The Messenger

December 2020

Unitarian Universalist Church of Saco & Biddeford www.uuchurchsacobiddeford.com

Reverend Shay MacKay

60 School St. Saco, Maine 04072 207 282-0062 uuchurch@gwi.net



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Whoever you are, wherever you come from, whomever you love, you are welcome here.

Worship for December

Sundays at 10:00 a.m. on Zoom

December 6th – Guest preacher, Matt Meyer. (See additional information on Page 2)

December 13th – **Hope vs. Expectation** – *The hope of the righteous ends in gladness, but the expectation of the wicked comes to nothing.* ~ *Proverbs 10:28*

December 20th – Honoring the Winter Solstice with Rev. Shay and the Youth of SUUC

December 24th – Joint Christmas Eve Service at 6:00 p.m. Have candles with you at home!

Join Rev. Shay and both the SUUC and UUCSB Beloved communities for a special celebration of love and light, featuring music from our many talented congregants. One of the most special parts of our annual Christmas Eve services is the candlelight, so everyone is encouraged to have as many candles as you can safely have around you as you Zoom in from wherever you will be. Or fireplaces, firepits, LED candles, Christmas lights, fairy lights, etc.

December 27th – Guest preacher, Reverend Niki Norman from UUCSB – more info to come!

Join Zoom Meetings at https://zoom.us/j/2399631729
Meeting ID: 239 963 1729 Phone: 646-876-9923

December 6th Worship Service – Guest preacher, Matt Meyer is a musician, worship leader, and community organizer, as well as a lifelong Unitarian Universalist. He graduated from Berklee College of Music in 2004, where he studied hand drumming and world music. During that time, he also studied abroad in Cuba, Ghana, and Central America. Since then, Matt has led music and worship for hundreds of services in congregations all over the country. He is a founding worship leader and current Director of Operations for <u>Sanctuary Boston</u>, a contemporary worship community in Boston. He was a founding member of the <u>Lucy Stone Cooperative</u> and is a current organizer of the UU Songleaders Convergence. You can find out more about Matt at his website: <u>www.RhythmRevelations.com</u>

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONNECTION

Virtual Brown Bag Suppers with Rev. Shay – Every Wednesday from 5pm to 6pm on Zoom.

Brown Bags in December will take place on December 2nd, 9th, and 16th.

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89026676599

Meeting ID: 890 2667 6599 Call In: (646) 876-9923

Weekly Vespers Services – Every Thursday from 7pm to 7:30pm on Zoom. Vespers services in December will take place on December 3rd, 10th, and 17th.

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83734173380

Meeting ID: 837 3417 3380 Call In: (646) 876-9923

Coffee Hour with your Board Members and Rev. Shay – Every Sunday after our worship service, join Rev. Shay and members of your Board of Trustees on Zoom for small group discussions based around the monthly theme, that day's sermon, and other relevant topics from your lives. Here is the zoom link for our Sunday services and Coffee Hour:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2399631729

Meeting ID: 239 963 1729 Call In: (646) 876-9923

The Soul of Aging with Rev. Shay – Every Tuesday from 10am to 12pm on Zoom,

Soul of Aging in December will take place on December 1st, 8th, and 15th.

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84624720782

Meeting ID: 846 2472 0782 Call In: (646) 876-9923

Rev. Shay's Schedule

- Mondays: Writing Day, limited availability
- Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays:

 Completely available to you. Please email, text, or call to set an appointment time!
- Fridays: Day Off. Emergency availability only.
- Saturdays: On Call for pre-scheduled meetings and events. Available for emergencies.
- Sundays: Worship and Coffee Hour.

Email: <u>revshaymackay@gmail.com</u> Phone and Text: (207) 518-8059

Shay's Musings

December Theme ~ Expectation



"My expectations were reduced to zero when I was 21. Everything since then has been a bonus." ~ Stephen Hawking

I'm sad to say that whatever holidays you may celebrate this month, and however you normally expect to celebrate them, things are bound to be different this year.

December can be a difficult month even during "normal" times, full of complex emotions and intense (or absent) family interactions, holiday shopping madness, and societal expectations of joy and goodwill despite the growing loss of sunlight and warmth. When you throw in a tension-filled presidential transition and a global pandemic, well, I'm thinking we're in for a wild ride, a rollercoaster of emotions, punctuated by small delights and big frustrations. And while many of us may be able to hide the toll this is taking on our spirits, the reality is that we can all probably use a little help in managing our expectations and processing our disappointments this year.

How, do I hear you shouting?

The problem of expectation occurs when we expect something to happen without good reasons for that expectation - for example, doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different outcome despite it never having worked in the past. Or, for example, expecting Christmas to be exactly the same as it has always been despite being in the middle of a pandemic this year.

BUT...when expectation is based on good reasons, on solid evidence, on positive past experience, that is when we can depend on the results. And yes, even then it is possible for the outcome to be different than what we had hoped it would be, but overall, our hope is well-founded, overall our faith will be rewarded.

In the Christian tradition – *our* tradition as Unitarians and Universalists – the four weeks leading up to Christmas are designated as a season called Advent, a time of waiting and preparation of the coming of Christ. More broadly defined – a time of rest and reflection as we wait *in expectation* for the return of Light to the world. And this expectation – that light <u>will return</u> is an expectation based on millions of years of natural cycles. As far as I know, the Earth's tilt on its axis hasn't changed much lately. If it ever does we'll have much bigger problems than how to do Christmas dinner over Zoom!

Here's my point: there are going to be disappointments this month and I'm sorry for that, but I can promise you that on December 21st light will begin its return and on December 25th Love will renew its promise to dwell among us all here on earth.

Our Sister Church

REFLECTIONS FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



The Board of Trustees, in our continued efforts to effect open communication, will share a preliminary copy of the monthly meeting minutes within two weeks of our monthly meetings.

On our agenda for the new calendar year is considering creation of a Covenant of Right Relations. This is something the UUA covers under their Safe Congregations efforts. See https://www.uua.org/safe for more information. Watch for your chance to provide input or join a work group.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has worsened since the last Messenger was published. The planned reopening of bars and increased capacity allowance for indoor spaces has been delayed. Spread is happening in small group gatherings so please be careful.

Fundraising and the collection plate have been severely impacted by the pandemic. The Fundraising group is working on some creative ways to raise funds during a pandemic. Anyone for virtual bingo! Just kidding but, if you have some ideas, please reach out to Marilyn Stoesser-Casad. We are putting online payments in place so members and other folks attending services can contribute.

We are excited about the planned Candlelight Concert program coming in mid-January. Ellie Rolnick, Donna Beveridge., and Jan Sacco from the Sanford church are coordinating the event. It will be virtual this year so there will not be an entrance fee but contributions are welcome.

Rev. Shay is working on the Christmas service and the board is looking for other creative ways to celebrate the season.

The virtual coffee hour breakout rooms have gone well and we hope that they continue to make the Sunday services more meaningful for all.

Again, as Susan said so eloquently last issue, "A big 'Thank You' to all of you who continue to support our mission and our community during these difficult times".

Stay safe and take care of each other.

— Ron Hiser

UUCSB Board of Trustees

Pat Snyder, Secretary Sonja Gerken

Ron Hiser, Treasurer Laurie Sivonen

Anne Cyr Anne Wilkinson

Mike Dolan Susan Young

BOT Notice

Board of Trustees agendas are posted one week prior to the meetings. Approved Board minutes are posted on the bulletin board nearest the Sanctuary and emailed to the congregation.

Liaisons to Committees

Building & Grounds: Mike Dolan Caring Connection: Anne Cyr

Committee on Ministries: Laurie Sivonen Faith in Action Team: Sonja Gerken

Finance: Ron Hiser
Fundraising: Susan Young

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Membership: Mike Dolan Ministerial Relations Team: Pat Snyder

Nominating: Anne Wilkinson

Worship: Sonja Gerken

Music Notes from Choir Director, Ellie Rolnick



The 'Bi-Choir' continues to make music together. Member of the UUCSB and SUUC choirs have joined their voices together to sing in a virtual format this year. We have already produced a couple of audio recordings and a couple of video recordings. We seem to be doing better each time! Everyone agrees it's been a lot of fun so far!

The choir is meeting virtually after church via Zoom 3 Sundays every month. Our focus is:

- deepening out connection to one another
- rehearing songs for audio or video recording (don't let this deter you it's easier than you think!)
- learning music theory (like how to read music) for those who are interested

All are welcome who love to sing or who want to be involved with our Music Ministry.

Upcoming rehearsals for holiday music – all rehearsals are at 11:30 a.m. Zoom links will be sent to all those on my choir list.

November 29

December 6, 13

For more information, please contact me via my email in the church directory or send an email to the church and Brian will forward it to me.

The Caring Connection

The Caring Connection Committee is now holding Zoom meetings until it warms up again next spring. We may be gathering digitally, but it's still good to be together. Our committee is four members... but the caring is spread throughout this church community. Thank you for all that you do!

How are you faring as the days grow shorter and cooler, and with the knowledge that the upcoming holidays will be muted? Please know that the Caring Connection is here for you and yours. Do not hesitate to reach out to Rev. Shay or any one of us

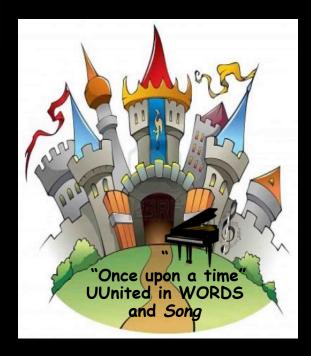


to let us know of your need or of a concern you may have for someone else in our church family. Even in the course of this pandemic we can make phone calls, send cards, Zoom, visit outside at a distance, deliver treats and meals, etc.

May we shine a light of love, With every thought, With every step we take, May we shine a light of love! (words/music by Joyce Poley, 2009)

The caring connection team: Anne Cyr, Margaret Merrill, Pat Snyder, Marilyn Stoesser-Casad







Hear ye! Hear Ye, all ye good citizens of our church kingdom! Hold the date!

The UU Church of Saco & Biddeford and the Sanford UU Church are **UUniting** to offer a virtual candlelight concert featuring talented performers of both churches. Their words and songs will be woven in and around a story about **Living in a Time of Change**. The MC of this special concert will be our very own Rev. Shay MacKay.



When? Saturday, January 16, 2021
Time? 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Where? Online link available in January
Cost? Fundraiser for our churches.
Pay what you wish.
More info to follow

We would love to have you and your family and friends join us virtually. Please contact any of the following for more information.

Ellie Rolnick (erolnick@maine.rr.com), Jan Sacco (jrsacco@metrocast.net), or Donna Beveridge (dbeveridge18@gmail.com)

Ministerial Relations Committee (MRT)

"What is it?" "Who's on it?" "What does it do?" "Why don't we know about it?" "Is it another name for the Committee on Ministries?"

These are some of the questions members and friends of our churches ask about the MRT or Ministerial Relations Team. Folks in the Saco & Biddeford church are even more confused because our church has both the MRT and the Committee on Ministries.

You may be surprised to know that the MRT is simply a group of three members from both churches appointed by Rev. Shay. We meet on a monthly basis to question, listen, reflect and advise on issues relating to our churches and minister. We are Tom Huber and Dee Ames from SUUC and Matt Gerken, Mark Young, and Donna Beveridge from UUCSB. Bev Brent from SUUC recently left the team and will be replaced by another member from Sanford. Each of us pays attention to Rev. Shay and our churches. We notice what is working well, focus on improvements rather than criticism, maintain respectful relationships, and operate, confidentially, as openly and honestly as possible.

To be more specific, the MRT provides Rev. Shay with support, provides valuable input into her annual evaluations while she is in preliminary fellowship, and gives feedback to her regarding challenges that may arise. The MRT also watches to be sure that Rev. Shay maintains a balanced work and personal life so that she fulfills her contract obligations but also takes care of herself.

The Committee on Ministries, on the other hand, evaluates all the various ministries and committees in the Saco church and provides support to individuals or groups when conflicts arise. The CoM was created during the time when we had no called minister. Once our two congregations called Rev. Shay, it was decided that we needed – in addition to the CoM – a Ministerial Relations Team specifically formed to support our minister. These two committees operate independently of each other.

Feel free to talk to any of us about our roles on the team. And think about whether you would enjoy being a member as terms on the MRT rotate and end.



Dee Ames, SUUC



Matt Gerken, UUCSB



Donna Beveridge, UUCSB

Tom Huber, SUUC

(Not shown)



Mark Young, UUCSB

Poems by Keith Walker

Call Home

Mamma would whistle two notes of a sparrow to call me home from play something calls me still though I forgot the place where that child used to live sometimes home finds me like coming in from the streets' hot ringing clamor into the shaded cool silence resting inside sanctuary walls footsteps on the stones and the grinding of your heart melt to a whisper a wordless prayer a call of silence within that waits for you there

The Calling

sounds not of the city
filter through the traffic
in late October dusk
rising into a wave of calling
that skims the rooftop

I crane and sweep the dim air to find them as their voices surge and pass directly over me speaking in a wildness that my bones remember

the skein of wings catches in the lights of the town square as they sink towards the black river

their wake leaves a silence that deepens in the empty rooms of my heart and maps the contours of an ache that haunts with asking

I have let the calls go unanswered until they passed out of earshot and lost have fallen to earth succumbed to a fear of flying and lost the use my wings







Last month WIONN (Welcome Immigrants Our New Neighbors) received a generous donation of 46 hats, 29 pairs of mittens, 3 scarves and 6 lap blankets/shawls! Beverly (pictured) and Doris, both of The Pines in OOB, have been busy knitting. Our immigrant friends will be the recipients of their handiwork this season.

These gifts came to WIONN in a circuitous way. Diane Eiker, one of our newest members, knew that FiAT (Faith in Action Team) was collecting household goods for immigrant families. She connected her neighbor Carolyn with me last spring. Carolyn began bringing household goods originally destined for a "now cancelled" yardsale to me over the summer. When *she* heard that her neighbors, Beverly & Doris, were finding it difficult to donate their handmade hats & mittens she immediately knew to call me. Because of this friendship chain of generous and caring women, many people will benefit from the warmth of their thoughtfulness.

Thank you, Diane Eiker, Carolyn, Beverly & Doris!





You can bring Holiday Cheer to our neighbors!

The BoT, in conjunction with the Faith in Action Team, will be looking for your support to help make the holidays more cheerful for a few local families.

We are currently working with *Gov. John Fairfield School, our back yard neighbor, to identify a family to support.

As you may know, FiAT has been working with WIONN (Welcome Immigrants Our New Neighbors) to assist immigrants and will give more specifics asap as possible.

A few things we CAN expect to be welcomed by these families are Gift Cards to Walmart, Target, Reny's, Hannaford, Shaw's & Market Basket! Gift cards may be dropped off to Sonja Gerken or mailed to her at 38 Weymouth St. Saco ME 04072

* Did you know that Gov. John Fairfield was a founding member of our church?! His daughter, Sarah, taught Sunday school and developed the first "kindergarten" in Saco in a room at City Hall.

Side with Love for BLM

Saturdays noon-1pm
On the Rt 1 (Elm St) Bridge
Between Saco & Biddeford
Park on Lincoln St past Bob's Auto



FiAT invites you to join fellow congregants and friends in a social action every Saturday from Noon to 1pm to Side With Love for Black Lives Matters. Make your values visible and show BIPOC (black, indigenous and people of color) that we side with them in dismantling over 400 years of white supremacy.

Yes, you'll see the rude gestures, hear the words "All lives matter" but more importantly see the smiles and hear the honking horns of those who believe now is the time to change. Dress warmly, bring a sign, a friend or just yourself- you will not regret it!

Share the Plate

At this time, with Zoom services, no plate is passed between the pews. In lieu of dropping money in a plate, please be generous and send a check to UUCSB each month with your contribution.

Each month a designated charity receives 1/2 of the money collected. Share the Plate brings our name and good intentions into the community and each month an important cause gets our attention, expanding our perspective on the world around us.

Your Help Needed

Please help us to identify organizations that could benefit from our financial help through Share the Plate. While many organizations are in need of donations, giving to local places that support our community is probably the best use of our limited financial help.

If you wish to nominate a nonprofit organization please send your suggestion and a short paragraph explaining the Organization's goals to Jeannine at: jwilso118@gmail.com.

December's Share the Plate:

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. & the Kinship Program (AFFM) provides support services for adoptive, foster, and kinship families.

AFFM's Mission is to provide the training, guidance, knowledge, and resources needed to handle complex issues encountered by resource families as they open their hearts and homes to children in need.

AFFM's services are for all adoptive, foster and kinship families. Child welfare is dependent upon a myriad of state and federal laws, rules, and regulations. Decisions concerning families and innocent children are rarely easy and are usually fraught with highly emotional issues. AFFM is dedicated to assisting families to help children find the security they deserve.

Alphabet Soup - December Calendar of Events

We meet via ZOOM.

For more information contact Tom Muise at tmansmk49@gmail.com.

ZOOM Talk

We meet on ZOOM every Thursday Evening from 7 to 9 PM. Please come out and socialize with us. Our group is all inclusive. We sit and chat about anything that comes up for discussion. No agenda. Tom will lead the meeting. To join in, open ZOOM and join using meeting ID #88918168615.

Open Discussion Night: Thursday, December 3rd, 2020 – 7:00 – 9:00 pm.

We sit and discuss items of interest together.

Board Game Night: Thursday, December 11th, 2020 – 7:00 – 9:00 pm.

We sit and discuss items of interest together.

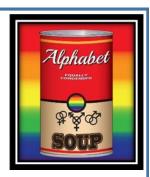
December Movie Discussion Night: Thursday, December 17th, 2020 – 7:00 – 9:00 pm.

We will be talking about the movie "Boys In The Band". Please take time to sit and watch it before the meeting, so we can discuss it together.

We will continue with our ZOOM meetings so invite folks to join us. Looking forward in seeing everyone....

No meetings December 24th Christmas Eve & December 31st New Year's Eve.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!! See you all On January 7th, 2021.



Donate your "Good Stuff" to UUCSB

Everyone must have some good stuff around the house that they would be willing to donate to the church to be sold. Good things are happening with these Good Stuff sales! We are steadily bringing in money and selling some really cool things. I just listed a massage chair, a portable crib, and two wall mirrors, just to give you an idea. Small appliances also sell well. Send me an email at: c.islandgal@yahoo.com if you have something to

contribute.

— Pat Snyder

Deep Cleaning - UUCSB Style!

Your Monday Morning Cleaning Crew continues to get into some of the untouched corners of our buildings. We took out the First Aid kits from the drawer in the kitchen and the Religious Education Room. We emptied the contents, scrubbed around a bit, threw away years old, dried sticking plaster, antibiotic cream, etc. and filled them with clean, new products. Everything is labeled within an inch of its life. In the RE Room, the First Aid kit sits on top of the shelving unit along the wall opposite the windows. In the kitchen, just stand facing the two stoves and look at the drawer on the lower right. A bright sign says "First Aid." Let's hope we don't need to use them!



— Jane Perkins

We Are All Members of B&G.....

Kudos to Donna Ravn!! Donna was made aware of several loose shingles on our annex roof last week. She immediately alerted the B&G folks and *voila* our roof was repaired yesterday. Thank you, Donna! We can't always be that speedy on our response to issues, but we do need to know about these issues so that we can address them.

Likewise the chipped and broken cement at our main entrance. Thanks to Ellie Lockwood's alert, we were able to get these "pot holes" patched before the big snows.

Keep in mind that our buildings are very large and our budget is very small. We need your help in assessing damage and needs and in getting some remediations. Let us know about issues as Donna and Ellie have done recently. It helps a great deal.

Pay Your Pledge Automatically!

Annual pledges paid in regular installments help the Church's cash flow - and yours! You can set up an automatic debit from your bank directly to the church account - no checks or mailing hassles. You may also use a credit or debit card for pledge payments. These, too, can be set up ahead of time to transfer automatically an amount you choose on the date you select. These Electronic Giving options can help you manage monthly expenses and help the church funds available regularly to meet our payroll and other bills.

Contact Brian in the church office to set up a payment plan. Automatic payment arrangements are kept confidential.

- Finance Committee

Financial Information

Greetings from the Treasurer

Account balances as of 11/21/2020 are as follows:

Checking	\$6,596.50
Accounts Payable	\$57.47
Moulton Trust	\$1,089.93
Restricted Savings	\$44,643.88
Saco/Bidd Investments	\$150,648.55

Any questions, just call. Sincerely, *Ron Hiser*



Teeny Tiny Fundraiser

Purchase a vinyl sticker (3 1/2" x 5 1/2") to benefit the church. Sonja Gerken paid \$3 for each. Purchase for \$5 (or more if you're feeling extra generous). Make checks out to UUCSB.



Hannaford Gift Cards

Do you shop at Hannaford? Please consider participating in our fundraising project. When you buy your groceries with a Hannaford Gift Card purchased at church, Hannaford donates 5% towards our operating budget. You can support the church at no additional cost to yourself. Hannaford cards make good gifts, too.

You may contact Ellie Lockwood at to arrange purchase of Hannafod card at:

eleanor.lockwood@twc.com



Get your cards from Ellie Lockwood

CLYNK

Help UUCS by returning your bottles and cans through the CLYNK service at Hannaford. Please remember that Market Basket labeled bottles and cans are not accepted by CLYNK.



During this time of physical distancing, Sonja Gerken is happy to deliver Clynk bottle bags (to support UUCSB) to your door. Just email her at s55gerken@gmail.com.



UU Post It Notes



Committee on Ministries

What should I do if I have a conflict with a church member or group?

Conflict Resolution Process

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Saco and Biddeford is committed to fostering right relations among its members, friends, and staff.

We understand that conflict can be an inevitable part of a healthy community and can serve as an opportunity for growth and development. As members of this congregation, it is incumbent on all of us to handle conflict in ways that are reflected in our covenant.

You are welcome to speak informally with any member of the Committee on Ministries.

Please read the Conflict Brochure developed by this committee and follow the Conflict Resolution Pathway that applies to your situation. When needed, the CoM will assist in developing a mediation plan for all involved parties.

Keep in mind that the CoM doesn't handle anonymous input. Be assured that information communicated will be handled with appropriate confidentiality.

Website

Visit our website at

www.uuchurchsacobiddeford.com.

If you would like to add or correct something, please let me know. Please be specific with corrections as we have over 75 pages on our site. Added content for areas that have not yet been developed will be gratefully accepted. Thank you to those folks who have provided content and updates.

- Brian Dustin, Webmaster

Don't forget to support our Little Free Pantry on our front lawn.

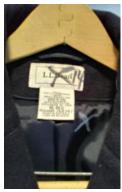
Bring what you want: take what you need.



Lost and Found

The Gerkens have discovered an L.L. Bean women's size 14 coat in their closet that is not theirs. It is navy blue wool with blue buttons and bands at the cuffs. Contact them if yours is missing!





Thinking about becoming a member?

To learn more about our congregation:

Please speak to any member or someone from the Membership- Welcoming Committee. Plan to attend a Sharing Your Spiritual Journey orientation.

To learn more about our faith and practice:
Various aspects of Unitarian Universalism are explained in brochures kept in a rack as you enter the sanctuary. You are welcome to take these home. You can also talk with members of our congregation.

Our Church

We are a voluntary association of those committed to this special religious community. We share common values, but we do not require or expect conformity to any specific religious beliefs. We welcome each person's spiritual exploration and expression.

Web sites <u>www.uuchurchsacobiddeford.com</u> and <u>www.uua.org</u>, contain more information on the traditions, activities and people of our church and association. Our Membership Welcoming Committee is also willing to assist you.

There are seven principles which Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote:

1	The inherent worth and dignity of every person
2	Justice, equity and compassion in human relations
3	Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations
4	A free and responsible search for truth and meaning
5	The right of conscience & the use of the democratic process within our congregations & in society at large
6	The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all
7	Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part

Our Membership

Those who sign the Membership Book agree to sustain our church through continuing contributions of time, effort and financial support. All members are part of the non-profit corporation that owns the church, and they govern it through democratic process in which each one is entitled to be heard. Members elect a Board of Trustees and must also approve the "call" of a minister to our pulpit. By participating in our worship, events and activities, you'll get a sense of how this congregation might work in your life, and you in the life of the congregation. As you discover the privileges and responsibilities of membership, we recommend that you take the time to:

- · Attend a Sharing Your Spiritual Journey orientation offered by the Membership Committee to find out more about Unitarian Universalism and our church's history and traditions.
- · Attend church for a while to get to know the community and think about whether you share in our common values and feel ready to make a commitment to the shared spiritual journey.
 - · Decide your financial and time commitment to this church community.

When you're ready, speak to the chair of Membership or president about signing the Membership Book!