

The Messenger

December
2022

Unitarian Universalist Church
of Saco & Biddeford

www.uuchurchsacobiddeford.com



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December Worship

Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

December 4th — Rev. Lori Whittemore

December 11th — Rev. Lori Whittemore

December 18th — Rev. Niki Norman — “I Wonder as I Wander”

December 24th — Rev. Lori Whittemore —
Christmas Eve Service — 5pm

(There will not be a service on Sunday, December 25th.)

The **Membership Committee** is happy to welcome interested church visitors and members to an informal meeting with Rev. Lori Whittemore after the service and coffee hour on December 11. Please join us.

Winter Cancellations

It is getting to be that time of year again when we start to enjoy winter weather. In the event of cancellation of Sunday service, channels 6, 8 and 13 will all be notified for them to post on TV. In addition, an email notification will be sent out, and the church phone message will be updated to reflect the closure.

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

Words from Reverend Lori

Here we are in December! It has been a great fall for our community! We are just on the tail end of an amazing Christmas fair and are growing our social media presence. We will have more details for how you can help us with that in the near future. There are some new faces appearing in the pews and UUCSB continues to be a strong, loving presence in Saco and Biddeford. What we have is something everyone needs! And I am delighted that people are finding their way to us. The theme for December is wonder. And we will also be following the advent candles through Christmas. December 4th will be joy, December 11 will be love, December 18 will be peace and Christmas eve will be the candle of wonder. This month we will not be publishing sermon titles in the messenger for the whole month, but putting them on the white board a week ahead. This will give us more flexibility to be more responsive to the events of the world and the life of the community.



I share an unattributed advent poem I found:

Let your love pierce through
all traces of dark
let my eyes look forward
to seeing you
appearing through
soft smattering of stars.

Let our eyes, with fierce love keep seeing past the darkness and challenge all around us.

Let our eyes focus on light in community and find joy of rolling up our sleeves being the light that
shines in the darkness.

Let the peace that passes all understanding be with each of us this season.

And may our hearts be filling with wonder at the mystery of it all.

Biographies

Reverend Lori Whittemore (Rev. Lori) serves as a contract minister for the Unitarian Universalist Church of Saco and Biddeford. She holds a Master of Divinity from Bangor Theological Seminary and is ordained by the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine (Chime). She is a Board-Certified Clinical Chaplain and Diplomate Supervisor certified by the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy. She received her doctorate in ministry from the George Fox University's Portland Seminary focusing on semiotics, church and culture. She is delighted to be with us.

Reverend Niki Norman is a community chaplain and interfaith minister in southern Maine. Rev Niki graduated from and was ordained by the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine in 2020, where she currently serves as a board member. Rev Niki provides weekly interfaith services each week for the residents of St Joseph's Rehab and Residence in Portland and was honored to be the Minister of the Week at Ferry Beach in the summer of 2021. Rev Niki is a member of the UUCSB and is deeply grateful for the support from the UUCSB community. She loves people, laughter, music, cats and poetry, in no particular order!

FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT

Before I go for my surgery, I have a couple of things to report on.

First: It took a few weeks to get a meeting scheduled, but on November 14th we were visited by Sgt. Scott Sicard and Officer Joel Gott of the Saco Police Department, who conducted a safety inspection of our beloved church. Unfortunately, I had a Doctor's appointment rescheduled for the same time as the inspection, so I did not make it. We were very well represented by Rev. Lori, Brian D, Anne D and other members of the B&G committee. The inspection went well. There were no major issues. The team has a list of recommendations, which the board will address at its next meeting.

Second: We just completed the Holiday Cheer Fair, and it was a great success. Not only for the money that was made, but for the incredible teamwork from so many church members, both new and old. Many people stepped up to move things from the basement, set up in the sanctuary and parish hall, make soups for the kitchen lunch, work at the fair and clean up afterwards. I think all of the people who contributed were glad we could have a post COVID, normal fair and enjoyed all of the camaraderie.

In peace,
Paul

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.

Tree of Hope

Update about The Tree of Hope. It will be ready to hang with items on Sunday, December 4th! That day, everyone who attends church will be given a cold weather item for those in need, to hang on the tree. And, if you would like, you can hang items from the donation basket, that are bagged, every Sunday throughout the winter. This way we can all have a part in this wonderful gift!

We are so grateful for all your donations to be hung on the tree. Please keep them coming throughout the cold winter months. Just toss them into the clothes basket just outside of the Sanctuary. We will bag and label them.

Happy Holidays!

— Pat Snyder



Invitation to “Who Knew....?”

We offer you an invitation to share yourself – your talents/and/or pastimes – with our congregation through a monthly Messenger article. Anne Dobson calls it a “Who Knew....?” piece – an exploration of things we don’t know about folks we do know. Send us a few paragraphs about yourself, along with a photo.

This month’s article focuses on Brian Dustin

Who Knew....?

I grew up in Lyman, Maine, the middle child of three. My older brother was the one who was always in trouble. My sister, being youngest and the only girl, was daddy’s little girl who could do no wrong. My focus was always to do my best to fly under the radar doing my best to stay out of trouble. When I graduated from high school, I decided to get as far away from Maine as possible. I ended up going to college in Washington, DC.

Maine and Washington are worlds apart. I had met only one non-white person in my life at this point. Suddenly I was in a diverse city of over two million people and at a large university with over one hundred countries represented in the student body. I was overjoyed to discover that there was so much more to the world than what rural Maine had to offer.

Right off the bat, I met my dorm roommates. First was Bob, a Hispanic man from Manhattan. Then there was Nassereddine Boumenna from Algeria. They were both wonderful men who educated me to the world beyond the woods. That very first weekend, we observed protests in front of the Soviet embassy because their military had just shot down Korean Airlines flight 007. I was much too new to the city to actually participate. I was also a bit intimidated.

I had so much to learn about the world and my place in it. My education was so much more than just learning from books and lectures. Washington has many resources to offer. My education included a visit to a US Senate committee hearing, a face-to-face interview with Senator George Mitchell in his Capitol office, and an interview with the World Bank HR manager at his office.

I also had the opportunity to travel to New York City to the United Nations with a contingent of international students. We all took turns sitting in our own country’s seat at the general assembly. I was also on the National Mall to see the AIDS Memorial Quilt in 1991. I also had the opportunity to jaywalk through a presidential motorcade.

Spending eight years in the nation’s capital gave me many experiences that I would never have had in Maine. After eight years, I decided that it was time to return to Maine. I had learned many things, the most important being that even I could make a difference, no matter how small, to my world. This is a lesson that I continue to take with me through life.

— Brian Dustin



Music Notes

from Choir
Director, Ellie Rolnick



"Music is the vehicle that transports us from where we are to where we want to be."

— Rabbi Israel Ba'al

- **Rehearsals:** Pick Up Choir will rehearse on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month followed by singing in church on that day. Upcoming Dates: December 11 and 24. There may be an additional rehearsal for Christmas Eve.
- **Time:** 8:45 – 9:45 We meet in the Parish Hall to start, and we begin on time. Time for 12/24 TBA.
- **Participation:** 'Pick up Choir' means that you do not need to commit to every Sunday that we sing; but if I can know in advance that you'll be there, it helps me plan for appropriate music.
- **Special Music:** Do you like to sing solo or play an instrument? Special music is always a welcome addition to a service. In December 'Special Music' will be provided by Niki Norman on 12/4 and Ron Houle on 12/18.

All are welcome who love to sing or who want to be involved with our Music Ministry. For more information please contact me directly at uucsbchoir@gmail.com.

Our UUCSB Musicians Out and About through the Holiday Season

Friday, December 9th, 7:00p.m.: The Alumni Band will perform at the 'Little Theater' at Biddeford High School. Nathan Caron (Ellie Rolnick's son) plays 1st Trumpet. More information: <http://thealumniband.com/upcoming-events/>. Please note the Little Theater location is correct.

Friday, December 16th, 7:00p.m.: The Songweavers Women's Chorus and Northern Lights Vocal Ensemble with Director Peggo Horstmann Hodes present a concert, "Tending the Spark," at the South Congregational Church in Concord, NH. Joining the singers will be the Songweaver Drummers, co-directed by Grace and Lindsey Schust. [Learn more and get tickets here](#) - we will offer a livestream option via YouTube in addition to the live performance. Ellie Lockwood and Sonja Gerken sing with Songweavers!

Saturday, December 17th, 700 p.m.: The Tri-City Community Chorus will offer 'When the Snow Falls'. The concert will be held at the Performing Arts Center at the Biddeford Middle School. For more information: <https://tricitycommunitychorus.com>. You'll find Matt Gerken in the tenor section!

Saturday, December 17th, 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 18th at 2 p.m.: Renaissance Voices will perform at St. Luke's Cathedral on State Street in Portland. More information: <https://renaissancevoices.net/#concerts>. You'll find Niki Norman doing percussion!

Caring Connection

The Caring Connection wishes everyone in our church community a happy holiday season. We are blessed with a congregation that is full of holiday elves, who have been very busy creating our wonderful Holiday Fair, filling our Little Free Pantry, making and delivering goodies, giving practical help and rides, making calls, and sending cards.



Please fill out our volunteer questionnaire (available in the Sanctuary) this month. We need to know how you wish to help. Just check all the kinds of caring assistance you are willing to provide. You will not be asked for a specific task or time, only if you are generally able to assist a member or friend. You may accept or decline any request.

We all will have an opportunity to help adorn our Tree of Hope this month. On Sunday, the 4th of December, everyone who attends church will be provided with an item to attach to the tree. That way we can all be involved in this wonderful project. Thank you all for your donations! They are welcome anytime and we use them to continue to fill the tree throughout the cold months of Winter.

Despite the shorter, darker, colder days, we hope the December holidays are a time of renewal, joy, connection, light and hope for you, and that you all stay safe and well. If you do experience times of difficulty, please let us know how we can help. We depend on you to reach out to any one of us to let us know of your need or of a concern you may have for someone else. Thanks to all of you for your generous support. Please contact one of our members if you need assistance or if you would like to join the Caring Connection Team.

— The Caring Connection Team: Paula Howard, Donna Ravn, Pat Snyder, and Marilyn Stoesser-Casad

Share the Plate

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. If you have a suggestion for a local charity or non-profit to receive the Share the Plate offering, please talk to Lori.



December Share the Plate: The Maine Way, Inc.

Our share the plate in December will be with The Maine Way, Inc. The Maine Way is located here in Saco. The Maine Way provides affordable housing and access to resources that can effectively assist homeless and at-risk individuals with their transition back toward independence. The intent is for the Maine Way residents to gain the life skills that most of us take for granted but are crucial to surviving and leading productive lives. Steve Ryan will be here on December 4 to share with us about the Maine Way.

UUCSB Birthday

On Nov. 21, 1827 the folks at the 2nd Parish Unitarian Church dedicated their Meeting House. That was 195 years ago! Members and towns people came to hear the words of Rev. Greenwood as he delivered the inaugural sermon and presided over the installation of the first minister, Rev. Tracy.

The Meeting House was chilly, heated only by a pot bellied wood stove in the back. Pews were heated by charcoal braziers brought in by each family. Fur robes and homemade quilts were in abundance and everyone lifted their feet off the cold floor and put them on the foot rests in each pew.

Imagine how these folks would react to our organ, central heating, electric lights, indoor plumbing and our sound system. Not a soul in that 1827 congregation could even picture such things. And now we are out on social media! We send out sermons on You Tube, post news on Facebook. This social media tool is a big one. Updated Facebook posts kept people streaming- pun - to our recent Holiday Fair, which resulted in record breaking sales. We no longer wait for people to discover us; we are out there in their faces saying "Here we are. Tada!"

I want to be here in 5 more years to see what wonders those years bring to our lives at the UUCSB.

Happy Birthday to us.

— Anne Dobson

Welcome Immigrants Our New Neighbors (WIONN)

WIONN is a 15 year old nonprofit group of volunteers who work with refugee and asylum seeking families primarily in the Biddeford and Saco area. Several of our UUCSB members have been involved in helping asylum seeking families over the last 4 years. These families sometimes find themselves in difficult financial situations.

If you would like to donate to help families in need, you may write checks to: **Christ Federated Church** ("Refugee Project" on memo line please) or give cash to Randa Thomas, Sonja Gerken or Matt Gerken.

LiveStream of Services

Over the past few weeks, some upgrades were made to the audio/video equipment used to livestream church services. Streaming will move from Facebook to YouTube, which will allow people to join without the need to join Facebook. This will give the church a wider reach beyond our sanctuary.

The equipment upgrades have been made possible due to the contributions made to UUCSB in memory of long time member, Thomas Muise, who passed away last December. He would have been pleased to know that his fundraising legacy continues to support the church.

Please join us for the livestreams, which can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxrh25Hvip6uxjA9fMVVwGw> or by searching Unitarian Universalist Church of Saco-Biddeford. Subscribing to the channel and liking the streams will help increase our visibility.

Help UUCSB reduce its use of Plastic and Petroleum.

The Faith in Action Team (FiAT) continues to delve into the Green Sanctuary 2030 and the *8th Principle, which are intertwined. We are focusing on Step #1 of GS 2030, which entails compiling a Congregational Profile and at the same time also reducing our use of plastics both here at church and in our homes. We hope to begin to inventory products used at church. You can do the same at home!

PLASTIC

Do **you** have ideas on how we could reduce plastic use? Would you be interested in inventorying UU products? Do you have great sources for environmentally friendly products?

Please share your ideas with us. Speak to us personally- Look for the *green leaf* on FiAT members' name tags. Or Email us:

Donna Beveridge (dbeveridge18@gmail.com)

Diane Eiker (deiker37@gmail.com)

Sonja Gerken (s55gerken@gmail.com)

Laurie Sivonen (sivonenlesw@icloud.com)

Randa Thomas(randat@zwi.net).

We welcome your input! We all belong to the FIAT!

PETROLEUM

Do you have an interest in researching how we could veer away from oil for heating our building? Would you be willing to contact Revision Energy to get their opinion as to the best options? Our aging boiler is just that, aging, and we would like to be prepared for the day that it no longer serves us. We are grateful that members did research years ago, and now we feel this is the time to revisit this. Do you have any connections in the energy industry? Again, **we welcome your input.** Contact any of us.

* The 8th UU principle: "We, the member congregations of the 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."

Around the Building

When I got out of my car this morning and looked across the street at the UUCSB, I was reminded of the times 50 years ago that we used to walk our two tiny tots by the church. I thought the place was not in use... paint failing, lawn not mowed, shingles dangling. The place look deserted. The building still needs some TLC, but no one would pass by and think it is unused. We've come a long way!

This month B&G has a new 8' step ladder thanks to Sarah Wells. We will be putting in our window inserts, cleaning up after the Fair; and we are still urging our contractor to finish stabilizing our Sanctuary windows (just two more to go).

Upcoming projects include organizing the basement, re-organizing the Youth Room and steam vacuuming the blue carpet.

We'd love to have you join us in these tasks. See Jane Perkins, Trevor Neitz, or Anne Dobson for the schedule.

Financial Information

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

Greetings from the Treasurer

Account balances as of 11/21/2022 are as follows:

Checking	\$814,712.05
Accounts Payable	\$0.00
Moulton Trust	\$1,037.57
Restricted Savings	\$49,166.37
Saco/Bidd Investments	\$149,854.09

Any questions, just call.

Sincerely, Wendy Coleman



Hannaford Gift Cards

Would you like to donate to the church in a way that doesn't cost you anything? If you buy your weekly groceries with a Hannaford gift card purchased from UUCSB, the church gets 5%. Our church depends on this fundraiser to contribute to its operating budget. Cards are available in \$100 or \$50 denominations. Gift cards are for sale in the Parish Hall every Sunday after the worship service, or if you are worshipping virtually, just call or email Ellie Lockwood (elenor.lockwood@twc-.com) and make arrangements to pick them up at another time. Thank you for participating in this fundraiser in support of our church. .



Ellie Lockwood

On-Line PayPal Payments

Donations and pledge payments can be made using PayPal. To do so, go to the church website at: www.uuchurchsacobiddeford.com and at the very top of the page click "Give" and then click "Donate".

Donations and pledge payments may also be mailed to:

Unitarian Universalist Church of
Saco & Biddeford
60 School Street
Saco, ME 04072

CLYNK

Help UUCS by returning your bottles and cans through the CLYNK service at Hannaford. Green bags may be picked up at the welcome table when you come to church on Sundays. Please remember that Market Basket labeled bottles and cans are not accepted by CLYNK.





UU Post It Notes



Post It!

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 a member of the Committee on Ministries (Niki Norman and Pat Campbell).

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

Church Administrator

Brian Dustin

Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 8 to 11 am.

[207/282-0062](tel:2072820062) or [207/632-4512](tel:2076324512)

www.uuchurchsacobiddeford.com

Little Free Pantry

Bring what you want; take what you need.

Some suggestions are peanut butter, pasta, rice, baking products, protein bars, cereal, canned soups, canned vegetables, powder laundry detergent, feminine hygiene products, diapers, toothpaste, bar soap and paper products.

During the cold weather and freezing temperatures please refrain from placing canned or glass items into the Little Free Pantry.

Thank you for putting your Faith into Action.



Photo by Liz Gotthelf/Journal Tribune

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 www.uuchurchsacobiddeford.com and www.uua.org, 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!

We strive to be a Green Sanctuary and a Welcoming Congregation.