



Parish Messenger

Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick

March
2025



OUR MISSION

To be a spiritual community,
To welcome all,
To nurture one another,
To work for justice,
And to care for the earth.

STAFF

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Minister

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Services in March

MONTHLY THEME: THE PRACTICE OF TRUST

March 2nd - In Humanity We Trust?

Led by Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos, Music by Jud Caswell

These days it seems like Trust is pretty low. As one tiny example, Gallup reports record low trust among Americans in the media and other public institutions like congress. When it seems like so much is wrong, where can we place our trust (or faith)? Historically, Unitarians and Universalists (and UUs together) have held a positive view of the potential of humanity and human communities to do good. As we initiate a month of reflection on the Practice of Trust, let's consider our own potential to build trust.

March 9th - Trust, and then What?

Led by Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos, Music by Will Bristol and the UUCB Choir
Conventional wisdom suggests that many of us have a tentative relationship with Trust (our theme this month). For example, we may trust the expiry date on our milk, but we probably also smell it before taking a chug. Another way of saying this is, "Trust but verify." Let's explore some strategies for discerning where we can take appropriate risks to build trust and invest in our deepest hopes.

March 16th - Trusting From the Margins

Led by Toben Cooney-Callnan, Music by Will Bristol

Marginalized and minoritized groups, by design, cannot achieve equality without help from the non-marginalized or minoritized population. This dynamic puts marginalized people in a position where they have to trust allies to do the work that they can't do. Lifelong Spiritual Formation Director, Toben Cooney-Callnan, will offer a reflection on trans visibility and allyship that will pose the questions: What is the work of allies? What is the difference between an ally and an accomplice?

March 23rd - Can We Trust Ourselves (to be good allies)?

Led by Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos, Music by Will Bristol and the UUCB Choir
We are a congregation that has taken our role as Ally seriously with regard to several historically marginalized populations. We have a "Black Lives Matter" banner on our church. We offer a land acknowledgement of sorts and engage with Wabanaki people and organizations now who advance justice for indigenous people. We have renewed our status as a Welcoming Congregation (the label for UU congregations who welcome LGBTQ+ people at every level). It is also true that criticisms about well meaning people of privilege being "allies" have solid grounding. Let's have some honest conversation with ourselves -- can we trust ourselves as allies? Are there practices we need to begin, renew, or cease that would help us level up in our allyship?

March 30th - Embodying Trust

Led by Rev. Lauren Bennett and AhSa-Ti Nu Ford, Music by Will Bristol and Special Guests. *See page 3 for details.*

Minister's Message

Continuing to Live our Mission *is Resistance!*

Dear Friends,

While I trust the reliability of planet Earth rotating on her axis, it sure feels like the world is spinning more quickly these days—in fact, way too quickly. As many astute analyzers have observed, the new administration's shock and awe tactics are working exactly as intended. The sheer number of nasty executive orders and statements have left many people shaking their heads, mouths agape, asking, "What the Actual <bleep>?!" I couldn't begin to even list the issues as singular dot points, for example, without breaking the Parish Messenger. So, I'll limit myself to three observations just to establish the context for what comes next.



- Programs that directly benefit poor, underserved, at-risk, marginalized people are being slashed so more money can shift to benefit billionaires. The impact on affected populations is catastrophic, not to mention the livelihood of thousands of people who have devoted their vocational lives to serving others in some of the world's worst humanitarian crises.
- The US has apparently leaned heavily into its aspirations as a colonizing empire. People are resisting. Some are laughing out loud at the absurdity of it all. However, the suggestions that the US should buy Greenland, colonize Gaza to turn it into ocean front property, and rename entire bodies of water to promote our own brand ... are coming from a serious place of hubris, greed, and power-hoarding (all of which are distracting us from actual humans—and a planet--in desperate life or death situations).
- Prejudice and hate have taken off their kid gloves and are no longer afraid to openly rumble in the streets. As Gary Lawless observed in a recent lecture on the history of the KKK in Brunswick, (I'm paraphrasing) if you take the worst propaganda and replaced the word "Catholic" with "Immigrant" or "Transgender," it would echo exactly what is being said and done right now. We should not take this realization lightly.

These and so many other things are happening concurrently, and it's overwhelming. As many wise and seasoned activists have reminded us, the point of all of this is that we are overwhelmed ... and their hope is that we will feel hopeless and give up.

In these times, I have been so encouraged by the reminders that simply continuing to do what we do is resistance. Living our mission is one of the ways that we are giving life to our values and centering love. We exist to be a spiritual community, to welcome all, to nurture one another, to work for justice, and to care for the earth. In our current context, each part of that mission feels like it is at once more difficult, and more vital than ever.

If you find yourself spinning these days, you are not alone. Breathe. Reach out for one another. Remember that every small action you take to center love, to slow down and tend to the life in front of you, to listen deeply and reflect, to make new and different friends, to create art, to generate joy, to contribute to another creature's well-being without expectation of any return. All of these are within our power, and they are ways of resisting the destruction we see around us with positive, intentional, alternative programming for life. Let us never underestimate how important this is, and let us remember that it is work best done together.

Blessings,
Kharma

A Note from the Music Director

I won't say much about this upcoming month's theme of trust since it seems to me that one does not need to necessarily discuss it but rather bring trust into being through action. Let us all stay present to how we trust this month whether in the external world of the church or perhaps within the context of a music rehearsal at church. And by the way—there will be an out-of-the-ordinary (in a good way) workshop featuring music at the end of the month of March that will be perfect to put trust, along with other spiritual pursuits, into practice—stay tuned for that!



Will Bristol

Music happenings this month:

- Choir rehearsals**—every Thursday (7-8:30pm) in the sanctuary
- Recorder ensemble**—Sunday March 2nd 11:20am-12pm in the Youth Group Room
- Drum Circle**—Monday March 3rd (7-8pm) in the sanctuary
- A Cappella**—Sunday March 9th 11:20am-12pm in the May Sarton Room
- Fourth Sunday All-Stars**—Sunday March 23rd 11:20am-12pm in the Youth Group Room

Best, *Will*

From the Lifelong Spiritual Formation Director (LSFD)



Toben Cooney-Callnan

In 2023, Rev. Kharma, in collaboration with First Universalist Yarmouth and Beth Israel sought to create a larger presence of liberal faith homes working together to support the LGBTQIA+ community at Brunswick Pride. The Pride Committee requires that groups give a name in order to register and thus, "Queer Spirit" was born. In preparation for Brunswick Pride 2023, members of the three collaborating congregations came together to get to know one another, to plan for what kind of presence they wanted to have at Pride, and to make swag (goodies to give away to people who come to the table). The result of the planning was a fabulous interfaith table that welcomed queer folx and their allies to make their own buttons, gather information about the different congregations, get their face painted, and to get a fabulous glitter blessing offered by queer and allied clergy.

As wild as it may seem to start thinking about June, it's right around the corner and planning for Queer Spirit 2025 has already begun. So far, the congregations that will make up Queer Spirit 2025 include UUCB, Brunswick United Methodist Church, St Paul's Episcopal Church, First Parish UCC, Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church, and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. As part of the interfaith Pride planning for Queer Spirit 2025, there will be a *Taste the Rainbow* Pre-Pride Planning Mixer held at Good Shepherd Church on March 21st at 6:30pm. All LGBTQIA+ allies are welcome to attend. This event will be a dessert pot luck and participants are asked to bring a brightly colored or rainbow themed treat to share. We will spend this time getting to know one another and to talk about opportunities for interfaith ally education.



If you would like to know more about or register for this event, you can go to the Events page on the UUCB website.

Services in March (continued)

March 30th - Embodying Trust

Led by Guest leaders Rev. Lauren Bennett and AhSa-Ti Nu Ford (bios on p.5), Music by Will Bristol and Special Guests
 What does it mean to put your trust in something? What could it feel like to trust your body? Together, we will lean into the wisdom of our bodies and explore how we might cultivate trust as a spiritual practice—acknowledging both its challenges and its transformative power. Who knows, we might even get up out of our seats...

Special Events

Connecting with the Sacred

TRUSTING THE WISDOM OF OUR BODIES

a workshop for all ages & all body types

Saturday, March 29 from 10 - 4

Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick - 1 Middle St.

www.uubrunswick.org

Our lives are not lived in our heads alone—we are whole beings containing oceans of emotions, experiences, and dreams. In this interactive workshop, we will explore embodiment through music, dance, and art, engaging our senses to deepen our connection to ourselves and the world around us. Through guided movement, creative expression, and communal reflection, we will discover how to trust our bodies to reveal to us truths we can trust in; we will lean into the ways our bodies need to be centered to experience presence, healing, and joy. Whether you feel excited about jumping into your body, and especially if you are nervous about it, we urge you to join us into this healing space. No prior experience is needed—just a willingness to move, create, and explore with an open heart.

special guests

Rev. Lauren Bennett & AhSa-Ji Nu Ford

more info about them on back

**SUGGESTED DONATION OF \$25 PER PERSON
OR \$40 FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY**

REGISTER HERE



or email
administrator@uubrunswick.org
for more information



Special Events

Special Guests

Rev. Lauren Bennett



Rev. Lauren Bennett grew up near the forests of the Cascade mountains, her first spiritual home. A church skeptic, she found a community of radical queer disciples who preached liberation of all people in upstate New York when attending St. Lawrence University. Through a long discernment process that included 3 years of Community Organizing in St. Petersburg, FL, she reluctantly started the process to become an ordained minister in Metropolitan Community Churches. She is currently serving as the Lead Pastor of Metropolitan Community Church of Greater St. Louis (MCCGSL) and co-coordinates conferences and events for the broader MCC movement. In her free time, she loves being outside, reading, and spending time with her wife AhSa-Ti, son Ahmmit, and dog Tyler.

AhSa-Ti Nu Ford



A multi-disciplinary artist, sound engineer, and educator with work rooted in poetry, storytelling, and activism, AhSa-Ti Nu utilizes her voice as a means of expressing soulful words in a contemporary context. AhSa-Ti Nu's work centers on the integrity and social context of communities of color, showing how artistry can act as a vehicle of resistance and empowerment for the marginalized. Her work seeks to provide a platform for underrepresented communities and to create a space for the voices and of those most marginalized to be heard and seen. Her work and life are deeply rooted in the rich sounds of African-American music through jazz, blues, R&B, gospel, reggae, rock, and various other genres as she seeks to engage in mutual teaching and learning with community members.

AhSa-Ti Nu's most recent work is a film entitled *Overlooked Giants: A Parable of Queer Women of Color in the Arts* which explores the stories queer women of color artists creatively collaged through song, dance, and enticing visuals. As a performer, AhSa-Ti Nu has shared stages with celebrated artists such as Bishop Yvette Flunder, Shirley Miller of the Edwin Hawkins Ensemble, Meklit Hadero, Sean Hayes, Quinn DeVeaux, and The Stone Foxes. These experiences have solidified her as a veteran of both live performance and the recording studio. Beyond performance, her expertise as a sound engineer has connected her with a wide array of artists and celebrities, further enhancing her creative contributions. As the founder of the National Black Liberation Alliance, AhSa-Ti Nu leads efforts to empower marginalized communities, with a particular focus on the Black community. Her work includes organizing free music events, workshops, and performances for charitable causes such as suicide awareness, educational advocacy, and equality initiatives.

From the Board of Trustees



It's cold and snowy but the days are getting longer and the seed catalogues are arriving!

The Board has been working with Erica Brown from the UUA to address the wonderful situation of our growing congregation. On February 1st we held a workshop with nearly 100 people attending, to consider what we like about our church and options for accommodating our growth. Our Sunday attendance for 2024/25 averages 182, and last year it was 135. Erica created a summary of our ideas. You can see them if you click on this [link](#) or scan this QR code.

The Board will be experimenting with some of the proposed ideas in the next few months. We plan to set up more chairs. We plan to move coffee hour to the Merry Meeting Bay room to avoid congestion with the extra seating and hallway chats.



Di Kew and her hardworking Pledge Team have a plan ready to roll out in March. We thank them for their efforts and look forward to supporting our staff, building, and programs in church and in the community.

In the coming weeks, you will notice a change in the Wabanaki Land Acknowledgement that is read at the beginning of the worship service on Sundays. The Board of Trustees has added to this statement to reflect UUCB's acknowledgement of the Wabanaki's strong connection to the land, their pain and struggle, and our commitment to support and include the indigenous people currently living in our community. This statement was developed in conjunction with the Indigenous People work group of the Working for Justice Team and the Worship Committee.

Joanne Allen jlaen543@gmail.com

UUCB ART GALLERY

MARCH ART SHOW:

WIMBERLEY BURTON

Travels: Neighborhoods to Nepal

Light drifting on white sheets and reflections in marshes as well as recent views of sunrises on the world's highest mountains are evident in Wimberley Burton's encaustic, oil, and watercolor or gouache paintings. These will be on view during March at the UUCB exhibit of "Travels: Neighborhoods to Nepal." After serving as a U.S. Naval Line Officer and Attorney, Wimberley graduated in 2003 with a Post-Baccalaureate degree from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University in Boston. Wimberley's views of landscapes from around the globe as well as in her "neighborhoods" reflect her love of light and color.

Image: Artwork by Wimberley Burton



Please take some time to enjoy the artwork in Fellowship Hall. Contact: Joanne Allen, jlaen543@gmail.com

Church Happenings and Announcements

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

On Sunday, March 2, we will welcome a large number of new members. A group photo will be taken for later publication. In the meantime, enjoy the two bios that are included below: one new member and one long-time member. We plan to include bios and photos each month so that we can become acquainted with our growing congregation. Please welcome our new members when you see them!

Debbie Caldwell



Debbie was born in Caribou, Maine in 1940. She lives in Augusta and has been a UU for 65 years! She has three adult children. She taught Religious Exploration in King's Chapel UU Church in Boston, also in Watertown and Hamilton, MA. In 1988 Deborah spent an entire summer at the Ferry Beach, UU owned camp conference center as an employee in the dining room.

Debbie considers herself a "community creator." She organized a home schooling club in Boston and an international secretary's work swap from MIT in Cambridge, MA with London School of Business.

Besides her community involvement, Debbie enjoys collecting family diaries, Garden Club, Genealogy and Historical Society activities.

Debbie was attracted to UUCB because of the rich community that we have. She is impressed by our activism, diversity and support of food and shelter needs. She is eager to get to know other members and she is more than willing to commute the 31 miles from Augusta to attend our church. Please welcome Debbie!

Vicki Simpson



Meet Vicki Simpson! Vicki and husband Hank have been members of UUCB for over 30 years. Vicki lives in Bath and has two grown children, Julia in NYC and John and family, including Vicki's 2 year old granddaughter, in Taiwan. Needless to say, this provides Vicki and Hank with exceptional travel opportunities!

Vicki is native to Maine, born in Bar Harbor before moving to Connecticut where she spent most of her childhood years. Vicki went to college to become an occupational therapist and later met Hank at a contradance in Cambridge, Massachusetts. They married and moved to Bath where they raised their children. Vicki started her career as an occupational therapist in Boston, then Arizona, and the last 40 years in Maine with the Pine Tree Society and also as a private contractor with the public schools.

When asked what makes her day, Vicki is quick to mention her husband Hank whose optimistic and cheerful good nature have grounded and strengthened her all these years. Vicki volunteers for the Patten Library Bookstore in Bath and enjoys reading, cooking, rug hooking, travel, and especially visiting family.

During her time as a member of UUCB Vicki has served on several committees including Building and Grounds, Membership, the Pledge Drive, as well as serving on the Board. She is currently on the Membership committee where she enjoys the opportunity to meet new people and help orient folks to our congregation. Vicki loves the openness of the UU church, and UUCB in particular, and is grateful to have this very special place to gather.

Church Happenings and Announcements

SoUP's ON – SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2025



SoUP's On has been rescheduled for Sunday, March 2, due to weather challenges.

The Membership Committee is planning a cozy luncheon directly following the service on February 9. We will quickly set up tables in the sanctuary and delicious soups, bread, fruit and desserts will be served in Fellowship Hall. While the sanctuary is being transformed into a dining area, coffee will be available in the Merrymeeting Room.

We look forward to having a variety of delicious soups to serve. Sign-up sheets will be at the Visitor's Table so that you can tell us what kind of special soup you will bring to share.

If your last name begins with A-L, please bring a dessert, cookies or bars.

If your last name begins with M-P, please bring sliced bread.

If your last name begins with Q-Z, please bring cut up fruits or veggies.

We are looking forward to SoUP's On! If you would like to attend and bring a soup, please contact Sarah Fabian: farahsabian@gmail.com.

SPIRIT FEAST – FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2025



Spirit Feast

Friday, April 11th - 5:30 - 7:30 pm

All Ages Welcome

Please join us for our **second annual Spirit Feast**, an intergenerational event to bring us all together as, this year, we share comfort food and practices to nurture our beloved community.

This is the season when many religious traditions are focusing on their respective high holy days (e.g., Christians have Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter; Jews celebrate Passover; Muslims will be observing Ramadan and Eid al Fitr, etc.). Here at UUCB, we come from a number of religious backgrounds, all drawn together by the UU covenantal community centering love and rooted in the values of equity, justice, pluralism, generosity, transformation, and interdependence. Spirit Feast is our attempt to create our own UUCB holiday celebrations, and we'd really love it if you were with us.

You're invited to bring a dish of "Comfort Food" (define this for yourself—seriously, if it's comfort food for you, bring it to share with friends). We will also have some community games, music, dance, and readings. Please let us know if you are planning to attend, so we have a basic headcount for our preparations. [Click here to register](#) or email administrator@uubrunswick.org.

Concerts for a Cause

The mission of Concerts for a Cause is to hold a series of concerts to raise money for the church and local charities while sharing a variety of quality music with the Brunswick area community. The 2024-25 season's charities will be Brunswick Area Teen Center and Maine Family Planning. See the entire lineup of concerts and more details about each performer at <https://uubrunswick.org/programs/concerts-for-a-cause/upcoming>, or scan the QR code at right with your phone camera! >> >> >>



Women in Harmony

SATURDAY, March 15 at 7:30 PM

Women in Harmony is an affirming and inclusive community of women who sing for social justice and for the joy of making music together. The group has been dedicated to both musical excellence and social justice for over 20 years, giving them a unique niche among singing groups in Northern New England.



Catherine "Kitty" Beller-McKenna has been the director of Women in Harmony since the fall of 1999, bringing to the group extensive experience in conducting both women's and mixed choruses in community and collegiate settings. **Deana Ingraham Gurney** is the accompanist for Women in Harmony. A consummate musician and technically skilled player, Deana is equally comfortable in a wide variety of styles.

For this concert, Women in Harmony is presenting a program of pieces that embody our commitment to working together to make the world a better place. The concert ranges in content from songs about making change happen to songs about holding onto love in an increasingly divided society. Some highlights are *I am Willing* by Holly Near, *What Happens When a Woman (Takes Power)* by Alexandra Olsavsky, and *Prayer* by Ysaye Barnwell.

Tickets can be purchased at the ticket table in the Fellowship Hall after church services (cash or check only), or in the church office, Gulf of Maine Books, or online at <https://ticketstripe.com/womenharmony>. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door, and \$10 for students/children.

There are only 2 more Sundays to get your tickets at the Concert Table, so, don't forget your cash or checkbook.

This is going to be a concert that will help us get through these difficult times. You don't want to miss it!

And donations of baked goods would be gratefully appreciated.

Guy Davis

SATURDAY, April 8 at 7:30 PM

Guy Davis is a two-time, back-to-back Grammy nominee for Best Traditional Blues, a musician, actor, author, and songwriter. Guy uses a blend of Roots, Blues, Folk, Rock, Rap, Spoken Word, and World Music to comment on, and address, the frustrations of social injustice, touching on historical events such as the Tulsa Race Massacre, and common life struggles.

Guy won "Keeping the Blues Alive" Award and was nominated by The Blues Foundation for Best Acoustic Album of the Year, Best Acoustic Artist of the Year, and Best Instrumentalist. In fact, he's been nominated nearly two dozen times by the Blues Foundation. His performances feature a mix of his original songs and cover songs by Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Pete Seeger, Bob Dylan, Mance Lipscombe, Blind Willie McTell, Leadbelly, Blind Lemon Jefferson, and many others.



Tickets are also available at the ticket table for the Guy Davis concert.

These tickets will go fast, so you should get them early.

Working for Justice

FEBRUARY'S CHARITY WITH SOUL: THE GATHERING PLACE

Contact: Stephen Wood swood88@outlook.com



From Mary Connolly, Director:



The Gathering Place (TGP) is dedicated to providing a safe, welcoming, and comfortable space for individuals to gather in downtown Brunswick. Our mission is to offer our guests respect, encouragement, companionship, support, and hope. We strive to ensure those in need have a friendly and supportive environment to spend their daytime hours.

At The Gathering Place, we stand ready to welcome those experiencing their most challenging times. The importance of feeling truly accepted cannot be overstated, particularly for those without other options. Every individual we serve is entitled to the opportunity to become a valued and contributing member of our community.

We recognize that many guests require support beyond what we can offer through safe space, hospitality, companionship, and basic necessities. Therefore, we have decisively expanded our services to include a Support Services Program. This program provides direct access to community resources through TGP's Community Navigator to address urgent needs such as housing instability, homelessness, food insecurity, poverty, legal representation, etc.

We actively forge relationships with community partners and service providers to ensure our guests receive the quality support they need. If we cannot fulfill a guest's need internally, we will take all necessary steps to connect them with the appropriate community resources that can.

The Gathering Place is relentless in its dedication to our mission of providing hospitality, support, and respect to everyone who enters our doors. We are a powerful example of what happens when a community opens its heart and offers a sense of home to its most vulnerable neighbors.

The Gathering Place is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM and Saturday from 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM. We are located at 5 Tenney Way (off Union Street).

"Our mission is to provide a safe, welcoming and comfortable space for people to gather in downtown Brunswick, offering our guests respect, encouragement, help with the practical problems of life, companionship and hope."

Want to make a difference? Volunteer with us!
Visit us or call 729-0288 to learn more,
and visit our website at <https://www.brunswickgatheringplace.org>.

Working for Justice

Contact Steve Eagles: seagles4@gmail.com

MUUSAN

You can actually make a difference in our Maine world by voicing your support for bills working their way through the legislature. Your statewide support action network has information and suggestions about bills as they develop and how you can help.



Gun safety, immigrant rights, homelessness, Wabanaki rights, protecting our environment are all topics MUUSAN engages with. Find out more and be informed by signing up for the MUUSAN action alert list by contacting Betsy Williams (bwilliams120@gmail.com) or look for our information table after church throughout the legislative session.

Two locally important bills:

- LD 222 (sponsored by Brunswick Rep Ankeles) deals with PFAS contamination.
- LD 29 (sponsored by Bowdoinham Rep Cluchey) would require the MDOT to implement (as funds become available) the recommended Lower Road Rail use Advisory committee which would turn the long-abandoned rail corridor from Brunswick to Gardiner into a non-motorized trail from Cooks Corner to Augusta! As many of you know, UUCB members were very active in establishing the widely used Brunswick bike path.

Both bills have been written and are now under consideration.

BRUNSWICK AREA TEEN CENTER

Contact: Cuffy Chase cmc1322@gmail.com



The teens are anticipating an early spring and painting small pots for their soon-to-be-planted seeds. Good luck with the weather!

Squirrel appreciation day was celebrated with a new specially designed and painted squirrel feeder. The teens may get more activity than they anticipated!



In addition to their springtime preparations they welcomed Lauren, a new intern from the University of Southern Maine. She will be with them until the end of April. Her field of study is behavioral health and no doubt she will have plenty of experience with the kids. Lauren walked the kids through making pizza waffles. They were an instant hit! The kitchen did look like a snowstorm had struck inside though as all the kids covered themselves and the floors with flour. Maybe next time that type of activity could be moved outdoors!

Recently, Renee led her first solo field trip with the teens. They attended the STEM Fair being put on at Mt. Ararat and learned about virtual welding, digital painting, underwater robots and so much more! The teens seemed to have a lot of fun with these activities, so the staff will continue to explore other similar possibilities.

Six more weeks of winter! It's official, or as official as a groundhog #39's word can be. It certainly felt that way as the Teen Center experienced what seemed like its first real snowstorm of the season. Mid-February the teens were introduced to a Mindful Monday activity using tarot cards. The kids were taught a variety of mindfulness exercises they can enjoy by drawing cards and reflecting on their thoughts and actions. It was so successful that even after drawing cards for hours on Monday, they wanted to do it with each other again the next day. Yet another snow day! But the next day was filled with retro gaming and whipping up some homemade orange chicken. Yay!

WE CARE



TOGETHER

One year after we celebrated the tenth anniversary of our new building, we find ourselves blessed with a congregation that is thriving, growing, and making a difference in our community. **Since We Care Together**, we must share generously as we enter our Pledge Drive Month.

Thanks to the first installment of last year's Heart Gift, which paid for additional hours of Toben's time, our Religious Exploration program, now renamed **Lifelong Spiritual Formation**, has expanded to include all ages. Our involvement in our community thrives through our work for justice, collaboration with the *Brunswick Area Interfaith Council*, a myriad of musical outlets offered for all ages (such as our musical partnership with Bowdoin College, the community Pride Choir, and our drumming circle) and our weekly sharing with Charities with Soul.

On Sundays, we can see that every seat is filled. We just reported 240 members to the UUA in our annual certification. We now welcome an average of 170-200 people a week to worship with us in person (and 30+ online), and we have grown from a small to a medium-sized church under UUA guidelines. Under the guidance of the Board we are seeking ways to increase our ability to welcome and provide meaningful worship services to all those who come through the door.

Continuing to support our growth will require renewed generosity to support our incredible and hard-working staff: Kharma, our Minister; Toben, our Director of Lifelong Spiritual Formation; Will, our Director of Music; Shirley, our Office Administrator; and Tony and Mary Sulkowski, our Sextons. Our growing numbers require that we meet new UUA compensation goals for the medium-sized congregation that we have become.

We will continue to expand opportunities for Lifelong Spiritual Formation for all with the planned increase in Toben's hours. We will continue our active presence in the Greater Brunswick Area to provide the comfort, hope, and inspiration that our current times call for.

We, your Pledge Team, will come to you soon with a big ask -- that you give generously to celebrate what we have achieved and what is yet to be achieved in order to allow us to continue to grow, thrive, and give to our community. **Because We Care Together!**

In Gratitude,

your Pledge Team

Al Cressy, Walt Harris, Di Kew, Nancy Kurtz, Cindy Parker, Kristen Pett & Vicki Simpson

The April Parish Messenger Deadline is Saturday, March 15th
Please send your submissions to: parish-messenger-editor@uubrunswick.org.