Because of the quick actions of our towns and governor, we may have flattened the curve in Maine, at least to some degree. Hopefully that means the medical people who serve us will have better access to the equipment they need both to protect themselves and to offer treatment.



By now, many of us are beginning to get our bearings. But it's hard. I long for connection, and maybe you do, too.

In recent weeks, I've held Zoom chats with my best friends from college, and I initiated and hosted a Zoom family reunion. In both cases, we were talking across states and time zones. Also, friends have reached out to contact Steve and me. Some folks have even sent snail mail and email cards – a delight to see. Wherever you are sheltering now, I encourage you to find some ways to reach out to others. It helps!

*Love, Sylvia*

### GREETINGS from Toben

Over the past two weeks, children in the Religious Exploration Program have been joining the RE teachers and me for a Zoom Children's Chapel on Sundays from 11:00- 11:45 AM. We have been and continue to do a modified Children's Chapel focused around different stories of hope, Spring, and our 7th Principle. These services are primarily designed to help kids stay connected to one another, UUCB, and their UU

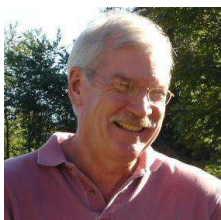


Identities. Meetings are password protected so email Toben [uubrunswickdre@gmail.com](mailto:uubrunswickdre@gmail.com) if your family has not received a Zoom Meeting Invitation.

Additionally, I have been making a weekly calendar with suggestions for how to connect to our Unitarian Universalist faith throughout the week. (See p. 5.)

*In Faith,  
Toben*

## GREETINGS from Board Chair Glenn Williams



**The Virus:** Sadly, we don't need to wonder which activities might be continuing at church. The church is closed until further notice. That doesn't mean we are unable to connect with each other,

however. Many people are getting up to speed with Zoom conferencing, and we have already had several meetings of various kinds using this technology. The entire Board met remotely at the regularly scheduled time in March, and it went very smoothly. One member was in New Hampshire at the time! He was the only one burning up fossil fuel. We are working on making this the new normal (for a while). If you would like help in learning how to connect, let me know.

**UUCB Website:** Our much-improved website is up and running. We've already gotten some positive feedback. One of the great things about the new site is that it will be much easier to keep it updated than it has been in the past. In addition to information about the church, committees, programs, etc., you can find links to our virtual services and opportunities to join with others. Please look it over <https://www.uubrunswick.org/> and let me know what you think. We are committed to continuous improvement.

*Peace and love, Glenn*

## GREETINGS from Treasurer Paul Peranteau

In these unforeseen times, there are things we can do and things we cannot. As Treasurer, I wanted to report to you about our finances for the current fiscal year, July 2019 to June 2020. Fortunately, our worship program is alive with evolving online Sunday services, newsletters are providing information and inspiration to us all, and our church building sits and waits for our return.



However, we cannot do a spring fund-raising event, nor can we continue Concerts for a Cause, nor will we have rental income. And we cannot send 50% of the cash from non-existent Church services to help needy charities – when there is no plate. And, oh my, with precipitous drops in the financial markets, where our Investment Fund will be is anyone's guess.

Although we have emergency funds, and may have to use them if this extraordinary situation continues for very long, please think now about what you would normally give to the church in pledge payments, plate offerings and so forth for the remainder of this fiscal year. We still need that income. Currently, the mail system is the only way to send in those donations and pledge payments. (Thanks again to all those who have signed up for Auto-pay.)

But we will be introducing a credit card pay system shortly, something we've avoided in the past, but in the current situation it makes sense, and perhaps this additional donation route will appeal to some people.

Covid-19 has impacted all of us in one way or another and we do understand if you do not feel comfortable giving to the church at this time. Please take care of yourselves and your loved ones and let us know if we can help in any way.

– Paul

## GREETINGS from the Pledge Drive Team

Greetings from the Pledge Drive Team! Our thanks to all of you who have already recorded your pledge! We have just surpassed 50% of our Pledge Drive goal for the 2020-2021 church year. Clearly, we do still have a way to go and hope you will send your pledge in as soon as possible. We would prefer in these times that you use our website to pledge:

<https://www.uubrunswick.org/our-work/pledge-drive/>

If you prefer, you may still mail your pledge form to the UUCB office.

UUCB  
Box 129  
Brunswick ME 04011

If you do not have a pledge form please leave a message with Shirley Bernier at the office (uubruns@gwi.net or 207-729-8515) and she will be happy to send one to you.



*Cuffy Chase among the crocuses in the church garden*

These are difficult times for all of us and for our families and we certainly understand if you are not in a position to pledge at this time. Whether or not you choose to pledge, remember that spring has indeed arrived right on schedule and our church and the gardens are there

to provide inspiration and beauty. We welcome you to take a walk and enjoy the beautiful crocuses and many daffodils that are showing their early stalks!

*Jon Allen, Cuffy Chase, Carol Gillespie, Mary Larson, Cindy Parker, Paul Peranteau, Janice Thompson*

### **GREETINGS from Lynn Ellis, Working for Justice Steering Group**



#### **Charities with Soul for**

**2020-2021:** It is that time of year again when we vote for our favorite Charities with Soul. We nominate five charities to fill out our twelve months – with the following seven legacy charities always

being included; Four Directions, The Gathering Place, Habitat for Humanity, Midcoast Hunger Prevention, Oasis Free Clinic, The Tedford Shelter, and UU Service Committee. Keep in mind that a charity would ideally support our mission statement of being a spiritual community, welcoming all, nurturing one another, working for justice, and caring for the earth.

Church Office Administrator Shirley Bernier sent out the nomination form via email last week (and via snail mail to folks who do not have email). We are asking you to nominate one or two charities and return that form to the office by

April 22. If you did not receive one please leave a message for Shirley at the office.

We will vote on the nominated charities in May.

- Lynn

### **STAYING CONNECTED**

Keeping our connections to one another is so important right now. We hope you are finding ways to reach out to one another. The church has created some ways for us to connect with one another, too.

**Reach Out Calls:** We thank our Pastoral Care Associates and Membership Committee for calling folks in our church directory to check in. If you haven't received a call yet, please let Sylvia know.

**Joys and Sorrows:** Because our virtual worship services are on line where anyone can watch them, we will not be posting joys and sorrows there. But the Pastoral Care Associates have an email address where you may communicate your joy or sorrow: uucbjoysandsorrows@gmail.com If you write to us there, a Pastoral Care Associate will get back to you. In addition (unless you tell us otherwise), we will publicize your joy or sorrow in this newsletter.

**Zoom!** Many are learning how to harvest the rich miracle of meeting via Zoom, a teleconferencing tool. But sometimes people are a bit leery of a new tech tool; sometimes people are afraid they won't know what to do.

To use Zoom, you will need to download the Zoom software onto your computer. Then, to join meetings, you simply click on the link your host provides and follow the instructions. But, even that can feel confusing at times, so we suggest you find a “how to use Zoom” lesson on YouTube. That way, you can learn how to use the software at your own pace, with no pressure. Here is one such lesson, but there are many more you can find:

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/3/31/21197215/how-to-zoom-free-account-get-started-register-sign-up-log-in-invite>



**Easter Zoom:** Isolated at home and wishing you could be with loved ones on Easter? Let's put our computers to work and gather together! You are

invited to participate in a Zoom chat from 4 to 5 pm on Easter.

Sign on at 3:45 to make sure you are all set up for the chat. At 4, we will split whoever shows up into groups of no more than 8. Enjoy some time checking in and catching up with one another! (We will send out the link to the Zoom chat via all church email.)

**Worship Services:** We have moved our worship services to a new YouTube Channel called UUCB AV. Every week, we will send you a link to the most up-to-date service. We have also started to offer occasional midweek meditations on the same channel ... just a moment for connection and contemplation.

**Virtual Coffee Hours:** We have held some virtual coffee hours, though few have participated so far. We expect to continue to hold them.



Starting Sunday, April 22, we will host a virtual coffee hour every Sunday from 10:00 to 11:00 for everyone. We will send out the link via all church email during the week ahead of each meeting.

In addition, Toben is hosting Zoom meetings for RE kids. He sends the links out to families ahead of time so that they know when to tune in.

**Committee Meetings:** We continue to ask committees to meet via Zoom or conference call rather than in person. More information: <https://zoom.us/>. Or, contact Glenn Williams or Sylvia Stocker for details.

**Church Office:** Our church office is closed, but staff are working at. Email is the best way to reach staff. You can also call Sylvia at home or on her cell phone.

### **GREETINGS from UUA President Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray**

UUA President, the Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray has posted a virtual greeting to all Unitarian Universalists.



Even as we isolate ourselves, it is helpful to remember we are all in this together. We encourage you to view Susan's greeting here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBUhn2ZQpSI>

# RE-inspire your week!

<p><b>SUNDAY, APRIL 5</b></p>	<p>After the online service, spend some time thinking about your friends at church. Say aloud why you are grateful for them.</p>	
<p><b>MONDAY, APRIL 6</b></p>	<p>Our 7th Principle talks about how important it is that we feel connected to one another. Write a letter to one of the church elders. If you need an address, ask Toben.</p>	
<p><b>TUESDAY, APRIL 7</b></p>	<p>Showing gratitude and appreciation is a big part of our UU faith. Mail delivery people are working hard to keep us connected. Make a thank you card for your mail carrier.</p>	
<p><b>WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8</b></p>	<p>Sing one of your favorite hymns together before bedtime.</p>	
<p><b>THURSDAY, APRIL 9</b></p>	<p>Paint or draw pictures or words of hope, love, joy, and connection on small rocks.</p>	
<p><b>FRIDAY, APRIL 10</b></p>	<p>Take a walk around your neighborhood and leave your special rocks in places where people can see them as the walk.</p>	
<p><b>SATURDAY, APRIL 11</b></p>	<p>Take the opportunity before or after a meal or during downtime to <b>light candles of joys and concerns</b> with your family. What are you holding in your heart this week?</p>	